

# CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT

Report Date: June 16, 2020



This is a report generated by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection/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/r5cwc](http://www.fws.gov/r5cwc). For more information about Atlantic salmon, visit the Connecticut River Salmon Association at [www.ctriversalmon.org](http://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	508	0	0	2	0	3,622	0	0
Leesville (Salmon)	0	1	-	0	-	-	0**	0	0
StanChem* (Mattabesset)	0	0	63	18	28	-	10	0	3
Moulson Pond* (Eightmile)	0	2	107	150	0	0	14	0	-
Mary Steube* (Mill Brook)	-	-	37,888	FINAL		-	-	-	- -
Rogers Lake+ (Mill Brook)			2,842	FINAL					
West Springfield (Westfield- MA)	0	5,093	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Holyoke (Connecticut- MA)	0	360,199	0	762	64	358	37,357	5	1,703
Manhan River* (Manhan- MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Turners Falls* (Connecticut- MA)	0	21,403	-	1	0	0	2,478	-	-
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								
<b>TOTALS=</b>	0	365,803	38,058	929	94	358	41,003	5	1,706
<b>(last year's totals)</b>	3	318,707	11,308	5,113	366	207	20,479	20/0	0

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. The same for Rogers Lake—they first pass through Mary Steube and therefore won't be counted as part of the total.

## COMMENTS:

Holyoke Fishlift is still passing fresh shad, although the rate has dropped off and we are certainly now seeing the tail end of the run. Numbers continue to rise at the next dam upstream, Turners Falls, but those counts are still days behind. More shad passed up through the West Springfield fishway and even a handful still moving up the Rainbow Dam Fishway. In the next section of this report, we note that we are seeing racers (spend adult shad) already moving out of the Shetucket River but I have heard no such reports from the Connecticut River system yet. The Shetucket run starts several weeks earlier than the Connecticut, which also has cooler water temperatures than the Shetucket. Two weeks ago, there were still lots of Blueback Herring spawning in the river and the tributaries and back coves. Last week, Ken Sprankle of the USFWS got out to Wethersfield Cove to sample for bluebacks and saw large numbers of river herring fry along the edges. He just returned from sampling the Cove today and reported catching only two bluebacks. That run is clearly over. Except for a school of less than 50 in the Moodus River on June 9, none of our staff or volunteer monitors reported seeing any bluebacks this past week. The flow in the river is unseasonably low—comparable to typical summer levels. With no snow to bank and only sporadic rain that has been good for flowers but insufficient for streamflow, it could be a really low flow summer.

Sea Lamprey spawning continues in many of the tributaries. We've seen an unprecedented number of nests at Leesville in the Salmon River and the most in many years in Higganum Creek below the falls. I hear that the intrepid Andy Fisk, Executive Director of the Connecticut River Conservancy, was being served Sea Lamprey today, compliments of Neftali Duran, a local chef known for indigenous cuisine. He will be trying a couple of recipes on Andy and this whole adventure will be broadcast on a local radio station later in the week. Andy—tells us what you think of it. And if the radio station archives the episode, share the link with us.

Jason Valliere of Maine DMR sent along the latest numbers from the Penobscot River (Milford Fishlift) and it appears they're having a good year up there: Atlantic Salmon 723, American Shad 9,190, River Herring 1,932,857, Sea Lamprey 5,537, Striped Bass 88. Not a lot of salmon showing up elsewhere—31 on the Narraguagus and 23 at the Lockwood Dam on the Kennebec—but of course they don't have a way to count fish on many of their salmon rivers (no dams) so they rely on fall redd counts to estimate the run size. It is good to see over a half million river herring passing the first dam on the St. Croix River after the debacle of closing those fishways for many years due to misguided management ideas. It's amazing what can happen when you once again allow fish to reach good habitat.



*More Shortnose Sturgeon were lifted at the Holyoke Fishlift this past week. Each fish is photo-documented and inspected for wounds and tags.  
(Photo courtesy of Holyoke Gas & Electric)*



*River herring spawning is over for this year in the Connecticut River watershed, but it continues in northern states like Maine.*

## OTHER LOCATIONS WITHIN CONNECTICUT

<b>FISHWAY (RIVER)</b>	<b>AMER. SHAD</b>	<b>ALEWIFE</b>	<b>BLUEBACK HERRING</b>	<b>GIZZARD SHAD</b>	<b>STRIPED BASS</b>	<b>SEA LAMPREY</b>	<b>SEA-RUN TROUT</b>	<b>AMER. EEL</b>
<b>Greeneville*</b> (Shetucket R., Norwich)	3,152	133	4	38	11	3	0	5
<b>Taftville*</b> (Shetucket R., Norwich)	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Scotland*</b> (Shetucket R. Windham)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	31
<b>Tunnel*</b> (Quinebaug R., Preston)	5	0	4	0	0	2	0	31
<b>Kinneytown*</b> (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	0
<b>Hallville Pond*</b> (Poquetanuck Br. Preston)	-	51	FINAL COUNTER OUT			0	0	0
<b>Jordan Brook **</b> (Jordan Brook, Waterford)	-	203	FINAL COUNTER OUT -			-	-	-
<b>Latimers Brook**</b> (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)	-	17,569	FINAL COUNTER OUT -			-	-	-
<b>Gortons Pond*</b> (Pattaganset R., E.Lyme)		71	FINAL COUNTER OUT					
<b>Brides Brook**</b> (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		409,115	FINAL- COUNTER OUT					
<b>Fishing Brook**</b> (Fishing Brook, OSaybrook)		12,084	FINAL- COUNTER OUT					
<b>Chapmans Pond*</b> (Menunketesuck R., Clinton)		234	FINAL- CAMERA OUT			0	0	0 0
<b>Branford Supply Pond Dam**</b> (Queach Br., Branford)	187		FINAL- COUNTER OUT -			-	-	-
<b>Lower Guilford Lake**</b> (East River, Guilford)		373	FINAL- COUNTER OUT -			-	-	-
<b>Haakonsen Fishway*</b> (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	4	333	42	13	0	258	0	0
<b>Hanover Pond Fishway*</b> (Quinnipiac River, Meriden)		4	0	4	-	162	-	7
<b>Bunnells Pond*</b> (Pegonnock R., Bridgeport)	<i>fish in fishway/no estimate</i> (Operating but no videography this season due to COVID-19)							
<b>Mianus River Pond* **</b> (Mianus R., Greenwich)		3,661	3,281	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= 6/12 Taftville= 6/01 Occum= na Tunnel= 6/01 Kinneytown= 6/12 Haakonsen= 6/12 Hallville= 6/10 Hanover= 6/11

Bunnells= na Chapmans= 6/01 \*\*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.

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:

Upstream passage seems to be now limited to Greeneville Fishlift, where a few shad are still trickling in, and Mianus Pond Fishway, where 135 Blueback Herring passed this past week. Interesting—opposite ends of the state. Taftville more than doubled its shad count since the last report but the video review is still a few days behind so maybe a few more will come up. However, Kevin is reporting large numbers of spent shad moving downstream over the Greeneville Dam in the last two days. Hundreds of them were crowding the downstream bypass pipe during the day and Kevin worked with Norwich Public Utility staff to adjust the water flow between the gatehouse and the pipe and saw most of them move downstream through the pipe. Both our crew at Bride Lake and the Greenwich Conservation Commission staff at Mianus Pond are seeing large numbers of Alewife young-of-year move out and head to sea. Stream flows are dropping fast and we're closing the most of the remaining fishways in the next couple of days. Some of these young-of-year Alewives may need to get out now or wait until fall when the rains replenish the streams. Despite all of the young Alewives leaving now, researchers with David Post's lab at Yale report there are lots of young Alewives still in Bride Lake. It appears that there is a diversity of ages in the lake, probably due to the long, protracted spawning season. It appears we had great survival this year.

We'll close Haakonson Fishway tomorrow. Patrick is behind on video counts at the next fishway upstream at Hanover Pond because there are so many weeds the video recording is being triggered constantly so that he has a ton of images to sort through. Pages Millpond, Dolan Pond, Millpond and other fishways that do not appear in the table above will all be closed in the next few days. Speaking of Pages Millpond, here is a link to a local television news report about the fishway:

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nbcconnecticut.com%2Fnews%2Flocal%2Fnew-fishway-in-north-branford-making-way-for-a-better-ecosystem%2F2282037%2F&data=01%7C01%7CTony.Petrillo%40ct.gov%7Ca0a7fe238faf40f8609208d81079ee6d%7C118b7cfaa3dd48b9b02631ff69bb738b%7C0&psdata=Og8nf81NTbfbzJfAe%2BxtBnJQoa3PTworMewAugLSTmA%3D&psreserved=0>

Jon of Save the Sound had one last trap in at the former Hyde Pond and has caught nothing for the last two weeks so he is pulling that trap now.

The eel runs remain strong and we still have some eel passes to get up and running. We expect to get the new eel pass at Kensington Pond Dam (Mattabesset River, Berlin) running tomorrow. While the numbers of glass eels seen along the shoreline are dropping off, the numbers of pigmented elvers farther inland are sure to rise.

**Eel Counts-** Fishing Brook = 12,813 glass/114 yellow; Chapmans Pond= 45,589 glass/836 yellow; Mill River Eel Trap= 29 glass/4 yellow; Hanover Pond= 1,022 yellow; Greeneville Eel Lift= 2 glass/5 yellow. Tunnel= 3,195 yellow eels; Kinneytown= 0 yellow. Occum= gate jammed; couldn't get in to check.

My weekly Diadromous Fish Radio show is live on iCRV ([www.icrvradio.com](http://www.icrvradio.com)) at 8:00 am on Wednesdays. Due to the COVID situation, I call in rather than sit in the studio. If you can't tune in at 8:00 am, listen to it at any time: [www.icrvradio.com/programs/program/50](http://www.icrvradio.com/programs/program/50). They archive the shows.



*Are you tired of migrating elver photos, yet? But this one from Chapmans Pond Dam is really cool. Not only can you see them climbing the wet, smooth, vertical concrete wall, but note that underneath where the water is spilling off is a horizontal face (like a ceiling) that the eels cling upside down to get across to resume their upward migration!*



*Tunnel Dam Fishlift on the Quinebaug River in Preston has not passed many shad this year but here's a photo of one passing the viewing window (courtesy of Steve Leach, FirstLight Power).*