

**CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT**  
 Report Date: June 19, 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.ctriversalmon.org](http://www.ctriversalmon.org).

**CONNECTICUT RIVER LOCATIONS**

<b>FISHWAY (RIVER)</b>	<b>ATLANTIC SALMON</b>	<b>AMER. SHAD</b>	<b>ALEWIFE</b>	<b>BLUEBACK HERRING</b>	<b>GIZZARD SHAD</b>	<b>STRIPED BASS</b>	<b>SEA LAMPREY</b>	<b>SEA-RUN TROUT</b>	<b>AMER. EEL</b>
<b>Rainbow*</b> (Farmington)	3	533	0	27	0	0	4,271	0	1
<b>Leesville</b> (Salmon)	1	-	-	0	-	-	0***	0	0
<b>StanChem*</b> (Mattabeset)	0	5	254	83	100	-	16	4	5
<b>Moulson Pond*</b> (Eightmile)	0	3	13	180	0	0	33	0	-
<b>Mary Steube*</b> (Mill Brook)	-	-	1,543 (final)	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Rogers Lake+</b> (Mill Brook)	-	-	0 (final)	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>WestSpringfield</b> (Westfield- MA)	2	4,727	0	4	0	0	1,105	0	3
<b>Holyoke</b> (Connecticut- MA)	24	365,335	0	647	343	50	22,093	0	0
<b>Manhan River*</b> (Manhan- MA)	1	0	0	0	0	0	30	0	0
<b>Turners Falls*</b> (Connecticut- MA)	8	37,709	-	0	0	0	3,676	-	-
<b>Vernon*</b> (Connecticut- VT)	6	23,805	-	0	0	0	293	-	0
<b>Bellows Falls*</b> (Connecticut- VT)	0	0	-	0	0	0	168	-	0
<b>Wilder*</b> (Connecticut- VT)	0	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	0
<b>Other</b> (all sites)	0								
<b>TOTALS=</b>	30	370,603	1,549	941	442	50	27,518	4	9
<b>(last year's totals)</b>	92	397,486	9,597	3,228	824	208	24,939	18	16

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.

## COMMENTS:

The runs in the lower river are winding down but shad and lamprey continue to run farther upstream. Yesterday, Holyoke Fishlift passed 1,784 **American shad**. The water temperature is 20 C (68 F) and the flows are down to around 16,000 cfs. One can see from the table above the typical big drop-off in numbers between Holyoke and Turners Falls but Vernon is passing a large percentage of the shad that pass through Turners Falls. At Rainbow Fishway, we passed 23 shad yesterday. We are only seeing lamprey at night and the numbers have dropped off to single digits. At StanChem, we are seeing post-spawned shad coming down the fishway. Some of them are the fish that we transplanted upstream from Holyoke. **Blueback herring** are pretty much done in Connecticut—none at Leesville, Moulson Pond, or Rainbow, although Ken Sprankle of the USFWS electrofished the lower Farmington River two days ago and still caught 111 bluebacks. It's not clear if these were pre-spawned fish but most were males. Ken will examine them back at the lab. Ken also brought up (and released) a 50 pound striped bass with a USFWS tag on it!

We've reported previously that the newest tributary fishway was operated this year—the **Manhan River Fishway** in Easthampton, MA. Melissa Grader of the USFWS is doing all the video review and is way behind (it's almost as if she has other things to do...) but she has seen 30 lampreys go up and one Atlantic salmon go down. She has yet to see the salmon go up but she has not reviewed all of the video from previous dates. The fishway is also passing smallmouth bass, fallfish, trout, and other species, so it looks like this is going to be an effective fishway.

Holyoke passed two **Atlantic salmon** yesterday. The Holyoke count has been adjusted. A salmon that was originally trapped, tagged, and released at Holyoke turned up at the West Springfield fishway on the Westfield River. So the fish was added to the West Springfield count (we assume it has found its natal stream and now will stay put) and subtracted from the Holyoke count. You can see from the table that six fish have moved up as far as the Vernon fishway. None have been reported through the Bellows Falls fishway as of this week. Obviously, it is going to be a low salmon count for the Connecticut River this year. That seems to be a New England pattern. Oliver Cox of Maine DMR just sent out an update on Maine runs and so far they have only trapped 66 salmon at the new Milford fish lift on the Penobscot River and passed only one at the Cherryfield Fishway on the Narraguagus River. The run was expected to be low this year and the new lift is passing other species well—455 shad, 187,000 river herring, and 601 sea lamprey. The shad and lamprey numbers may seem low in comparison with Holyoke numbers but remember they are just starting out. The old Veazie fishway did not effectively pass these species so this is a new beginning.

Snorkeling at Leesville indicates the season is pretty much over. I saw a lot of sea lamprey nests but all but one were empty. However, the **American eel elver run** is in full swing. Thousands of young-of-the-year elvers (fully pigmented) are working their way up through bedrock pools to the eel pass in the daytime and likely passing at night. This is a bit late. Typically, we see the glass eels show up at the mouth of the river in late February or March and the same year class of elvers shows up at Leesville (rivermile 20) in early June. This year's run seems stronger than recent years. Speaking of eels, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) is holding public hearings on its draft Addendum IV to its American Eel Fishery Management Plan. The draft addendum offers several options on how to manage eels going forward, including some ideas on glass eel harvest. Hearings are being held in many states along the East Coast. A Connecticut hearing will be held June 24 at 7:00 pm at Dinosaur State Park in Rocky Hill. If you wish to see the draft Addendum that will be the subject of the hearing, go to [www.asmfc.org/](http://www.asmfc.org/) and under breaking news on the right hand side, click on the fourth item from the top.

The spring meeting of the Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Commission is tomorrow at the Conte Anadromous Fisheries Research Center in Turners Falls, MA.



*A worker at the Holyoke Dam Fishlift installs a crowding fence in a holding tank to push captured shad into an adjacent tank. This system is used to truck shad from the Connecticut River to other locations.*



*American eel elvers working their way up wet bedrock at the Leesville Dam, approaching the eel pass that will help them get over the dam.*

## 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> (Shetucket R., Norwich)	2,248	787	169	120	7	0	0	8
<b>Taftville*</b> (Shetucket R., Norwich)	10	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)	48	29	0	2	0	0	0	0
<b>Kinneytown*</b> (Naugatuck R., Seymour) (out of order)	0	1	0	0	0	14	0	0
<b>Hallville Pond*</b> (Poquetanuck Br. Preston)	-	47	Season Final Count		0	-	0	
<b>Latimers Brook**</b> (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)	-	17,003	Season Final Count					
<b>Gorton Pond-</b> (Pattagansett R., E.Lyme)	-	no counter this year						
<b>Brides Brook**</b> (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		265,969	Season Final Count					
<b>Clarks Pond</b> (Indian River, Milford)		90	Season Final Count		-	-	-	
<b>Branford Supply Pond Dam**</b> (Queach Br., Branford)		1,395	Season Final Count		-	-	-	
<b>Landon Dam**</b> (West River, Guilford)		886	Season Final Count			-	0	0
<b>Haakonsen Fishway*</b> (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	4	3,078	862	136	0	140	3	
<b>Bunnells Pond*</b> (Peqonnock R., Bridgeport)		9,031	0	0	0			
<b>Wood Dam**</b> (Saugatuck R., Westport)		3,456	Season Final Count		0			
<b>Mianus River Pond* **</b> (Mianus R., Greenwich)		49,081	29,424	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= 5/30 Taftville= 6/4 Occum= n.a. Tunnel= 6/8 Kinneytown= 6/9 Haakonsen= 6/15 Hallville= ??

\*\*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:

All runs along the shoreline are over. Many fishways have been closed down and today we have crews out shutting down other fishways and pulling the fish counting instruments. Note that we're shutting down fishways but we are still a week or more behind in reviewing the video data so the numbers may still increase. In fact, for Occum, we are now just beginning to review those images so we expect those numbers to start increasing during the remaining weekly reports. We have not received reports from a few partners this week and would like to hear from them over the next week to confirm that their runs are over and provide final numbers.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation just announced the recipients of round 2 "Hurricane Sandy grants". We are very pleased that a DEEP project to remove the Springborn Dam (Scantic River) was funded. The grant was not as large as we had requested but it will be helpful nonetheless. Several of our partners worked hard on great proposals to remove dams or build fishways and we are very disappointed that none of them were awarded a grant. I will note that of the \$100 million in grant awards, Connecticut projects only received \$8 million.

To see some fun video of sturgeon jumping in the Kennebec River in Maine, go to <http://vimeo.com/4223203>. This video was developed by Doug Watts, a well-known activist for diadromous fish in Maine.

**Glass eels-** Fishing Brook = 13,428; Mill River Eel Trap= 4,346; Greenville Eel Lift= 1,041, Lower Millpond (Old Lyme)= 61,101. Elvers are still coming up the Clarks Pond Fishway in Milford. The eel trap on Fishing Brook has been invaded with fiddler crabs! There were 300 in the trap on the 16<sup>th</sup>!

Speaking of eels—I had the pleasure of joining Captain John on the schooner the Mystic Whaler for a fund-raising cruise on the Hudson out of Manhattan over the weekend. The Mystic Whaler, which calls New London home, hosted a concert termed the Jib Jam by the Funkinships to raise funds to replace its jib. In the band was Chris Bowser of NY DEC from the Norrie Point Environmental Center. Chris works a lot with eels and operates eelavators and eel passes at Hudson River tributaries. They performed a song about eels that Chris wrote and it was hilarious. Later on there was a lot of eel talk on the deck. It was fun catching up with Chris. If you have a chance to see the Funkinships before they depart on their world tour—or you just see Chris at a meeting—request a rendition of "Not That There's Anything Wrong With That".

While I was in the City, I swung past 182<sup>nd</sup> Street in the Bronx to check out progress on that fishway being built by the NYC Parks and Recreation Dept. It was a Sunday and the construction site was buttoned up tight so I could not get a close look but the work has progressed since the photo below was taken in April. The concrete for the upper fishway has been poured. Can we assume this will be done by fall, Marit????

Speaking of eels once again—yesterday we convened a joint sampling effort between the Diadromous Fish Program and the Habitat Conservation and Enhancement Program to help evaluate a habitat enhancement project on the Pomperaug River. The National Audubon Society of Connecticut has a great preserve along the river called Bent of the River and they received a grant from our Department to install large woody debris structures along the river banks within the preserve to improve fish habitat. A fish survey was conducted prior to the work and now that the work has been completed a follow-up fish survey was needed. The data from yesterday's survey still need to be analyzed but the log structures were holding a lot of fish and it seems that the structures, which were completed last year, are doing their job. Congratulations to preserve director Leslie Maclise-Kane on a great project! Of interest to the Diadromous program was the capture of six eels. This is above the Stevenson Dam and this is the most eels we've documented at any location above the dam. This is still a real low density for eels so the dam is clearly impacting the population but it appears more eels are getting past the dam than we realized. FirstLight Power is testing a prototype eel pass now. In fact, we visited it with Bob Stira and others of FirstLight after our sampling was completed.

Here are a couple of shad and herring articles (thanks John Waldman for forwarding these):

<http://newyorkhistoryblog.org/2014/05/13/shad-the-founding-fish-returns/>

<http://bangordailynews.com/2014/05/22/outdoors/thousands-of-alewives-return-to-penobscot-tributaries-after-nearly-200-years-without-adequate-access-to-upstream-habitat/>



Work proceeds on a steep pass fishway at the 182<sup>nd</sup> Street Dam, the first on the Bronx River in NYC. This photo showing the fishway entrance below and the gap in the dam above for the entrance was taken in April.



An electrofishing crew samples for fish around a log structure placed in the river to enhance fish habitat. Below is one of the six eels captured and released (photos by Leslie Maclise-Kane, Audubon).