

# CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT

Report Date: May 12, 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

FISHWAY (RIVER)	ATLANTIC SALMON	AMER. SHAD	ALEWIFE	BLUEBACK HERRING	GIZZARD SHAD	STRIPED BASS	SEA LAMPREY	SEA-RUN TROUT	AMER. EEL
Rainbow* (Farmington)	0	253	0	8	0	0	345	2	0
Leesville (Salmon)	0	-	-	0	-	-	0***	0	0
StanChem* (Mattabesset)	0	4	27	11	3	-	42	2	0
Moulson Pond* (Eightmile)	0	12	33	975	0	0	9	0	-
Mary Steube* (Mill Brook)	-	-	128	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rogers Lake+ (Mill Brook)	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
WestSpringfield (Westfield- MA)	0	824	0	1	0	0	107	0	0
Holyoke (Connecticut- MA)	2	154,039	0	24	6	2	4,295	0	0
Manhan River* (Manhan- MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Turners Falls* (Connecticut- MA)	0	708	-	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>2</b>	<b>155,132</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>1,019</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4,798</b>	<b>4</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:

Last week I said that spring may have finally arrived. This week I ask if summer has arrived! We have had temperatures in the upper 80s and low 90s this past week, which has pushed water temperatures up to 23C/73F at Rainbow and even higher at Leesville. Holyoke is still reporting 17C/63F. Stream levels are quite low and we need rain! The Connecticut River is down to 14,000 cfs. Holyoke is passing a lot of shad right now with daily counts of 25,000 (Saturday), 42,000 (Sunday), and 40,000 (Monday). West Springfield is passing quite a few and even Rainbow has added to its count. The Moulson Pond Fishway shocked us last week with three shad (a record) but now has passed six more for a record nine. The Eightmile River is a small river and the fishway is small (see photos below). Also note that the Turners Falls fishways are passing shad and Gatehouse has already logged over 700. That count is probably a bit behind. No word from the Vernon Fishway about shad yet. The blueback herring came on strong in the lower river this last week but few have passed at Holyoke. Strong runs were seen in the Eightmile (Moulson Pond Fishway is full of them), Salmon, a few in Moodus, Wethersfield Cove, and the Farmington River. Our crew helped net bluebacks in Wethersfield Cove and transplant them to the Farmington River (see photo in next section). Ken also ran 650 up to the Oxbow. The run is starting to pick up on the Mattabeset River, having been slow to transition from alewives. It is too early to say what kind of year it will be for shad and bluebacks. Stay tuned. Stripers are in all over and the run is building. A few big ones are showing up in the river. Lampreys began in earnest this past week. The run at Rainbow really got started today. They're fresh and moving straight upstream through fishways; it's too early for nesting. We've seen them move up the Eightmile, Salmon, Mattabeset and Farmington and Holyoke has already passed over 4,000. A few dead on the rocks below the Rathbun Dam in Lyme. White suckers are still running well in most places although tapering off due to hot weather. An amazing run of tessellated darters at Leesville!

NOAA and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission are requesting comments on their new River Herring Conservation Plan. To learn more, go to: [http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/mediacenter/2015/may/07\\_river\\_herring\\_conservation\\_plan\\_released.html](http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/mediacenter/2015/may/07_river_herring_conservation_plan_released.html)

Here's a fish habitat conservation story from Connecticut. Some of you old time Atlantic salmon aficionados may recall a gentleman named Appleton Seaverns. He was much more than a salmon angler—he was the headmaster for Suffield Academy for many years and prominent with the Bushnell in Hartford—there's a room named after he and his wife. But he was an avid angler and fished for salmon for years on the St. Jean on the Gaspé'. In the 1920s, his father had acquired over 200 acres of land along the Blackledge River in Marlborough—a trout stream tributary of the Salmon River. He operated his Blackledge River Club (fishing) for many years and managed the land well. Some of the best salmon habitat in the watershed was on his land and when we first started stocking salmon fry in the Salmon River watershed, he volunteered to let us start with his property. We also experimented with streamside incubator there. The land is a gem, tucked between two large tracts of Salmon River State Forest. Ap died a few years ago and after a while, the land became the property on one of his daughters, Mary Saner, an accomplished fly fisher herself. Just recently, we closed on a deal where she and her husband Buzz, both conservationists, sold the land to the CTDEEP to preserve it. This is a marvelous conservation victory and ensures that this highly developable land alongside of Rt. 66 will remain in its natural state and continue to provide good habitat for both diadromous and resident species of fish. I'm very proud of the family and our Department for making this happen and saving this habitat.

Eels: Fishing Brook= 6,140/67 elvers (picking up!); Lower Millpond= 4,667 glass eels/142 elvers.



*The lower section of the Moulson Pond Fishway on the Eightmile River in Lyme is a series of pools and weirs. This week the blueback came in strong and packed into the pools as they approached the steppass section. A great underwater shot of the fish and streaming flow over the weir.*



*After fish move through the pool-and-weirs at Moulson Pond, they ascend a section of steppass fishway and then pass through the camera box (lid off). The camera is at the end of the far triangular section. Nine shad have come up this fishway so far.*

## 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)	231	253	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)	2	20	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Kinneytown*</b> (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	0	1	0	0	0	116	0	0
<b>Hallville Pond*</b> (Poquetanuck Br. Preston)	-	27	0	0	-	0	5	1
<b>Latimers Brook**</b> (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)	-	4,438	0	-	-	-	0	-
<b>Gorton Pond-</b> (Pattagansett R., E.Lyme)	-							
<b>Brides Brook**</b> (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		218,076	<b>FINAL</b>					
<b>Clarks Pond</b> (Indian River, Milford)	-	0	none seen this week, but a few birds				-	-
<b>Branford Supply Pond Dam**</b> (Queach Br., Branford)	410		-	-	-	-		
<b>Lower Guilford Lake**</b> (East River, Guilford)		1,439	-			-	0	
<b>Haakonsen Fishway*</b> (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	0	710	0	6	0	150	0	
<b>Bunnells Pond*</b> (Peqonnock R., Bridgeport)	-fish have arrived but our camera is malfunctioning!					0	0	
<b>Wood Dam**</b> (Saugatuck R., Westport)		2,476	0		0			
<b>Mianus River Pond* **</b> (Mianus R., Greenwich)		7,327	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= 5/4 Taftville= n.a. Occum= n.a. Tunnel= 5/12 Kinneytown= 5/10. Haakonsen= 5/10 Hallville= 5/06

\*\*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:

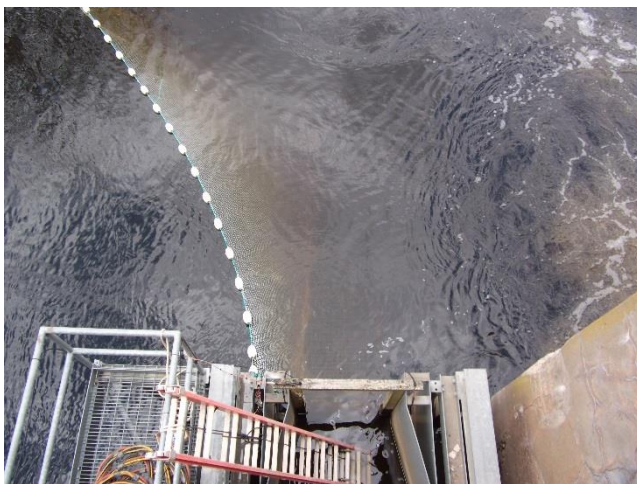
While alewives are still coming in down in western Long Island Sound, the run is over at Bride Brook. After this stretch of hot weather, the lake is full of downrunners trying to get out and return to sea. We pulled our trap and have discontinued counting as of today—the figure you see in the table above is the season final. Latimer Brook had a modest gain this past week but not much else going on in eastern Connecticut. In the midcoast, Lower Guilford Lake Fishway passed a strong wave up, Branford added a few, as did Haakonsen on the Quinnipiac but volunteer monitor Dennis Bennett is still not seeing them in the lower tributaries of the Quinnipiac. Farther west, not much happening on the Naugatuck but both the Saugatuck (Wood Dam) and Mianus (Mianus Pond) got a bit of a bump this week. Only the Mianus is starting to report a few blueback herring mixed in. No big surprise since the runs are later here and few of these coastal streams support blueback runs anymore. Although we should see some on the Quinnipiac. Our camera problems are still not solved at Bunnells Pond Dam but we hope to resolve that soon. There are birds at Clarks Pond Fishway, which means the fish must be there. I bet there are birds at Sasco Brook, but no observations to report. The fish were in last Saturday when the Greenwich Conservation Commission held its Open House at the fishway and about 40 people got to see them go up.

The shad run is finally picking up on the Shetucket River. Norwich Public Utilities has trucked a couple of hundred upstream around three dams. We plan to be at Greenville on Thursday applying radiotags on shad with Bob Stira of First Light Power. Not much passing at the next two dams, but the video at Taftville is waiting to be reviewed by Greenfield Community College students, who are not on board yet. In addition to the many suckers going up lots of fishways, we're seeing lots of trout go up the Hallville fishway in Preston. A good run of lamprey both on the Naugatuck and Quinnipiac rivers.

We're starting to hear some reports out of Maine. After this cold spring, the alewives have finally started running up there—Penobscot at Milford, Androscoggin at Brunswick, and the Kennebec at Lockwood and at Benton Falls on the Sebasticook. They're already over 240,000 at Benton Falls and it's just begun. A handful of salmon have been caught at the Milford lift on the Penobscot. No reports yet from the Merrimack River.

They're starting to see glass eels climbing the nets at the Mianus Pond Dam in Greenwich. On Thursday, the glass eels could not avoid the sharp eyes of Deputy Commissioner Susan Whalen at an undisclosed small dam in eastern Connecticut. In the middle of the afternoon, scores of glass eels were attacking the concrete spillway and looking for a way upstream. Anyone who is operating seasonal eel passes (like our friends with the Branford Land Trust)—now is the time to deploy.

Get outside—it's great. The warblers are back, the osprey are fishing up a storm, the apple trees and trillium are blooming and fish are running! And treat yourself to a shad dinner—or maybe smoked shad!!!



*The Tunnel Dam Fishlift benefits from having a guide net strung along the side and bottom to help steer migrants toward the entrance. The entrance of the fishlift is below where the ladder is seated. The attraction water is turned off in this photo. The water issuing from the hydro turbine is seen to the right (photo courtesy of First Light Power).*



*Another Connecticut River photo- CTDEEP and USFWS crew join forces to collect pre-spawned blueback herring to transplant into the Farmington River. Fish were collected by electrofishing and then put into our Shad Transport Truck for the trip. Over 1,000 fish were moved. In this photo, you can see I-91 in the background of Wethersfield Cove. Captain Sprinkle at the helm.*