

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT

Report Date: April 9, 2019



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/r5cnc. 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	STURGEON/ TROUT++	AMER. EEL
Rainbow* (Farmington)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leesville (Salmon)	0	-	-	0	-	-	0**	0	0
StanChem* (Mattabesset)	0	0	present	0	0	-	0	0	0
Moulson Pond* (Eightmile)	0	0	present	0	0	0	0	0	-
Mary Steube* (Mill Brook)	-	-	3,017	-	-	-	-	-	- -
Rogers Lake+ (Mill Brook)	-	-	55	-	-	-	-	-	-
West Springfield (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								
TOTALS=	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
(last year's totals)	2	281,328	7,326	1,079	99	268	23,955	91/0	2,083

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. ++Shortnose Sturgeon (Holyoke)/Sea-run Trout (other locations) 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 Connecticut River remains high and cold. Yesterday, as the air warmed up, a dense fog developed over the lower river, only to disappear as the sun set and the air cooled down. Nothing happening at the mainstem dams yet (e.g. Holyoke, Turners Falls, etc.) but Alewives are in the lower tributaries. We have not heard much from upriver volunteer observers including the crack team in the Salmon River, but that has something to do with the behavior of Alewives. When the Blueback Herring come in, they are wild and crazy party animals and they're splashing around and spawning in daylight and making their presence known even to river bank observers. Alewives, on the other hand, tend to hunker down and move a lot more calmly. Often river bank observers don't see any but if you put on a mask and snorkel (and wetsuit!) you discover there are many below. So this time of year, our Alewife reports tend to be commonly from tributaries where there are fishways and counters or video rather than streams like Salmon River, Pine Brook, Roaring Brook, Higganum Creek, etc. where there are no such fishways.

The first tributary on the river is Lieutenant River/Mill Brook, where we have the Mary Steube Fishway. We have a good run going and the numbers we show above do not include two good days when the fish counter malfunctioned due to wiring. We are excited that fish continue to move up through Mary Steube, Upper Millpond Fishway, and the Rogers Lake Fishway and enter Rogers Lake. This is the first year that fish have 'run the table' and we hope those numbers continue to rise. Next up is the Eightmile River where we have the Moulson Pond Fishway. In past years, we think fish were overshooting the entrance so we added to the rock berm at the fishway entrance (see photo below) and it already seems to have pay dividends. Cyber Fish Counter Valinn has reported 98 White Suckers going up that fishway in the first few days—more than used it all last year. And as of tonight, our friend in conservation, David Bingham reported seeing Alewives scattered throughout the fishway, working their way up, so we'll have some data for next week. No observations yet at Tiley-Pratt Fishway in Essex or Leesville on the Salmon River (not opened yet) but we opened StanChem today and Bruce reported seeing Alewives passing. No video review yet.

Bruce starts stocking Atlantic Salmon fry into the Salmon River tomorrow out of the Tripp Streamside Incubation Facility (happy to have their support for another year!). Kevin continues to haul Alewives and now with Tim installing video stations, our seasonals will start to review video along with all of their field duties. A very busy time of year. Finally, I'll add that while I listen to the rain outside, I welcome it. Many of our streams are uncharacteristically low (despite the Connecticut River being high) so some spring showers will help refresh the streams and the vernal pools for more fish and more frogs and salamanders.

Continuing our practice of telling you what went on last year after these reports ended: **The removal of the Heminway Pond Dam**, on Steele Brook in Watertown will not benefit anadromous fish (yet) but it is a great project to have been finally completed after many years of planning. This Town-owned dam was in poor condition, full of contaminated soil, aesthetically unpleasing, and a real degradation to that tributary of the Naugatuck River. The Town received various funding including DEEP 319 funds and hired Princetown Hydro to design it and Dayton Construction to remove it. It involved not just removing the dam but creating new riparian habitat with some pond sediments and the restoration of a stream channel through the old pond bed. It looks great and will benefit the stream immensely.



This rock weir helps divert fish over to the entrance of the Moulson Pond Fishway. This is the Diadromous Crew (plus 1) for 2019. Seasonal workers are in green and permanent biologists are in black.



The site of the Heminway Pond Dam (where the date stamp is). A small tributary enters to the right. The green is hydroseeding.

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)	0	more	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
Scotland* (Shetucket R. Windham)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tunnel* (Quinebaug R., Preston)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kinneytown* (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Hallville Pond* (Poquetanuck Br. Preston)	-	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
Jordan Brook ** (Jordan Brook, Waterford)	-	19	0	0	-	0	0	0
Latimers Brook** (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)	-	7,300	-	-	-	-	-	-
Brides Brook** (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		69,286						
Fishing Brook** (Fishing Brook, OSaybrook)		1,192						
Chapmans Pond* (Menunketesuck R., Clinton)		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Branford Supply Pond Dam** (Queach Br., Branford)	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	-
Lower Guilford Lake** (East River, Guilford)		46	0	-	-	-	-	-
Haakonsen Fishway* (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hanover Pond Fishway* (Quinnipiac River, Meriden)		0	0	0	-	0	-	0
Clarks Pond Fishway*** (Indian River, Milford)		0						
Bunnells Pond* (Peqonnock R., Bridgeport)	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
Mianus River Pond* ** (Mianus R., Greenwich)		1,263	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= 4/2 Taftville= 4/2 Occum= na Tunnel= 4/2*

*Kinneytown= na Haakonsen= na Hallville= na Hanover= na, Bunnells= na Chapmans= na **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. ***These are counts made by a volunteer when he is present and represents an index not a census.*

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:

A lot of Alewives came in during the past week, at least in New London County. We got over 46,000 in at Brides and have begun trucking fish to other streams. We are now seeing 10,000 fish nights. That run is not as visible as the one at the Latimer Brook Fishway and those fish went crazy this week and folks are stopping off to watch the spectacle (including our EnCon Officers, so don't get any ideas). We know Norwich Public Utilities is passing Alewives at the Greeneville Fishlight on the Shetucket River in Norwich but we have yet to download video so the actual counts will have to wait until next week. Fish are showing up in other eastern CT streams but still slow in Anguilla, Whitfords (Jon only reports 13 Alewives at the former Hyde Pond), Vargas, Poquetanuck, Pattagansett, etc. We're very pleased with the strong start for little Fishing Brook (thank you, Lake Rockview) but the midcoast counts are still slow to absent. We had some early season unexpected beaver problems at Chapmans Pond on the Menunketesuck River but hopefully those are resolved and we hope to be able to post some numbers there by next week, as well as get Branford and the Quinnipiac River on the board. We just open Haakonsen in Wallingford but Pat of New England Hydro Company has had Hanover Pond up and running for a few days and it has already passed 79 White Suckers. And great news upstream on the Quinnipiac! After much delay due to high water, Schumack Construction has finally got in to remove that big abandoned steel pipe that crossed the river upstream of the old Carpenters Dam and created a migratory barrier. We'll report more on that Save the Sound project in the coming weeks. Long-time Milford volunteer Ray Baldwin reports some winter damage to the Clark's Pond Fishway on Indian River but he thinks he can patch it together with bubble gum and bailing wire to limp through the season before we can get in to do summer repairs. We just opened Bunnells today and have high hopes for this season. Sarah from Greenwich reports that the Mianus Pond Fishway had a good night on Friday with hundreds of Alewives ascending but those numbers are still a little slow for the season. Even farther east, our friends from NYC Parks and Rec on the Bronx River report that they have passed their first Alewife of the season at their fishway. Note below that the glass eel run has begun and we're picking them up at our Index Station at Fishing Brook.

Water temperatures are still 50F (10 C) or lower but with this rain and hopefully some warmer weather, we expect many more fish over the next week. Hopefully by then all sites will be reporting fish. I'm presenting two papers at the 75th Annual Northeast Fish & Wildlife Conference to be held in Mystic next Monday and Tuesday. Next week's report could be delayed due to my busy schedule next week.

Eel Counts- Fishing Brook = 11,927 glass/32 yellow; Chapmans Pond= 0 glass/0 yellow; Mill River Eel Trap= 0 glass/0 yellow; Hanover Pond= 0 yellow; Greeneville Eel Lift= 0 glass/0 yellow. Occum= 0 yellow eels; Kinneytown= 0 yellow.

My weekly Diadromous Fish Radio show is live on iCRV (www.iCRVradio.com) at 8:00 am on Wednesdays. If you can't tune in at 8:00 am, listen to it at any time: www.icrvradio.com/programs/program/50.



In past years, winter storms sometime push tons of sand up on the Rocky Neck State Park beach where Bride Brook enters Long Island Sound. This makes us go out and dig it out so Alewives can come in and spawn. This year, the entrance looks great with no issues for incoming Alewives. Replacing the old rusty pipes with this new channel was a Save the Sound project several years ago.



Matt and Jake confer at the entrance of the Landon Dam Fishway on the West River in Guilford while Kevin sits on the exit to take the photo.