

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT

Report Date: May 14, 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 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	58	0	0	0	0	92	0	0
Leesville (Salmon)	0	-	-	0	-	-	0**	0	0
StanChem* (Mattabesset)	0	0	53	0	11	-	6	0	0
Moulson Pond* (Eightmile)	0	0	13	51	0	0	2	0	-
Mary Steube* (Mill Brook)	-	-	11,232	FINAL	-	-	-	-	-
Rogers Lake+ (Mill Brook)	-	-	285	FINAL -	-	-	-	-	-
West Springfield (Westfield- MA)	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Holyoke (Connecticut- MA)	0	1,479	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Manhan River* (Manhan- MA)	0	12,586	0	96	54	1	11	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	14,130	11,583	45	64	1	111	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 came back up a bit but is still around 40,000 cfs. The past week, the water temperature ranged from 8.5 to 12.5 C (46 – 54F), which is quite cold for this time of year. You can see that the Holyoke Dam Fishlift has begun passing American Shad along with other species but its operation may still be sporadic if these frequent rainstorms keep pushing the flow above 40,000 cfs. For example, they were not able to lift yesterday. The Turners Falls and Vernon fishways are now open but with so few fish above Holyoke, it will likely be some time before we see fish there. Melissa Grader of USFWS reports the Manhan River Fishway is opened and passing White Suckers but nothing else seen yet. We didn't receive as many field reports for this week's report but there were no river herring in the few tributaries for which we received data. Ken Sprinkle reports that he just sampled the Chicopee and Westfield rivers and picked up "modest" numbers of Blueback Herring. There was a big slug of Blueback Herring in Wethersfield Cove earlier this past week and we considered trying to net some and move them above some dams but the water was too high to effectively net them.

Micah Kieffer of the Conte Lab set some gillnets at the Rock Dam Pool in Turners Falls and captured and released 48 Shortnose Sturgeon, one of which was a tagged fish that had been lifted over the Holyoke Dam last year. These fish were up into the bypass reach of the Turners Falls project, spawning. I received a report (and the photo below, left) of an angler catching a sea-run Brown Trout in the Farmington River a miles or so below the Rainbow Dam fishway. He thought it was a salmon but it is clearly a brown trout fresh from the ocean.

Some news items- Dam removal helping restore Alewives in Plymouth, MA-

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USNOAAFISHERIES/bulletins/24432f0> A story about the pipe removal on the Quinnipiac River I reported on last week- <http://www.courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-news-quinnipiac-river-barriers-removed-20190425-r5krrvyrzfacrmdzooswccmt3i-story.html> A good op-ed piece on the Pebble Mine threat to Sockeye Salmon, written by our NYC fish friends, Waldman, Greenberg, Kurlansky, and Safina- <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/06/opinion/pebble-mine-alaska-trump.html> and a piece on NOAA's LEAP program as part of the International Year of the Salmon- https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/endangered-species-conservation/taking-giant-leaps-salmon?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery#noaa-fisheries-leaps-for-atlantic-salmon Speaking of salmon...

The Connecticut River Salmon Association (CRSA) received the 2019 Dr. Sigmund Abeles Science Advocate Award from the Connecticut Science Teachers Association and the Connecticut Science Supervisors Association at an awards dinner in New Haven last Wednesday (photo, right). This is in recognition of their excellent Salmon-in-Schools program, for which the Fisheries Division partner with them. The program distributes 200 eyed Atlantic Salmon eggs from our Kensington State Fish Hatchery to schools each fall and they incubate them in chilled tanks, monitor the process, and eventually stock the hatched fry into designated streams in Connecticut. This has been a wonderful opportunity to teach students not only about salmon but about fish, streams in general, conservation, and extinction. With the award, the CSTA and the CSSA recognized all the students the CRSA has reached for the 20 plus years and outstanding service and mentoring that has occurred. The program is in over 90 tanks in 60 schools and distributed in towns across the state. The CRSA will be out with us on Saturday as we hold our annual Rainbow Fishway Open House on May 18 from 10 until 3 at 400 Rainbow Road, in the Pequonock section of Windsor. Come by and see some fish. The shad and lampreys should be running strong.



This is a beautiful sea-run Brown Trout but I can't say much for the angler's fish handling technique.



The Presentation of the award to the CRSA. Left to right: CRSA President Tom Chrosniak, holding the award, Dr. Sigmund Abeles, for whom the award is named, Jim Carroll, Steve Gephard of the DEEP, and Dick Bell. Jim and Dick are Board members of the CRSA and were instrumental in launching and maintaining the Salmon-in-Schools program.

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)	590	696	0	12	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	5	0	
Hallville Pond* (Poquetanuck Br. Preston)	-	15	0	0	-	0	0	0
Jordan Brook ** (Jordan Brook, Waterford)	-	116	Final	0	-	0	0	0
Latimers Brook** (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)	-	26,390	Final	-	-	-	-	-
Brides Brook** (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		296,703	Final	-	-	-	-	-
Fishing Brook** (Fishing Brook, OSaybrook)		14,279	Final	-	-	-	-	-
Chapmans Pond* (Menunketesuck R., Clinton)		5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Branford Supply Pond Dam** (Queach Br., Branford)	373		0	-	-	-	-	-
Lower Guilford Lake** (East River, Guilford)		334	0	-	-	-	-	-
Haakonsen Fishway* (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	1	1,998	0	13	1	234	0	0
Hanover Pond Fishway* (Quinnipiac River, Meriden)		2	0	0	-	8	-	0
Clarks Pond Fishway*** (Indian River, Milford)		303	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bunnells Pond* (Peqonnock R., Bridgeport)	-	8,002	0	1	0	21	0	-
Mianus River Pond* ** (Mianus R., Greenwich)		6,027	1,843	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= 5/12 Taftville= 4/16 Occum= na Tunnel= 4/16*

*Scotland= 4/22 Kinneytown= 5/9 Haakonsen= 5/09 Hallville= 5/4 Hanover= 5/13 Bunnells= 5/10 Chapmans= 5/3 **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:

We have removed the counter and trap from Bride Brook to allow spent fish to head back to sea. The presence of the gear blocks their exit and the run is really over now anyway. You can see the crowd heading out in the photo below, left. We also have pulled gear from Jordan, Latimer, and Fishing Brook. The fishways are still functional, we are just not counting anymore. None of these sites support Blueback Herring runs. Many smaller fishways to the west had modest bumps in numbers last week, with the Alewives still running to the west. Ray Baldwin reports active spawning in Indian River in Milford and his index number took a big jump last week. Meanwhile, the Blueback Herring showed up in Mianus last week yet as far as we can tell the Alewife run is still going strong in the Quinnipiac. However, the water was too high to go in below the Haakonsen fishway and sample the run. Upstream, the Hanover Pond Dam continues to spill a lot of water and makes that fishway hard to locate for fish, although it is passing a lot of White Suckers and Brook and Brown Trout. With the Naugatuck, Shetucket, and Quinebaug rivers, there also is too much water to provide effective fish passage. Greeneville is operating and has added to its shad passage numbers during the past week as well as having passed upstream 15 Atlantic Salmon broodstock that were stocked upstream of the dam but high flows probably flushed them down and now they're trying to get back upstream. But even Greeneville is probably not as efficient as it normally is due to all the water. Anglers report the Shetucket and Thames are pretty quiet. Taftville is operating but there is so much spill, many fish must be overshooting it. Occum was open for a day or so and then shutdown due to high water. Scotland is lifting a bunch of perch, suckers, etc. but nothing diadromous. Elsewhere, the Monument and Herring rivers in Massachusetts are logging some good numbers. The runs are just beginning in New Hampshire and while the Alewife run seems late, the Blueback Herring runs seems early. Still no fish reported from Maine Rivers.

Eel Counts- Fishing Brook = 47,131 glass/169 yellow; Chapmans Pond= 9,783 glass/70 yellow; Mill River Eel Trap= 3,250 glass/20 yellow; Hanover Pond= 52 yellow; Greeneville Eel Lift= 0 glass/0 yellow. Occum= 0 yellow eels; Kinneytown= 0 yellow, Lower Millpond= 18 glass/0 yellow. The water is too high to effectively operate Greeneville and Kinneytown. The eel count at Fishing Brook is the second highest in the time series.

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. **This week- Tim Wildman on eels!**



After removing the fish counter at Brides Lake, a large school of spent Alewives crowd the weir and try to get out of the Pond.



This American Shad was found near the Chapmans Pond Fishway on the Menunketesuck River—a stream not known to host a shad run. It appears to have lost an argument with the local otter.