




them— striped bass, bluefish, tuna, cod, haddock, halibut, American eel, rainbow trout, brown after spawning, landlocked salmon, smallmouth bass, pickerel, pike, white and yellow perch, seabirds, bald eagles, osprey, great blue heron, cormorants, seals, whales, otter, mink, fox, raccoon, fisher, and turtles.

A single female alewife can lay 60,000-100,000 eggs, but as few as three may survive to adulthood. Adults make their way back to the ocean after spawning, and many return the following spring to spawn again.

Commercial harvesting rights are held by towns where there are sustainable runs of alewives. The harvest can generate substantial income for a town, and it is often used for the maintenance of fishways and dams.



Harvested alewives are sold for lobster bait. To get a permit the town must show that a run is sustainable by doing annual fish counts and taking scale samples to age fish. If a site has a harvest the word harvest, is listed here as  with the day and time.



2019

Maine ALEWIFE TRAIL MAP



*Celebrate spring
with an alewife
adventure!*



Maine's annual spring alewife migration is inspiring. We created a map to help you find locations to witness this natural wonder.

We recommend using a mapping program like Google Maps, with the local information included here. In many instances you can see a fish ladder or dam in Google Maps, satellite view.

Alewives are anadromous (sea-run) fish that spend the majority of their lives at sea but return to freshwater to spawn. Alewives (also known as river herring) are guided by their sense of smell to migrate upstream from the ocean to rivers, streams, ponds and lakes to spawn. Runs generally occur between May 15 to June 15 depending on water temps and river flows.

Pilgrims were taught by Native Americans to put a fish in the ground as fertilizer when planting corn. Those fish were very likely alewives. Back then nearly every stream would have been swarming with alewives just as the planting season arrived. When dams were built to power the industrial revolution alewife runs were decimated. Today because of many substantial efforts to remove dams and install fish ladders, alewives are returning to Maine rivers by the millions. Rebounding numbers of alewives mean more food for the creatures that eat

A Mousam River Kennebunk

Alowies and shad can't make their way past the first dam in the Mousam River, located next to Route 1 in Kennebunk, but in the spring you can see them schooling below the Kesken dam by walking down to the river from the park adjacent to Route 1. Bring your underwater camera!

B Presumpscott River Mill Brook Highland Lake Westbrook

The Presumpscott Regional Land Trust's Mill Brook Preserve provides a trail system along Mill Brook stream, to see alewives migrating upstream to Highland Lake. It can be difficult to see alewives underwater so use polarized sun glasses and search for places like riffles that concentrate the fish. Viewing is possible from bridge on Duck Pond Road. The best spots are two pools in Mill Brook labeled on the map at <https://www.prlt.org/mill-brook-preserve>

C Nequasset Stream Nequasset Lake Woolwich

Woolwich, just north of Bath, is home to a historic run of alewives into Nequasset Lake. The Nequasset fish ladder was restored in 2014. With active harvesting operation at the fish ladder visitors can at times, purchase smoked alewives. Take U.S. Hwy 1 to George Wright Road to Hummingbird Drive or enter Hummingbird Drive, Woolwich, ME in your GPS system. Hummingbird Drive is a short, narrow dirt road marked at the entrance by two concrete columns but limited parking at the dam. You may park along George Wright Road. The river is tidal up to the dam so visit at high tide. Kennebec Estuary Land Trust volunteers count fish: kennebecestuary.org/fish-counting. Harvest is Thursday through Sunday, near high tide.



D Androscoggin River Brunswick

Located on the Brunswick Dam, a large hydropower dam located behind Fort Andros, the Brunswick Dam fishway has a see-through panel allowing visitors to watch the fish pass over the dam before they are trucked upstream to reproduce. It is open Wednesday-Saturday in May and June. FMI: www.maine.gov/dmri/science-research/searun/programs/androscoggin.html

E Cobboscocontee Stream Pleasant Pond Gardiner

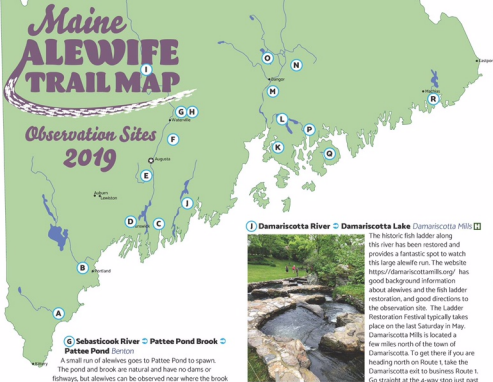
This fish migration is blocked by a small, privately owned tidal dam about one mile upstream from where the stream flows into the Kennebec. It is often possible to view the alewives just below the dam, using the trail on the Harrison Avenue side of the stream. The Maine Department of Marine Resources has trucked alewives from other locations to Pleasant Pond above the dam and a small run does return to the base of the dam each year. Before dams, this stream hosted millions of alewives making their way to the lakes and ponds that feed the stream. Read the book *Alewife* by Douglas Watts for many interesting alewife tales and check out "Upstream" on Facebook to learn about restoring Cobboscocontee fish passage.

F Seven Mile Brook Webber Pond Vassalboro

Alewives have had access to Webber Pond since the removal of Edwards Dam and the construction of a fish ladder at the Webber Pond Dam. This is a great place to see a medium size run and has good access. There is a boat ramp and small parking lot at the dam where visitors can watch the alewives ascend the ladder into the pond. Take Route 201 north from Augusta to Webber Pond Road. Turn right and follow Webber Pond Road to Dam Road and the dam. The harvest typically is Sunday through Wednesday in the mornings.

Maine ALEWIFE TRAIL MAP

Observation Sites 2019



I Damariscotta River Damariscotta Lake Damariscotta Mills



The historic fish ladder along this river has been restored and provides a fantastic spot to watch this large alewife run. The website <https://damariscottamills.org/> has good background information about alewives and the fish ladder restoration, and good directions to the observation site. The Ladder Restoration Festival typically takes place on the last Saturday in May. Damariscotta Mills is located a few miles north of the town of Damariscotta. To get there if you are heading north on Route 1, take the Damariscotta exit to business Route 1. Go straight at the 4-way stop just past

the Congregational Church. Take Route 215 north for approximately 16 miles. Look for a parking area just past the Austin Road on the left. Or, take the next left into the Fish House parking lot. From the fish house, follow the path behind the building; the harvesting area is ahead on the left and the fish ladder makes a right turn. The harvest takes place 3 days/week, Monday through Wednesday. Since the site is tidal, the harvest occurs for 2 hours in the morning and 2 hours in the afternoon with tides dependent.

K Bagaduce River Mill Brook Pierce Pond Penobscot
Pierce Pond, 112 acres, hosts a small run of alewives that run up the Bagaduce River from Penobscot Bay. A newly constructed, natural looking fishway is adjacent to a small parking area and a boat ramp. Penobscot is a small town just north of Castine. From Route 1 take Route 175 through Orland and south towards Castine. Stay on 175 towards Penobscot, turn left on Pierce Pond Road and then stay left on Mill Creek Road to the boat ramp.

L Orland River Alamoosook Lake Orland

The Orland River hosts a large run of alewives that meet their first barrier at the head of tide near Orland. From Route 1 take Route 175 (Castine Road) towards Orland and turn left just before the bridge onto Fish Pond Road. Go about 400 feet to a lane on the left that leads down to the dam. The run is harvested Monday through Thursday using a weir and pulley system. The harvest can only be viewed from the opposite side of the river.

M Sedgeunkedunk Stream Fields Pond Orrington

Several dams were removed along Sedgeunkedunk Stream in Brewer and Orrington, allowing fish to pass up into Fields Pond. There is a small public park off Brewer Lake Road just 100 yards or so from where it intersects Fields Pond Road. This is a very small run. The alewives might be seen as they go up a rock-ramp fishway that looks like natural rapids. There is a short, pleasant trail that runs along the side of the stream a few hundred yards down to a country store from the top of the rapids.

N Blackman Stream Chemo Pond at the Maine Forest and Logging Museum Bradley

The Maine Forest and Logging Museum collaborated with the Atlantic Salmon Federation to install a fish ladder at the original Leonard's Mills dam site. There are 17 weirs and rock pools that enable fish to pass over the dam. Visitors can view the fishway from the logging museum property. There is a small admission fee for anyone over 12. See www.maine-forest-and-logging-museum.org/river-restoration-fish-ladder-for-directions.

O Penobscot River Pushaw Stream Pushaw Lake W. Old Town

This large run of alewives migrates up the Penobscot River past Bangor and Orono to Pushaw Stream and Lake. Fish congregate below the fishway at the low dam near the end of the stream. Unfortunately, this is a difficult to reach location and requires a bit of a hike (about 1/2 mile) through woods. From Bemrock Road in Stillwater turn left onto Kirkland Rd, then left on Poplar St, then at Old Town Landing turn right on Woodland Ave, then right on Lakeside Lane, then right on Beechwood Ave to the area of the dam. Most of these are gravel roads and road signs may not be present. There are numerous logging roads that may or may not be accessible in May which could get you closer to the dam. The dam and fishway are visible on Google map, satellite view. Good navigation skills may be required, and a GPS would be helpful.

P Patten Stream Lower Patten Lake Surry

Alewives can be seen migrating up Patten Stream and into Patten Pond in the town of Surry. The Blue Hill Heritage Trust continues work to restore other fish runs. FMI: <http://bluehillheritagetrust.org>

Q Somes Stream Somes Pond Somesville (Mt. Desert Island)

Alewives travel out of Somes Harbor and into Somes Pond (also called Somesville Mill Pond) in Mount Desert each year. After a 2005 restoration of the fishways on the stream, alewives can now again be seen traveling into the pond. Parking is located at the Historical Society Museum, where there is an interpretive sign explaining the fish ladders. FMI: www.dowsestatefisherytrail.org/sites/somesville-mill-pond/

R East Machias River Gardiner Lake East Machias

Alewives travel out of Machias Bay into the river to the dam at the outlet of Gardiner Lake. The dam has a fishway where the alewives can be viewed. There is also a unique harbor here. The fishway enters the lake next to a small beach. Since the fishway doesn't have a pen, nets are strung out around the beach to trap the alewives and once enough are enclosed, the nets are pulled to the beach. From Highway 11 take Chases Mill Road to the dam. A large parking lot and boat ramp is located just past the dam. This is a medium size run.



Disclaimer: Information is provided here with no guarantees of accuracy. Any actions you take are strictly at your own risk. Please be mindful if crossing private property. But we'd like to hear from you! Please contact info@mainerivers.org with recommendations or corrections.

www.mainerivers.org