

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT
 Report Date: June 30, 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)	12	37	0	0	0	1	1,864*	4	85
Leesville (Salmon)	2	-	-	0	-	-	1***	0	0
Moulson Pond (Eightmile)	0	- thousands	??	0	0	0	0***	0	-
Mary Steube+ (Mill Brook)	-	-9 (broken)	-	-	-	-	-	-	424
WestSpringfield (Westfield- MA)	2	1,363	0	0	0	0	540	0	11
Holyoke (Connecticut- MA)	57/10	158,771	0	39	65	610	18,995	0	4,029
Turners Falls (Connecticut- MA)	6/6	3,781	-	0	0	0	7,237	-	-
Vernon (Connecticut- VT)	7/7	16	-	0	0	0	1,532	-	-
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=	73/10	160,171	0++	39	65	611	21,397	4	4,564
<i>(last year's totals)</i>	<i>141/11</i>	<i>156,4926</i>	<i>-----</i>	<i>89++</i>	<i>110</i>	<i>551</i>	<i>66,521</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>213</i>

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:

At this point during most years, the runs are all but done. However, the cool rainy weather has allowed fish to linger on. The flow in the river is over 15,000 cfs and the temperature is only around 68 F (20 C), which are pretty good conditions for this time of year. We've picked up three more salmon since last week (Rainbow, Holyoke, and West Springfield) and shad continue to trickle it at Holyoke at over 100 per day. While a few fish have been added to other counts, most other runs appear to be over—other than American eel, the numbers of which continue to rise. Tributaries seem to be under the control of serendipitous cloud bursts, which seem to be occurring sporadically all over the basin. On Friday, a storm that eventually resulted in a tornado for Wethersfield, swept the middle portion of the Farmington River. The next day, a torrent that included 2 inches of hail in some spots camped over the Salmon River watershed, spiking the flow at 1,000 cfs. Yesterday, the West River in Vermont got it.

The salmon at Rainbow was a 29" female of intermediate color—not bright (silver) but not super dark, either (see photo below).

I'm not sure of some of the Vermont numbers above. A couple of them are slightly lower than last week. I have not heard from Jay this week, so we'll try to clear those up and maybe get an update on the whereabouts of tagged salmon for next week's report, the last of the 2009 season.



Seasonals Jeremy Grous and Emily Petchler attempt to hog the limelight from the latest salmon trapped at the Rainbow Dam. Note the dark coloration of the fish as opposed to the typical silvery color. This denotes the salmon has been in freshwater for some time. Photo by Andy Pryshlak



Sesasonal Sue Aiezza watches a large brown trout swim past the window at the Rainbow Fishway. If you look close, you might see some Argulus (a parasite) on the head. [On the fish, not Sue. We try to hose down our seasonals occasionally to control outbreaks.] Photo by Andy Pryshlak

OTHER LOCATIONS WITHIN CONNECTICUT

<u>FISHWAY</u> (RIVER)	<u>AMER.</u> <u>SHAD</u>	<u>ALEWIFE</u>	<u>BLUEBACK</u> <u>HERRING</u>	<u>GIZZARD</u> <u>SHAD</u>	<u>STRIPED</u> <u>BASS</u>	<u>SEA</u> <u>LAMPREY</u>	<u>SEA-RUN</u> <u>TROUT</u>	<u>AMER.</u> <u>EEL</u>
Greenville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	2,168	190	0	12	7	4	2	231 [^]
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)	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	200
Kinneytown* (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	<i>no counts this year; sea lamprey, American shad, sea-run trout observed above fishway</i>							917
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)							9,115
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		587					
Mianus River Pond** (Mianus R., Greenwich)	23,086		9,519		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:*

Greenville= 6/23 Taftville= 6/18? Occum= ?. Tunnel= 6/18 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.

[^]includes 10 eels seen in the fishlift and 221 eels in the eel pass.

COMMENTS:

There is nothing much going on along the shoreline. Even the Mianus River runs have stopped and the counter has been removed. Two exceptions: Greeneville is still lifting a handful of shad (analogous to Holyoke?) and will be staying open another week and the Wood Dam on the Saugatuck is still registering some ticks on its fish counter. Everything else is quiet and we have begun to close down some of the small fishways for the summer. We are now scheduling our summer maintenance projects, visiting fishways while they're dry and doing minor repairs and upkeep. Due to the lack of fish runs to report, I'll use the space to report on some news from the region:

Tingue Dam Gets Stimulated! In February 2009, NOAA received \$167 million from the Economic Stimulus program and announced a competitive grant program to restore coastal habitat and help jumpstart the nation's economy. The agency received 814 proposals from 34 states and 5 territories, totaling more than \$3 billion in requests. Today, NOAA announced that 50 projects received awards and one of them is the DEP's Tingue Dam Fishway Project, which will get \$2.5 million to match a similar amount the DEP has set aside for the project. To date, the DEP and partners have removed 7 dams and built one fishway on the Naugatuck River but the Tingue Dam (the second on the river) remains, blocking access by anadromous fish to over 30 miles of re-opened upstream habitat. A fish bypass channel—to be excavated out of bedrock—has been fully designed and permitted but has not been constructed due to insufficient funds. This grant will allow this shovel-ready project to move forward. After some prep work, construction should begin this fall. The Inland Fisheries Division worked with the DEP's Bureau of Water Protection and Land Reuse to apply for this grant.

Rocky Neck and West River also Receive Stimulus Grants Anadromous fish will also benefit from two marsh restoration projects in Connecticut that received a grant. Brides Brook cuts through the beach at Rocky Neck State Park via two rusting metal pipes that are about to fail. If this happens, the beach would suffer severe damage and one of the state's largest alewife runs would be jeopardized. This grant will allow the replacement of the pipes with a mostly open channel, carefully designed to allow full fish passage and restore normal tidal flushing of the upstream marsh. The West River in New Haven also has river herring runs but a tide gate near the mouth inhibits passage and tidal flushing. The grant will allow the installation of modified tide gates that will accomplish all objectives. Save the Sound is leading the charge on these projects along with many partners including the DEP's Inland Fisheries and Parks divisions.

A Major Decision in Maine Regarding Fish Passage Conservationists and State agencies have been battling S.D. Warren for years to provide fish passage at multiple dams on the Presumpscot River in southern Maine. One dam has been removed and FERC has ordered fishways at upriver hydro dams when fish arrive at their base but the first dam—the Cumberland Mills Dam, which is FERC non-jurisdictional—has stood in the way. Now the Commissioner of the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and determined that S.D. Warren must provide fish passage at Cumberland Mills. This sets the stage for meaningful diadromous fish restoration in this river and will likely help conservationists achieve fish passage in other Maine rivers.

Saltwater Fishing License appears to be in Connecticut's Future The General Assembly passed the bill but while it sat on Governor Rell's desk awaiting a signature, someone in the DEP jumped the gun and began selling saltwater fishing licenses. This snafu has created a lot of confusion and given opponents an opportunity to jump on their soapbox once again. I trust all the confusion will be sorted out but in the meantime you might be interested in a letter written to the New London Day in defense of saltwater fishing licenses by Eric Smith, who recently retired as the Director of the DEP's Marine Fisheries Division.

Next week will be our last report- all partners should submit any relevant end-of-season reports, data, and observations.



The Tingue Dam on the Naugatuck River, looking south. The Rt. 8 overpass can be seen to the right. The spillway is actually an inch or two higher than the ledge on the far side so during low flows, all spill occurs over the ledge. The future fishway will excavated through the rock underneath the water in the foreground, and proceed northerly toward the camera.