

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT

Report Date: May 3, 2016



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 visit the USFWS website at www.fws.gov/r5src. 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)	0	9	0	0	0	0	6	0	0
Leesville (Salmon)	0	-	0	0	-	-	0***	1	0
StanChem* (Mattabeset)	0	29	254	0	40	-	10	1	0
Moulson Pond* (Eightmile)	0	0	52	25	0	0	16	0	-
Mary Steube* (Mill Brook)	-	-	145	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rogers Lake+ (Mill Brook)	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
WestSpringfield (Westfield- MA)	0	94	0	0	0	0	80	0	1
Holyoke (Connecticut- MA)	0	17,148	0	0	67	0	112	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								
TOTALS=	0	17,280	451	25	107	0	224	2	1
(last year's totals)	22	416,355	237	11,822	93	21	24,573	9	20,305

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 the Connecticut River was 11 C (52 F), and flowing at around 17,000 cfs. The same is true today. The weather pattern is stable and the river isn't doing much. This week's rains may help some smaller coastal streams but so far it hasn't done much for the Connecticut River. The Salmon River is coming up and may actually surpass the seasonal average flow rate. It's hard to know what to say right now about the shad run. It should be picking up faster than it is but the water remains unseasonably cool. The netters are getting shad so it could be that river is full of fish but with the cold temperatures, they're not making their big push up to the fishways. Numbers at Holyoke, West Springfield and Rainbow are all low for this time of year. The alewife run is disappointing with most of our volunteer observers not seeing anything. Nothing in Pine Brook, Higganum Creek, the lower Farmington River, or the streams coming off Keeney Cove. Micaela saw a few in the Moodus River. Jeff in Essex found alewives above the broken down dam at the mouth of Falls River, heading to the new fishway at Tiley-Pratt Dam, which is exciting. Jim saw some fish in the Coginchaug in Middletown. One of our challenges is that we know the blueback herring are in the River. When volunteer observers see river herring this time of year, we're never certain which species they are. Bill Yule was part the rescue team when the eagle nest on Nott Island crashed to the ground. He reported five alewives underneath the nest, apparently fallen from the nest. Yes, river herring are important to eagles, too. The count for shortnose sturgeon at Holyoke is now 9. All released downstream. We've seen 69 salmon smolts moving down the Rainbow Fishway. More have presumably used the downstream bypass. We have two more days of salmon fry stocking in the Farmington River watershed.

We are working with Dr. David Post of Yale University on a study of alewives in Rogers Lake. David is studying the dynamics of how sea-run alewives will recolonize Rogers Lake after being absent for over 100 years due to dams. There is a land-locked population of alewives in the lake, too, and his study will investigate how the two life forms of the same species will interact once reunited. This week, our crews sampled alewives by clipping their fins and releasing them into the lake. Genetic information will be taken from the fins and allow David's lab to identify the offspring in the lake.

WORLD FISH MIGRATION DAY- MAY 21. This is an international celebration of migratory fish. The last one was in 2014 and this year it is Saturday, May 21 and we (the partners who work together to restore runs of migratory fish) are planning various activities throughout the region. We will have more information next week but we will have open houses at the following fishways: Greeneville Fishlift (Norwich), Rainbow Fishway (Windsor), Haakonsen Fishway (Wallingford), Mianus Pond Fishway (Greenwich), and the Holyoke Dam Fishlift (Holyoke, MA). Staff will be on hand to show the fishway and explain how they work and help migratory fish. There are viewing windows at Greeneville, Rainbow, and Holyoke where you can see migratory fish swim past. Hours are generally 10 am until 3:30 pm. Here's more details for Holyoke from the Connecticut River Watershed Council: *Celebrate World Fish Migration Day by joining CRWC at the Holyoke Fish Lift (Robert E Barrett Fishway) in Holyoke, MA for a tour @ 11am, The guide will teach us about fish that migrate in the CT River and use the fish lift to get past the Holyoke Dam, as well as work that has been done at the dam recently to benefit the endangered shortnose sturgeon. Also, the US Fish & Wildlife Service's Connecticut River Coordinator will be on site from 10am-3pm. Every hour @ the top of the hour, he will discuss status & trends of migratory fish, & other pertinent topics, as well as fish migration. Please RSVP for the tour. For more information, to RSVP or get directions email eryba@ctriver.org or call 413-772-2020.* New for this year will be a **mass paddling event on the Lower Connecticut River** where many of us will gather in kayaks and canoes and paddle up the river with signs, led by restoration specialists, biologists, and engineers. The **Connecticut River World Fish Migration Floatilla**. I can't do justice to this one—see additional attachment to this email and also check out the link below on the international website. Please come out and join the fun at one of these events!

<http://www.worldfishmigrationday.com/events/917/connecticut-river-floatilla>



A team from both DEEP Inland Fisheries and Yale University collects data and fin clips from alewives before releasing them into Rogers Lake.



Here is one of the largest alewives we've seen in years--- 335 mm or 13.2 inches.

OTHER LOCATIONS WITHIN CONNECTICUT

FISHWAY (RIVER)	AMER. SHAD	ALEWIFE	BLUEBACK HERRING	GIZZARD SHAD	STRIPED BASS	SEA LAMPREY	SEA-RUN TROUT	AMER. EEL
Greenville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	346	681	0	0	0	0	0	0
Taftville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Occum* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tunnel* (Quinebaug R., Preston)	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kinneytown* (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	0	2	0	0	0	3	0	0
Hallville Pond* (Poquetanuck Br. Preston)	-	7	0	0	-	0	0	0
Trading Cove Brook** - (Trading Cove Brook, Montville)	-	0	0	0	-	-	0	-
Jordan Brook** - (Jordan Brook, Waterford)	-	57	0	0	-	0	0	0
Latimers Brook** - (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)	-	3,583	0	-	-	-	0	-
Brides Brook** (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		119,414						
Branford Supply Pond Dam** 627 (Queach Br., Branford)			-	-	-	-		
Lower Guilford Lake** (East River, Guilford)		2,997	-			- 0	0	
Haakonsen Fishway* 0 (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	0	329	0	10	0	34	1	
Hanover Pond Fishway* (Quinnipiac R., Meriden)		1						
Bunnells Pond* - (Peqonnock R., Bridgeport)	-	1,200	0	0	0			
Wood Dam** (Saugatuck R., Westport)		30	0					
Mianus Pond* ** (Mianus R., Greenwich)		11,791	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:

Greenville= 4/25 Taftville= n.a. Occum= n.a. Tunnel= n.a. Kinneytown= 4/28. Haakonsen= 4/28 Hallville= 4/28

**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 coastal alewife runs are mixed. Some, like Brides, are way down compared to last year while others are only slightly down (Latimers), and a few are up slightly (Lower Guilford Lake). But remember, last year was our worst alewife year on record so being slightly better than 2015 is not good. We have kept hoping that the weather would break and the runs would pick up but they haven't. Many stations report a couple of hundred fish last week. Mianus Pond Fishway in Greenwich had one of its better weeks with 5,797 herring passed. But that brings their total up to 11,000+ and last year they were 18,000+ and a few years ago they were at 90,000. Furthermore, we suspect that some of those fish are blueback herring now coming in. We hope that will be confirmed by run sampling this coming week. Bride Brook had a quiet weekend but we had 1,000 come into the trap last night. But large numbers of fish already in the lake have spawned and are trying to get out so we will have to open the trap. When this happens, very few uprunning fish continue to arrive. All indications are that run is just about over. If we finish the season at, say, 125,000 fish, this will be third consecutive year of decline. In 2013, we had 363,000 fish. Environmental factors influence the run and the water is colder than usual for this time of year. But alewives are an early spring migrant and come in at temperatures well below the ~13 C (55 F) degree temperatures we are seeing now. The temperatures might delay spawning but not migration. Furthermore, our experience at Bride Brook is that the run is very in tune with the calendar and by now the run is just about over every year. That is not necessarily true in other streams in the state and maybe the next few days of rain will bring in more fish elsewhere, but we're not hopeful.

Save the Sound is sponsoring a celebration and volunteer planting event at the site of the former **Hyde Pond Dam** this Saturday, May 7 at 10 am. This is a great chance to see this site with the dam gone and learn about dam removals and stream restoration. We expect dignitaries including Senator Richard Blumenthal, Congressman Joe Courtney, and others. I'll speak about the value of the project to diadromous fish runs. Save the Sound will have lots of native plants to plant along the newly exposed streambanks so if you like planting, bring a pair of gloves! If not, come by anyway and say hi and see this restored stream. The address is 33 New London Turnpike, Mystic, CT 06355. That's Rt. 184 just north of the village of Old Mystic. Look for Seaport Auto. The Day ran an article about this project: <http://www.theday.com/article/20160422/NWS01/160429716> and there is a cool time lapse video of the project at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5bgxSZwqjic>.

My weekly Diadromous Fish Radio show is live on iCRV (www.iCRVradio.com) at 8:00 am on Wednesday and re-played at 2:00 and 6:00 pm that day and sporadically during the rest of the week. We had listeners email questions last week, which was fun. This week the show will be a bit shorter due to my need to give a presentation at the DEEP's Kellogg Environmental Center in Derby later in the morning.

EEL PASSAGE: Fishing Brook= 3,042 glass/106 yellow; Mill River= 2 glass/2 yellow; Greenville= 7 glass/175 yellow.



The first alewife known to have passed above the Hanover Pond Dam, on the Quinnipiac River, captured on video as it swam past the camera on the Hanover Pond Fishway, Meriden, CT.



This is the first year we've counted fish at the Jordan Millpond Fishway in Waterford. The Town owns the fishway and purchased the fish counter and we operate it. This is Dave Ellis installing it in late March.