

**CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT**  
 Report Date: May 20, 2014



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](http://www.fws.gov/r5crc). For more information about Atlantic salmon, visit the Connecticut River Salmon Association at [www.ctiversalmon.org](http://www.ctiversalmon.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* (WFMD) (Farmington)	0	274	0	21	0	0	2,214	0	1
Leesville(WFMD) (Salmon)	0	-	-	0	-	-	0***	0	0
StanChem*(WFMD) (Mattabeset)	0	1	252	22	17	-	16	0	5
Moulson Pond* (Eightmile)	0	0	23	0	0	0	18	0	-
Mary Steube*(WFMD) (Mill Brook)	-	-	1,274 (final)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rogers Lake+(WFMD) (Mill Brook)	-	-	0 (final)	-	-	-	-	-	-
WestSpringfield (Westfield- MA)	0/0	1,533	0	2	0	0	732	0	0
Holyoke (WFMD) (Connecticut- MA)	3	160,924	0	371	113	2	3,211	0	0
Manhan River* (Manhan- MA)									
Turners Falls* (Connecticut- MA)	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	-	-
Vernon* (Connecticut- VT)	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	-	0
Bellows Falls* (Connecticut- VT)	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	-	0
Wilder* (Connecticut- VT)	0	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	0
Other (all sites)	0								
<b>TOTALS=</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>162,457</b>	<b>1,549</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6,194</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>(last year's totals)</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>397,486</b>	<b>9,597</b>	<b>3,228</b>	<b>824</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>24,939</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16</b>

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.

\*There is a video camera that records passage. 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.

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. (WFMD)- Tours or open house for World Fish Migration Day, May 24 (<http://nature.org/ctfish>)

## COMMENTS:

The **American shad** run is really ramping up! Holyoke lifted over 155,000 this past week. Both West Springfield and Rainbow were seeing a lot of shad—and at least West Springfield was passing them. The run up the decrepit Rainbow fishway dropped off after the last rain but there are still a lot of shad and blueback herring in the tailrace. FirstLight has not been able to review video at Turners Falls yet but it is likely some are passing and heading to Vernon. It is becoming quite clear that this is the best blueback herring run in the Connecticut River in many years. Some areas are thick with them. I snorkeled Leesville over the weekend and believe there were tens of thousands, more than I've seen down there in 20 years. In recent years, Leesville has seen one anemic wave of blueback herring, usually in the hundreds, and it comes in around Memorial Day and last one or two days. This current run has been going on for more than a week. We received an email suggesting we lift the harvest prohibition. We'll talk more about that in upcoming reports but that is certainly premature. The last two years, the alewife run to New London County looked like it was on the verge of rebound but this year it was back down again. We need to have a sustained AND SIGNIFICANT recovery before we lift the restriction. Other snorkeling news includes building runs of tessellated darters and spottail shiners and of course stripers. Bass and sunfish have not appeared in large numbers yet. The sucker run is still going strong but I detected some drop off in numbers, both below and in the traps. The fish in the trap are running ripe with eggs so they are probably now focusing on spawning not moving upstream.

The season's first **Atlantic salmon** were trapped over the weekend. To date three have shown up, all at Holyoke. All three were handled, data collected, tagged, and released to continue upstream. This the protocol for salmon this year. We'll try to get some reports from the handlers and maybe some photos to give you an idea on the quality of the fish this year. Remember—just because we're releasing them doesn't mean they are now fair game. All salmon in the Connecticut River must be released immediately. If you catch one that has already passed through a fishway, it will be tagged. If you can read the tag number quickly without stressing the fish, call it in to the number on the tag—or email your report to me. We want reports of observed or caught fish but we don't want to stress them. We want them to spawn. So only get as much information from the tag as you can quickly and then let them go. What's important to us is where and when you saw/caught them.

Ken Sprankle of the USFWS has been transplanting more **blueback herring** from netted about 840 and released them at Oxbow Marina, which means just over 2,000 fish into Oxbow this year. Monday he trucked to the Manhan River, upstream of the new fishway at Easthampton. We've been putting fish into the Farmington River above Rainbow Dam but I don't have numbers to report at this time.

Since it is not in Connecticut, it is not on our website but to learn more about that location, see <http://www.worldfishmigrationday.com/events/459/crwc-tour-of-holyoke-fish-li>



*Netting blueback herring from Wethersfield Cove: Crews from the USFWS and CTDEEP have been cooperating to capture herring from the cove (where they are plentiful) and truck them to low-seeded area upstream of dams. Above, Ken Sprankle hauls and dipnet full of herring to the truck.*



*Yes, there is still good habitat upstream of barrier dams. The Nature Conservancy has received a grant from the Hurricane Sandy fund to remove the Norton Dam on the Jeremy River, a major tributary of the Salmon River. When completed, all of the habitat including the gorgeous gravel beds (spawning habitat) will be accessible to diadromous fishes*

## OTHER LOCATIONS WITHIN CONNECTICUT

FISHWAY (RIVER)	AMER. SHAD	ALEWIFE	BLUEBACK HERRING	GIZZARD SHAD	STRIPED BASS	SEA LAMPREY	SEA-RUN TROUT	AMER. EEL
<b>Greeneville*</b> (WFMD) (Shetucket R., Norwich)	1,544	782	72	35	4	0	0	2
<b>Taftville*</b> (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Occum*</b> (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Tunnel*</b> (Quinebaug R., Preston)	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Kinneytown*</b> (Naugatuck R., Seymour) (out of order)	0	1	0	0	0	11	0	0
<b>Hallville Pond*</b> (WFMD) (Poquetanuck Br. Preston)	-	47	0	0	-	0	0	0
<b>Latimers Brook**</b> (WFMD)- (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)	-	17,003						
<b>Gorton Pond</b> (Pattagansett R., E.Lyme)	-	0	0					
<b>Brides Brook**</b> (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		265,969	Season Final Count					
<b>Clarks Pond</b> (Indian River, Milford)		68	0	-		-	-	
<b>Branford Supply Pond Dam**</b> (WFMD) (Queach Br., Branford)		1,395	0	-	-	-	-	
<b>Landon Dam**</b> (West River, Guilford)		886	0	-	-	-	0	0
<b>Haakonsen Fishway*</b> (WFMD) (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	0	3,009	701	134	0	123	2	
<b>Bunnells Pond*</b> (WFMD) (Pegonnock R., Bridgeport)		4,926	0	0	0			
<b>Wood Dam**</b> (Saugatuck R., Westport)		3,285	0	0				
<b>Mianus River Pond* **</b> (WFMD) (Mianus R., Greenwich)		41,834	0	0	0	0	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= 5/13 Taftville= n.a. Occum= n.a. Tunnel= 5/09 Kinneytown= 5/14 Haakonsen= 5/18 Hallville= 5/12

\*\*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. (WFMD)- Tours or open house for World Fish Migration Day, May 24 (<http://nature.org/ctfish>)

## COMMENTS:

All counts are behind. The Kinneytown camera was back in operation and then it, too, died! We will not have good Naugatuck River data this year. We are also having problems with the Moulson Pond camera. Last year it was trucks; this year it is cameras. Trap #1 at Leesville still is not fixed but we're limping along with it and trap #2. While most alewife runs along the shoreline are done and we're seeing drop downs (especially at Brides and Mary Steube), we're still getting a few fresh ones: Bunnells, Landon, Latimers, Haakonsen. Bunnells passed 700 on Sunday. Bluebacks are picking up at Haakonsen and Greenville. Greenville's shad run is finally going strong and we've been over there helping FirstLight and Kleinschmidt Associates tag shad for studies. Norwich Public Utilities will probably start trucking shad from Greenville to above Scotland Dam soon. We need to start sampling some of these smaller coastal streams to see if the strong blueback run that we're seeing in the Connecticut River is being seen along the shoreline, too.

**Glass eels-** Fishing Brook = 11,148; Mill River Eel Trap= 2,345; Greenville Eel Lift= 312, Lower Millpond (Lyme)= 60,343.

We showed a photo here two weeks ago of an otter in the Occum Dam Fishway. A recent article by Judy Benson in The Day can be found at: <http://www.theday.com/article/20140520/NWS01/305209973/-1/nws>. (Also has a better photo than ours!)



Well- this is it! This Saturday is **World Fish Migration Day**—our first celebration in Connecticut and many folks have been working hard to organize the many events statewide. I want to especially call out the good work of The Nature Conservancy and Sally Harold for this. There is something near you: Greenwich, Bridgeport (two fishways for the price of... well, it's all free!), Seymour (the Tingue Fishway under construction!), East Haven, Branford, Wallingford, Spoonville and Rainbow on the Farmington River (East Granby and Windsor), East Haddam, Old Lyme, East Lyme, Norwich and Preston. All the directions, the hours and the details you need to know are on the website: [www.nature.org/ctfish](http://www.nature.org/ctfish). When you see "Fishway Open Houses" look below and you'll see "Click Here" in brown. Click that and all the details will appear. When you're driving around, look for the signs shown above. Many of them will have arrows on them. They will direct you to the site. Sally and I (see photo below) and DEEP Commissioner Rob Klee will start the day at 9:00 am at the Lyme-Old Lyme High School (69 Lyme Street, Old Lyme) with some brief talks about the fish and the conservation efforts for them. Then we'll lead a caravan of cars on a tour of 5 eastern Connecticut fishways. You are welcome for the talks even if you don't go on the tour. The forecast sounds good. We really hope to see you at one or more of these sites. Come learn, celebrate, discuss—tell us your migratory fish stories. And if you own a dam that could be removed or fitted with a fishway—let's talk!!!



The CTDEEP is assisting FirstLight Power with **shad tagging studies** designed to evaluate upstream passage at Taftville and Tunnel dams, downstream passage at the same dams, and confirm that shad can reach the base of the Scotland Dam as part of the re-licensing agreement for that dam. Above, Dave Ellis of the Diadromous Program releases shad tagged with radio transmitters in the impoundment above the Occum Dam.



Yours truly Steve Gephard (left) and Sally Harold of The Nature Conservancy (right) appeared on Suzanne Thompson's radio show, "Connecticut Outdoors" on WLS and WMRD today at 12:30 to talk about diadromous fishes and promote **World Fish Migration Day**. To listen to the show on the web, go to <http://www.wlismrd.net/> and click on "listen to recent shows. Find "CT Outdoors"; our show was number 52014.