

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT

Report Date: April 23, 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/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	STURGEON/ TROUT++	AMER. EEL
Rainbow* (Farmington)	0	20	0	0	0	0	running	0	0
Leesville (Salmon)	0	-	-	0	-	-	0**	0	0
StanChem* (Mattabesset)	0	0	46	0	0	-	2	0	0
Moulson Pond* (Eightmile)	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	-
Mary Steube* (Mill Brook)	-	-	9,412	-	-	-	-	-	- -
Rogers Lake+ (Mill Brook)	-	-	238	-	-	-	-	-	-
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	20	9,702	0	0	0	2	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:

Rain, rain, rain. The Connecticut River has hovered between 80,000 and 90,000 cfs for most of the past week, approaching the two-year flood interval. I hear they are still skiing at Killington and other VT peaks, so there is a lot more run-off coming. The floodplain in Rocky Hill and Wethersfield is underwater as are the docks at Eagle Landing State Park. If the river rises more, the pier at Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam will go under. Holyoke Dam Fishlift is still not lifting due to highwater. Rainbow Dam is spilling and today Bruce trapped 20 American Shad in the fishway for a tour and then let them go. We haven't viewed the video but assume there are more shad and Bruce saw lamprey swimming past the window. The Salmon River is backed up halfway up the Leesville Dam. I passed 125 White Suckers there on Sunday but the water was too turbid to see if the Alewives were in. Volunteer Rowan Lytle reports seeing a few at the surface of the Salmon River last week, as did Stu Winkvist on Pine Brook. Stu also reports otters grabbing a few Striped Bass in the lower brook. Ken Sprankle with the USFWS sampled the Mattabesset River yesterday and collected 65 Alewives (80% males) and no Blueback Herring. He reports the Connecticut River water temperature is still in the 40s (F). The Fisheries Division announced that over 350,000 trout had been stocked into over 2,000 unique locations for Opening Day and many of those locations will be stocked 1-3 more times over the next month.

While we're waiting for the Connecticut River to heat up, we'll report on one last dam removal from the off-season. **Old Papermill Pond Dam on the East Aspetuck River in New Milford** was not blocking diadromous fish runs currently but someday when fish passage facilities are completed on the Housatonic River dams, this stream will be important for those runs. After many years of planning, design and permitting, this decrepit dam was finally removed this past winter. Sally Harold managed the project for The Nature Conservancy. The property is owned by the Ousatonic Fish and Game Protective Association, which uses the property for, among other things, teaching young people to fish. The dam had become a major liability and was accumulating sand that periodically washed downstream into the lower river where there is a Class 3 Wild Trout Management Area. The OFGA hired TNC to manage the project which was funded by a grant from the Housatonic Natural Resources Damage Trust (the settlement over General Electric dumping PCBs into the river). The project was designed by Princeton Hydro (engineers) and implemented by SumCo, a construction firm with lots of dam removal experience. Some sand was released as part of this project but it has quickly flushed out of the area and the Fisheries Division has stocked the stream this year.



Old Papermill Pond Dam before. The spilling water hides the heavily degraded condition of the dam. This springtime photo shows a full pond.



Old Papermill Pond before, taken in the summer when the pond was dry. Note all the sand and lack of gravel. The wall in the foreground is the top of a retaining wall. Note the overhanging tree seen in both top photos.



The left photo shows **where the dam used to be** shortly after it was removed. The only part of the dam that is left is that triangular piece with snow on it in the foreground. The right photo shows **the former impoundment** from the same view as the photo above it. You can see that overhanging tree in all photos. Note the presences of gravel, cobbles and placed boulders. All good fish habitat.

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)	6	433	0	0	0	0	0	0
Taftville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	1	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	33	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kinneytown* (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	
Hallville Pond* (Poquetanuck Br. Preston)	-	10	0	0	-	0	0	0
Jordan Brook ** (Jordan Brook, Waterford)	-	65	0	0	-	0	0	0
Latimers Brook** (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)	-	25,995	-	-	-	-	-	-
Brides Brook** (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		266,166	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fishing Brook** (Fishing Brook, OSaybrook)		10,920	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chapmans Pond* (Menunketesuck R., Clinton)		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Branford Supply Pond Dam** (Queach Br., Branford)	77		0	-	-	-	-	-
Lower Guilford Lake** (East River, Guilford)		268	0	-	-	-	-	-
Haakonsen Fishway* (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	1	391	0	3	1	56	0	0
Hanover Pond Fishway* (Quinnipiac River, Meriden)		1	0	0	-	1	-	0
Clarks Pond Fishway*** (Indian River, Milford)		10	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bunnells Pond* (Peqonnock R., Bridgeport)	-	614	0	0	0	2	0	-
Mianus River Pond* ** (Mianus R., Greenwich)		5,133	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= 4/17 Taftville= 4/16 Occum= na Tunnel= 4/16 Scotland= 4/8 Kinneytown= 4/15 Haakonsen= 4/21 Hallville= 4/17 Hanover= 4/22, Bunnells= 4/14 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:

The rain has both helped to draw fish in but hindered in getting them over some fishways. Brides Brook started the week out slow (we failed to trap enough to give Rhode Island their allotment) but then we had 22,000 over the weekend. Latimers continues to shine and we typically have about 50 below the fishway each morning. But other streams are strangely quiet. Jon still has only 24 Alewives on Whitfords Brook and not much happening at any other streams. Kevin reports the Thames/Shetucket right up to Greeneville and including Poquetanuck Cove is eerily 'dead'. No fish, no birds. Greeneville has started to pass a few fish (including some White Perch) but those numbers are low. But the river is still very high and cold. Tunnel, Occum, and Scotland are currently not operating due to high water but you can see they've logged some fish. Scotland has passed 52 White Suckers and some Yellow Perch. In the mid-coast, activity at both Branford and Lower Guilford Lake has picked up. You can see by the numbers that Haakonsen on the Quinnipiac River are building (check out the number of Sea Lampreys already!) and Pat up at Hanover has passed his first Alewife at the second dam as well as 175 White Suckers and 3 Brown Trout. There are a number of fishways, such as Hanover Pond, where the turbidity has made us suspect we have missed some fish. Equipment malfunction at Tunnel and Rainbow has resulted in a loss of video records, which also may result in an undercount. Further down on the Quinnipiac, Dennis Bennett reports a few herring in Waterman Brook but the other tributaries like Muddy River are quiet. Save the Sound reports only one Alewife so far at Konolds Pond. Joe Cassone reports no herring at Derby. Captain Ian reports close to 1,000 Alewives at the Mill River, a couple of dozen below the breached dam on Sasco, and a few dozen at Wall St. on the Norwalk River in Norwalk. No fish have been seen farther upstream on the Norwalk by the crew from the Aquarium. Also a few stripers in Bruce Park in Greenwich. Elsewhere- fish are running in the tribs on the Hudson, on Long Island, Rhode Island (a pretty good run going at Potter Hill on the Pawcatuck River), and in coastal Massachusetts. No reports yet from the Merrimack River and northward.

On May 15, I'll be giving a talk on the effort to open up the Norwalk River for fish restoration. It will be at the Wilton Library, 137 Old Ridgefield Road Wilton, CT at 7:00 pm. We will be having our annual Open House at the Rainbow Fishway in Windsor on May 18. The Town of Greenwich will be hosting an Open House for the Mianus Pond Fishway on May 4th, 11-1. See the attachment that I included on the email. Also on the 4th, the Quinnipiac River Watershed Association will be holding its Spring River Cleanup, 9- 12 and will provide gloves and trash bags to volunteers. Either meet at 540 Oregon Road, Meriden or contact Liz at grwainfo@att.net for more information. Captain Ian and 300 volunteers will be doing a Housatonic River cleanup on April 27 in Shelton and Stratford.

Eel Counts- Fishing Brook = 30,657 glass/80 yellow; Chapmans Pond= 161 glass/7 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.



The Tiley-Pratt Fishway on the Falls River in Essex was built several years ago at a private residence. It is the first dam on the Connecticut River tributary and for the first time we've installed an electronic fish counter at the top, thanks to the cooperation of the property owner. Two more fishways will be built upstream this summer.



Marc Rivas, a member of the volunteer crew from the Maritime Aquarium Norwalk clears debris from the Davis Pond Fishway on the Silvermine River in Norwalk. This nature-like fishway passes through the earthen dam through the two concrete walls seen in the top of the photo.