

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT
 Report Date: June 16, 2009



This is a report generated by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection/ Inland Fisheries Division- Diadromous Program. For more information, contact Steve Gephard, 860/447-4316. For more information about fish runs on the Connecticut River call the USFWS Hotline at 413/548-9628 or visit the USFWS website at www.fws.gov/r5crc. For more information about Atlantic salmon, visit the Connecticut River Salmon Association at www.ctriversalmon.org.

CONNECTICUT RIVER LOCATIONS

FISHWAY (RIVER)	ATLANTIC SALMON	AMER. SHAD	ALEWIFE	BLUEBACK HERRING	GIZZARD SHAD	STRIPED BASS	SEA LAMPREY	SEA-RUN TROUT	AMER. EEL
Rainbow (Farmington)	11	37	0	0	0	1	1,765*	3	39
Leesville (Salmon)	2	-	-	0	-	-	1***	0	0
Moulson Pond (Eightmile)	0	- thousands	??	0	0	0	0***	0	-
Mary Steube+ (Mill Brook)	-	-9 (broken)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
WestSpringfield (Westfield- MA)	1	1,355	0	0	0	2	531	0	5
Holyoke (Connecticut- MA)	55/10	155,280	0	39	51	427	18,947	0	0
Turners Falls (Connecticut- MA)	5/5	2,874	-	0	0	0	7,237	-	-
Vernon (Connecticut- VT)	7/7	19	-	0	0	0	1,536	-	-
Bellows Falls (Connecticut- VT)	4/4	0	-	0	0	0	100	-	0
Wilder (Connecticut- VT)	1/1	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	0
Other (all sites)	0/0								
TOTALS=	69/11	149,046	0++	39	44	380	20,247	3	13
<i>(last year's totals)</i>	141/11	156,4926	-----	89++	110	551	66,521	8	213

Fishways listed in gray font above are not yet opened for the season. In some cases, the fishways will be opened soon. In the case of the fishways on the Connecticut River, some fishways are not opened until significant numbers of fish pass through the fishway immediately downstream of them. If that never happens, the fishway may not be opened during the season.

* The number before the slash indicates the total number of salmon seen at the fishway that were not counted at downstream fishways. The number after the slash is the number of those fish that were allowed to continue upstream of the dam. The others were captured for breeding.

**Many of these species move at night. There is a video camera that records overnight passage when staff is not present. So this count is a combination of real-time counts and video counts. There is a considerable lag between the date a tape is recorded and when staff is able to count fish from the tape, so these numbers will not represent up-to-date counts until after the end of spring season.

*** Population estimates based on end-of-the-season nest surveys.

+There is an electronic fish counter at this fishway. ++This total does not include the imprecise estimates at Moulson Pond Fishway.

NOTE: All fish that pass through the Turners Falls, Vernon, Bellows Falls, and Wilder fishways had to first go through the Holyoke Fishlift where they were counted. Therefore those fish are not included in the totals at the bottom.

COMMENTS:

Hi all. I'm back in the office. I'll report on the NASCO meeting at another time and place but can report a couple of quick things:

- The West Greenland Commission adopted another three-year regulatory measure of 'no fishing' at West Greenland. The subsistence fishery will be continued but no commercial fishing or export of salmon.
- France declined the invitation to join NASCO to represent St. Pierre and Miquelon, two French islands between Nova Scotia and Newfoundland where a small interceptor fishery exists.
- NASCO endorsed 'enhanced sampling' of salmon at West Greenland as part of the SALSEA research initiative. This sampling was stymied last year by parties that misunderstood the sampling to represent an increase in the number of salmon to be killed at West Greenland. (The number of fish killed in the subsistence fishery will be the same but the amount of data taken from each fish will be more.)
- Next year's meeting will be somewhere in Quebec.

Three more adult salmon were trapped since last week (one each at Rainbow, Leesville, and Holyoke). This week's featured video is about salmon trapping and handling. The video is actually a composite of a salmon captured at Rainbow and the first one captured at Leesville—spliced together to show the process of how the fish are handled and trucked. It even has a cameo appearance by former Whittemore Manager Joe Ravita (who is about to get married!!!) At some point in the video it appears that the salmon magically transforms itself into a white sucker but fear not—the salmon re-appears. When the salmon is shown in the holding tank, you can see the numbered tag we place through its dorsal fin when we handle them in the trap. We use on-site holding tanks to gradually acclimate the salmon to the colder water temperatures that await them at the Richard Cronin National Salmon Station in Sunderland, MA (last photo). To view this (and all the videos produced thus far) visit the Connecticut River Salmon Association website @ <http://www.ctriversalmon.org/> and follow the link on the left margin of the homepage.

You'll see that we are reporting more salmon passing the Vernon fishway than the downstream Turners Falls fishway. This is not unusual. A few salmon often slip through Turners Falls undetected. Note that one salmon has already passed through the Wilder Dam Fishway north of Hanover, NH—217 miles north of Long Island Sound. Some salmon in past years that cleared this fishway have been able to leap over the next dam and enter the Ammonoosuc River, which drains the White Mountains.

As I think I've said in past years, there doesn't seem to be such a thing as a normal year anymore and 2009 is no exception. The water temperatures remain unusually low. We usually achieve 17 C (63 F) water temperatures in early May. It is still 17 C in places in CT. The entire spring seems to have been rainy with few sunny days to warm the water yet until this last batch of rain, the rivers were low because those rainy days weren't producing much rain. The streams came up during the last two days and it will be interesting to see if it draws in a last wave of fish. The peak of salmon captures at Leesville usually corresponds with the blooming of the local mountain laurel, which usually happens around the first of June. The mountain laurels are finally blooming now. The sea lamprey run has been off and on and the males have been slow to show the dorsal "rope" that they develop as spawning time nears. It seems that they need more warmth before the sprint to that finish line. Wednesday sounds like a warm sunny day—then more rain. 😊



Some of this year's salmon are making it up to the tributaries of Vermont and New Hampshire.

OTHER LOCATIONS WITHIN CONNECTICUT

FISHWAY (RIVER)	AMER. SHAD	ALEWIFE	BLUEBACK HERRING	GIZZARD SHAD	STRIPED BASS	SEA LAMPREY	SEA-RUN TROUT	AMER. EEL
Greeneville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	2,147	190	0	12	7	4	2	10
Taftville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Occum* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Versailles Pond (Little R., Sprague)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tunnel* (Quinebaug R., Preston)	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kinneytown* (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	<i>no counts this year; sea lamprey, American shad, sea-run trout observed above fishway</i>							
Whitfords Brook (Whitfords Br., Groton)	0	none seen yet						
Trading Cove Brook (Trading Cove Br., Montville)	small numbers seen							
Latimers Brook+ (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)	present (not enumerated)							
Gorton Pond (Pattagansett R., E.Lyme)	good numbers seen below (not enumerated)							
Brides Brook** (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)	74,774							
Fishing Brook (Fishing Br., O.Saybrook)	present (not enumerated)							
Branford Supply Pond Dam** (Queach Br., Branford)	3,477							
Clarks Pond (Indian R., Milford)	6							
Bunnells Pond (Peqonnock R., Bridgeport)	present (not enumerated)							
Wood Dam** (Saugatuck R., Westport)	1,401 321							
Mianus River Pond** (Mianus R., Greenwich)	23,086 9,442 0							

**Fish passage is video-recorded and counts are made off of tapes several days later so these data are always lagged a little behind. This report covers passage up to the following dates for these fishways:*

Greeneville= 6/10 Taftville= 6/2 Occum= ? Tunnel= 6/10 Kinneytown= no counts this year

***These locations have an electronic fish counter and are used as index sites for river herring runs. The counter is checked daily Monday-Friday. Monday counts typically include all weekend passage. These counts are usually up-to-date but some may lag behind a day or two, occasionally.*

+This location has a fish trap and fish are enumerated prior to release.

Counts in parentheses indicate numbers seen in a run that is now over and no further fish were counted during the past week. Typically used for alewife runs later in June.

COMMENTS:

There were continued runs of blueback herring in western Connecticut during the past week. Both the Saugatuck and Mianus showed a modest increase in numbers. The runs are often done by this time of year but with the moderate water temperatures, it is probably keeping the runs going. Same is probably true for sea lamprey runs along the coastline but we don't have any direct evidence of that. For the most part, the sites listed in the table on the previous page are alewife runs and those runs are over. We don't expect to see any additions to those numbers. The shad run on the Shetucket continues to trickle in. More interesting is a few more shad using the next fishways upstream (Taftville and Tunnel). Data at Taftville continue to support the idea that the Denil is perfectly good at passing shad, the problem is for the fish to locate the entrance. The situation at Tunnel is a little more complicated but with a dozen shad passed, we have some information to work with. FirstLight is pursuing a couple of ideas and will be analyzing the data from this year to look for hints on what conditions result in shad moving through these fishways.

Here are some eel pass numbers: **Greeneville**= 170 (but needs updating), **Tunnel**= some operational issues; waiting on update from FirstLight, **Kinneytown**= 893 (see photos below), **Lower Millpond**= 376, **Mill River**= 44 (more information needed), **Fishing Brook**= 8,497.

I've generally kept salmon information to the Connecticut River "comments" page but since the news for this section is starting to get light and the other page was full, I'll add some salmon information here. First, some return numbers for other rivers: **Merrimack River**= 57 salmon (18,580 shad, 1,460 river herring, and about 2,000 lamprey), **Saco**= 8 salmon, **Androscoggin**= 13, **Penobscot**= 810 (tracking similar to last year), **Narraguagus**= 1, **Dennys**= 2, and **Kennebec**= 5. Other rivers are zero for now but many have returns derived from fall redd surveys.

The federal fisheries agencies (USFWS and NOAA) have announced the listing of salmon in the Penobscot, Kennebec, and Androscoggin rivers under the federal Endangered Species Act. This was widely anticipated and the spring angling season on the Penobscot was terminated with this expectation. For more information, go to http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2009/20090615_salmon.html

FEATURED FISHWAY OF THE WEEK: Kinneytown Eel Pass



Kinneytown Eel Pass (protective covers removed). The substrate to the left (black) is for elvers and the substrate to the right (beige) is for glass eels. Most water enters at the top but the white hose at the bottom is supplemental attraction water. The green hose is the scent line from the trap at top.



This is the trap at the top of the eel pass. The spray bar at the top delivers water to both the eel pass and the blue trap. Eels wiggle up the pass and fall into the trap, where they are removed weekly, enumerated, and hand-carried to above the dam.

