

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT
 Report Date: June 23, 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. 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)	3	315	0	18	0	0	1,591	2	33
Leesville (Salmon)	0	-	-	0	-	-	0***	0	0
StanChem* (Mattabeset)	0	15	31	18	11	-	49	7	1
Moulson Pond* (Eightmile)	1	19	72	11,698	0	0	63	0	-
Mary Steube* (Mill Brook)	-	-	134 - FINAL	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rogers Lake+ (Mill Brook)	-	-	0 (but all 134 from Mary Steube trucked to Rogers Lake) - FINAL-						
West Springfield (Westfield- MA)	3	3,373	0	1	0	0	216	0	49
Holyoke (Connecticut- MA)	13	412,656	0	87	84	21	22,245	0	9,443
Manhan River* (Manhan- MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	yes	0	0
Turners Falls* (Connecticut- MA)	3	54,044	-	0	0	0	8,423	-	-
Vernon* (Connecticut- VT)	2	23,137	-	0	0	0	736	-	7
Bellows Falls* (Connecticut- VT)	0	0	-	0	0	0	130	-	0
Wilder* (Connecticut- VT)	0	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	0
Other (all sites)	0								
TOTALS=	19	413,239	237	11,822	93	19	24,138	9	9,514
(last year's totals)	31	374,232	1,549	942	475	61	27,585	4	17

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.

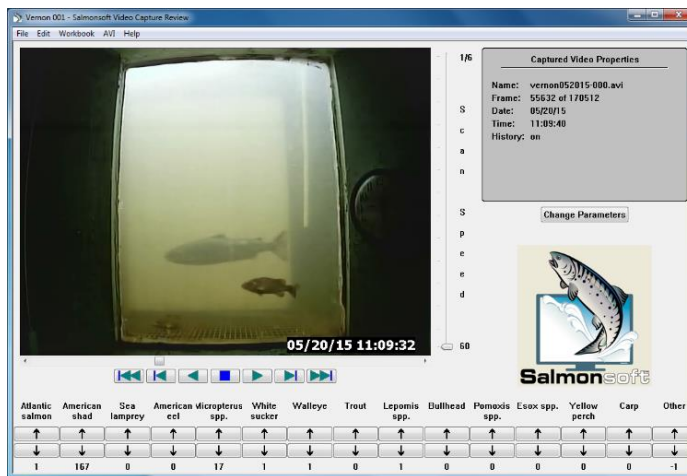
COMMENTS:

The year's fish runs are now coming to an end. Very few fish were added to any column this past week, although we're still waiting on some updates. Next week's report will be the last report of the season and we hope to have updates for most locations, although it is possible that some video counts will not be completed by then, even those the runs will have ended. The Holyoke Dam Fishlift closed for the season yesterday. This is a bit early for the traditional end of operation but it was done to accommodate the contractor on site who is working on the downstream bypass facility at the spillway. Downstream migrants have had two routes to take when approaching the Holyoke dam from above—either go into the canal system, where an angled louver rack guides them to a pipe that spills them into the tailrace, or go over the bascule gate on the spillway near the turbine intakes. The latter route has always been considered ineffective and the resource agencies have been working with Holyoke Gas and Electric and engineers to come up with a better design. Now, many years later, a new facility is going in that has multiple entrances at varying depths. Among other species, this is hoped to be a big improvement for sturgeon and silver phase American eel. This is a large and complex construction project and to keep the project on schedule, the Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Commission and its Technical Committee agreed to allow the fishlift to cease operation a bit earlier than normal to let the contractor get out in the river. Given the number of fish we have been seeing during the last week, I don't think this will have any impact on the season's numbers. The runs seem to be over.

This is the time of year when a few shad bounce around. Many of the fish that are coming upstream have already spawned. A few last lamprey were moving a few days ago but we haven't seen them lately. I'm sure they are all on nests by now—or dead. The water temperatures are still moderate so if there is a lingering salmon, we could see one at Rainbow or West Springfield. Such a late return seems unlikely at Leesville. I thought the supply of dead shad was over but we received new reports of dead shad in the Hartford area during the past few days. Maybe the rains of a couple of days ago washed them down from Massachusetts.

You can see a few more shad and lamprey have moved upstream on the river, passing through fishways at dams at Turners Falls, Vernon, and Bellows Falls, although no shad have passed Bellows Falls this year. Lamprey have been seen spawning upstream of Bellows Falls but have not been documented passing through the Wilder fishway. By the way, before it closed, Holyoke lifted one shortnose sturgeon.

Snorkeling suggests that many of the striped bass have moved out. The blueback herring are gone; the elver run is still occurring but less than a couple of weeks ago. Most of the resident fish that have spawning runs like white suckers and tessellated darters have moved back downstream, leaving the smallmouth bass and sunfishes. Much of the habitat in Connecticut now looks like it is in summer mode.



A screen shot of the computer reviewing the Vernon Fishway window. One adult salmon and one smallmouth bass (photo courtesy of VTFW).



I can't tell you much about this photo. It was sent to me without attribution. Apparently this sturgeon jumped on board of a sailboat in Essex, CT (rivermile 8). We assume the yachters coaxed the fish overboard. Perhaps after sharing an afternoon gin and tonic.

OTHER LOCATIONS WITHIN CONNECTICUT

FISHWAY (RIVER)	AMER. SHAD	ALEWIFE	BLUEBACK HERRING	GIZZARD SHAD	STRIPED BASS	SEA LAMPREY	SEA-RUN TROUT	AMER. EEL
Greeneville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	1,919	502	10	5	5	1	0	33
Taftville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Occum* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tunnel* (Quinebaug R., Preston)	36	21	0	0	0	0	0	3,700
Kinneytown* (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	0	1	0	0	3	136	0	0
Hallville Pond* (Poquetanuck Br. Preston)	-	32	FINAL 0	0	-	0	5	1
Latimers Brook** (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)	-	4,926	FINAL					
Gorton Pond (Pattagansett R., E.Lyme)	-No counter this year- fish passed							
Brides Brook** (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		218,076	FINAL					
Clarks Pond (Indian River, Milford)		34	0	FINAL -		-	-	
Branford Supply Pond Dam** (Queach Br., Branford)	538			FINAL-	-	-	-	
Lower Guilford Lake** (East River, Guilford)		2,414	FINAL		-	0	0	
Haakonsen Fishway* (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	2	1,289	159	15	1	198	0	
Bunnells Pond* (Pegonnock R., Bridgeport)	No counts this year- fish passed							
Wood Dam** (Saugatuck R., Westport)		3,032	0	0				
Mianus River Pond* ** (Mianus R., Greenwich)		18,642	4,313	FINAL 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= 6/21 Taftville= n.a. Occum= n.a. Tunnel= 6/13 Kinneytown= 6/21 Haakonsen= 6/11 Hallville= 6/07

**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:

As reported last week, all of the runs are over. These data probably represent final counts. Fishways that are still open today will likely be closed before the end of the week. We'll pulling cameras out of the fishways that will remain flowing over the summer—mostly for downstream passage of young-of-year. We've been seeing some passage of fish but mostly non-anadromous species, including smallmouth bass and a few trout trying to scramble upstream to cooler waters before the lower water gets too warm. We've been still seeing great blue herons at Leesville and other locations and Larry Timmerman reports that his black crowned night heron has returned at Tiley-Pratt in Essex but I suspect that they are now keying in on minnows and sunfish not river herring.

The numbers above for Mianus are final numbers (the counter is pulled) but the Town was unable to sample the run to determine the ratio of alewives vs. bluebacks during the end of the season. We know we passed over 4,000 bluebacks but there had to have been more, so that blueback number is not accurate. The total number of river herring passed was 18,642 but some unknown number of them were bluebacks. We'll hope to get everyone's more-or-less final numbers next week and provide a wrap up. It seems likely that the numbers from First Light at Tunnel and Taftville will not be final by next week because they are way behind on counts. The numbers at Tunnel may be only as of May 10. The good news is that its shad numbers may continue to rise. We've got seasonal employee Hillary Clifton on the Occum video now and although she will not be caught up by next week, maybe we'll have a few shad to report there.

If you think we'll be sitting around with our feet up, think again. Summers are very busy times. First of all, we will be working with our hard working partners on fish passage projects. We are scrambling now to get contracts signed, kick off construction meetings, and final permits in place. We're still arguing on the permits for a couple. We are also still short a couple of 100,000 dollars on a great dam removal project. If any of you have some extra dollars rattling around in your pocket and would like to be a White Knight on opening up miles of great fish habitat, get in touch. But with a little bit of luck, we could be seeing dam removals at White Rock, Straight, hopefully Pond Lily, Hyde and Flock Process, and fishways going in at Chapman Pond, Upper Pond, and two DOT culverts in Marlborough and Chester. Plus, our crew will be doing regular maintenance at several fishways over the summer.

Juvenile eels- Fishing Brook = 11,629 glass eels/98 elvers; Mill River Eel Trap= 10 glass eels/123 elvers; Greenville Eel Lift= 91 glass eels/1,301 elvers; Tunnel= 3,700; Scotland= 161.



At the recent CRASC Technical Committee, Dr. Steve McCormick demonstrated a 'fat meter' that measures the amount of fat in a shad. This is helpful when studying live shad for bioenergetics modelling. CT River Coordinator Ken Sprankle looks over his shoulder as the late Congressman Silvio Conte looks over HIS shoulder.



We had a good year of transplanting American shad. The Mattabeset River upstream of StanChem Fishway received several hundred pre-spawned shad from Holyoke. Here, the Connecticut truck has already discharged its load and workers are preparing to release a load from a U.S. Fish & Wildlife truck.