



**CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT**  
 Report Date: April 6, 2015

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>
Rainbow* (Farmington)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leesville (Salmon)	0	-	-	0	-	-	0***	0	0
StanChem* (Mattabesset)	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
Moulson Pond* (Eightmile)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
Mary Steube* (Mill Brook)	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rogers Lake+ (Mill Brook)	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
WestSpringfield (Westfield- MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Holyoke (Connecticut- MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Manhan River* (Manhan- MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
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>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>(last year's totals)</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>374,232</b>	<b>1,549</b>	<b>942</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>27,585</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>17</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.

## COMMENTS:

To cut to the chase—nothing is happening in the river yet.

The Connecticut River in Connecticut rarely freezes solid throughout the length and even if it does, the Coast Guard sends ice cutter up to free the channel. With no commercial traffic on the river to speak of anymore, there is no need to send up an ice cutter. The river froze everywhere for a while. Even the mouth of the Park River which has warm water coming out. Folks were posting video of trucks driving on the ice around the East Haddam Bridge. (Not only do we not recommend this but it is illegal in Connecticut.) By March 27, the channel opened up. The very next day the river was totally ice free. Now the river is running at about 40,000 cfs—about normal for this time of year. The run-off has been good. With all the snow, we have had a gently thaw and avoided major flooding. You can see from the data sheet above that only one fishway is open—the West Springfield Fishway on the Westfield River. Caleb Slater of MA Wildlife opened that today. The river is still quite cold and we don't expect shad or even alewives for a while yet.

Since there are no fish runs to report, we'll feature a new Connecticut River tributary fishway that was built over the summer and should be passing alewives this spring. It is the Tiley-Pratt Dam Fishway on the Falls River in Essex. This is the first dam on the Falls River and river herring have been observed at its base for years. The Nature Conservancy (Sally Harold, Project Manager) got a NFWF grant to build this fishway and two others (more on those later) and secured permission from the dam owner, Larry Timmerman, an avid angler. Equipment to build a cofferdam was borrowed from the Conte Anadromous Fish Lab, rocks were donated by a local company, and a work crew consisting of TNC and some of us took two weeks and many bags of concrete to build this pool-and-weir fishway around this four-foot dam. Restoring fish runs doesn't have to always be about large hydroelectric dams, FERC licenses, and multi-million dollar fish lifts.



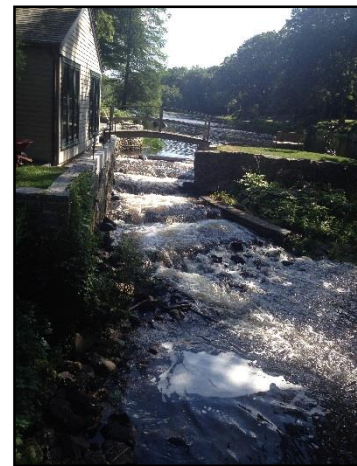
The Connecticut River at the East Haddam Bridge on March 27.



The crew picking rocks for the last weir in the de-watered channel.



The Tiley-Pratt Dam has two spillways and channels that convey flow down to the stream below the dam. The eastern one was confined in between rock walls and was full of randomly piled rocks. In this photo, the work crew is forming a base for a concrete pedestal to accept weirboards. A full stone weir was built around this pair of pedestals.



The project created four weirs with adjustable boards that each had about 6 to 9 inches of drop at each weir. This photo was taken at low fall flows after the project was completed but with typical spring flows, this channel more resembles a set of rapids that fish can swim up and over the dam.

## OTHER LOCATIONS WITHIN CONNECTICUT

<b>FISHWAY (RIVER)</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>Greeneville*</b> (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<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	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Kinneytown*</b> (Naugatuck R., Seymour) (out of order)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Hallville Pond*</b> (Poquetanuck Br. Preston)	-	0	0	0	-	0	0	
<b>Latimers Brook**</b> (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)	-	0	0	-	-	-	0	-
<b>Gorton Pond-</b> (Pattagansett R., E.Lyme)	-							
<b>Brides Brook**</b> (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		3,000						
<b>Clarks Pond</b> (Indian River, Milford)	-	0		-		-	-	
<b>Branford Supply Pond Dam**</b> (Queach Br., Branford)	0		-	-	-	-		
<b>Lower Guilford Lake**</b> (West River, Guilford)		0	-			-	0	
<b>Haakonsen Fishway*</b> (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
<b>Bunnells Pond*</b> (Peqonnock R., Bridgeport)	-	0	0	0	0			
<b>Wood Dam**</b> (Saugatuck R., Westport)		0	0		0			
<b>Mianus River Pond* **</b> (Mianus R., Greenwich)		2	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= n.a. Taftville= n.a. Occum= n.a. Tunnel= n.a. Kinneytown= n.a. Haakonsen= n.a. Hallville= n.a.

\*\*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:

The alewife run is on at Bride Brook—it began March 27 (a full month late!) with 40 fish. We just had 2,000 over the weekend and we're up to 3,000 fish. The counter went in right away but the ice cover prevented us from installing the trap. Dave and the crew hope to do that today. Water temperatures are hovering around 4 and 5 C (39 – 41 F). The only other place where we have suspected fish is at the Mianus Fishway in Greenwich. Matt has gotten a couple of ticks on the fish counter but none seen. Temperatures may be higher down there. Most of the fishways east of the Connecticut River (except Connecticut River tributaries) are now opened. Tim is meeting ECCD folks to open Hallville today. Most fishways west of the river are not open, except for Branford Water Supply Ponds and Lower Guilford Lake, which opened yesterday thanks to the GLIA. We are operating our roving fish counter at the Lower Guilford Lake fishway this year and Dave will be wiring that this afternoon. Note that it is on the table above in place of Landon Dam Fishway that was listed last year. This particular fish counter gets rotated to a different fishway each year to allow a quick snapshot of what is passing. The eel pass that serves as our ASMFC Index Station for glass eels is operating but no eels yet. Yesterday, Tim opened the Kinneytown fishway on the Naugatuck River. Flows are high at 1,200 cfs and temps are at 5 C. We will meet Sally Harold and a TNC crew to open up fishways on the Saugatuck River system tomorrow and throughout the next few days start opening other western fishways like Bunnells, East Haven Diversion Dam, etc. Some fishways such as Clarks Pond in Milford stay open year-round but need springtime checks. Long-time volunteer Ray Baldwin has already reported that Clarks Pond is in good shape and he is seeing yellow perch (that spawn this time of year) in the lower fishway. The fishways on the Shetucket River will be delayed from their usual April 1 opening. The Greeneville Dam Fishlift is inside a massive concrete bunker where the sun does not reach and it has been filled with a block of ice. We expect that to thaw out and open by mid-April and the upstream fishways to follow close behind. Connecticut River tributary fishways will start opening next week, starting with Mary Steube and Moulson Pond, then Leesville, StanChem and Rainbow (on the 13<sup>th</sup>). We hope to get the new Tingle Fishway operational by the 14<sup>th</sup>. More on that in an upcoming report.

Our friend John Waldman (professor at Queen's College in NYC and author of "Running Silver") is in demand these days. He'll be speaking at the Hudson River Foundation on April 28 at 10:30 but closer to us on May 17<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm at the Gunn Memorial Library in Washington, CT (sponsored by the Rivers Alliance and the Housatonic Valley Association). There's an article in April's issue of *The Fisherman* featuring the Haddam Shad Museum, operated by Joe Zaiantz. It will be opened for the spring season. The closure of all river herring fisheries in Connecticut waters was extended for another year by the DEEP Commissioner Rob Klee. Despite the uptick in Blueback Herring in the Connecticut River in 2014, there was not significant recovery in all runs to warrant relaxation of that closure.

Newman Fishway: Since there is not a lot of fish activity to report, I will report on another new fishway for 2014. In the Connecticut River section, I reported on the Tiley-Pratt Fishway sponsored by The Nature Conservancy. Sally Harold received a NFWF grant to build two Connecticut fishways and design a Long Island fishway (Beaver Lake). This is the other Connecticut fishway, owned by the family of the late actor Paul Newman on the Aspetuck River in Westport. There are five fishways downstream of this fishway (several built by TNC) and TNC removed the next dam upstream of this one. This fishway, which is not opened to the public, was designed by us (CTDEEP) and built by Schumack Engineered Construction out of Clinton. This was a great job and we are optimistic about its future and thrilled with the cooperation by the family. This is another good example of identifying priority streams and systematically working upstream to restore fish runs, developing important relationships with landowners as you go. It also underscores the point that even small dams can block fish runs and deserve attention.



*Newmans Fishway under construction. The right-bank pool-and-weir wraps around the end of the two-foot high spillway. A rock retaining wall can be seen between the fishway entrance and the spillway. The entire face of the fishway was backfilled with boulders to hide the concrete.*



*The fishway was opened on March 12 when there was still a lot of snow so you cannot appreciate all the rock work around it. There are two more baffles in the lower fishway that are not shown in this photo. Note the nice plume of water issuing out of the fishway entrance. This will attract fish that are stopped at the dam.*