

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT

Report Date: April 17, 2018



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	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leesville (Salmon)	0	-	-	0	-	-	0**	0	0
StanChen* (Mattabesset)	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
Moulson Pond* (Eightmile)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
Mary Steube* (Mill Brook)	-	-	286	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rogers Lake+ (Mill Brook)	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
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	286	0	0	0	0	0	0
(last year's totals)	19	392,057	8,606	922	800	230	23,955	1/9	20

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:

Spring seems a ways off on the Connecticut River. The river is back to normal levels (~40,000 cfs) but that is still too high to operate the Holyoke lift. Besides—it is too cold yet for shad to enter the river. We know river herring are in the river but they're not showing themselves except for at the lowermost tributary fishway in Old Lyme where the Mary Steube Fishway has logged 286 Alewives. Yesterday, I measured the water temperature in Pataconk Brook (Chester) at 6 C (43F). That's quite cold for April! Yesterday's rains hit some watersheds heavy. The Farmington River at Rainbow Dam is near 6,000 cfs. MDC is dumping water on both the West and East Branches and Rainbow has floodgates open. We opened the fishway today but attraction is not very good at these levels. The Salmon River came close to 3,000 which is a "two year flood". Leesville is still not open due to staff shortages and other priorities but we expect to open it soon. There are Striped Bass chasing Alewives in the Salmon River below Rt. 151 but Rowan has not seen any Alewives up in Pine Brook yet. There are ospreys everywhere and in the lower river, they're finding Alewives. We have completed the stocking of Atlantic Salmon fry out of the Tripp's Streamside Incubator Facility in Old Lyme: Jeremy River= 20,470, Blackledge River= 13,777, Dickinson Creek= 20,336, Salmon River= 32,458.

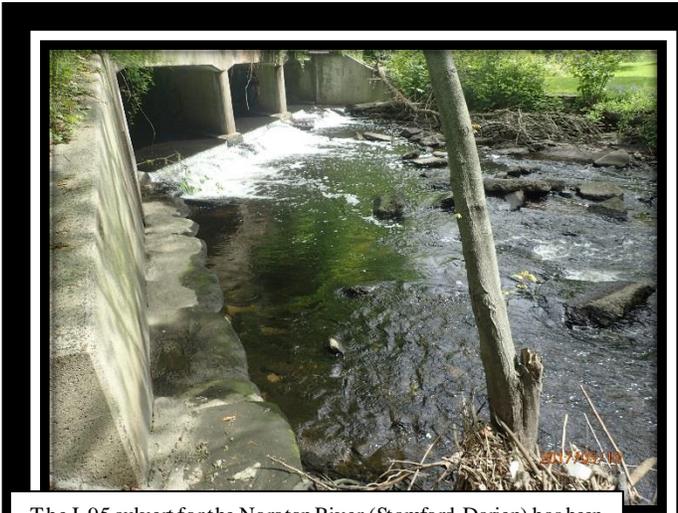


Left: Bruce Williams extracts a tray of hatched salmon fry from a Heath Tray incubator to load them in transport coolers.

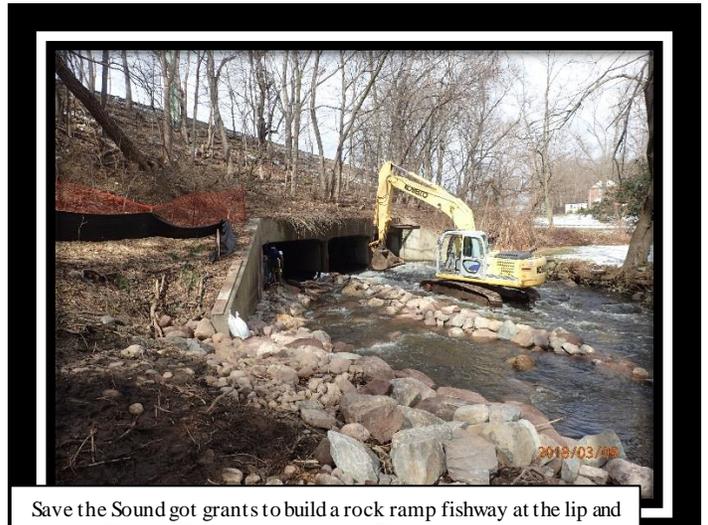
Right: Volunteer Caroline Lester is working on a blog about Atlantic Salmon for the U.S. Forest Service and came along to help stock the Jeremy River where the Norton Dam used to be. We hope to share the link to her blog when it comes out.



PROJECT REVIEW OF THE WEEK:



The I-95 culvert for the Noroton River (Stamford-Darien) has been perched and blocking river herring runs at most tide stages. Plus the flow is shallow and fast in the long culvert.



Save the Sound got grants to build a rock ramp fishway at the lip and install off-set baffles inside the culvert. This work is just now finishing and the fishway will be a featured event for World Fish Migration Day on Saturday. Designed by Princeton Hydro; constructed by Schumack Construction.

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	25	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
Tunnel* (Quinebaug R., Preston)	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kinneytown* (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hallville Pond* (Poquetanuck Br. Preston)	-	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
Jordan Brook ** (Jordan Brook, Waterford)	-	26	0	0	-	0	0	0
Latimers Brook** (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)	-	1,001	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gorton Pond** (Pattagansett R., East Lyme)		0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Brides Brook** (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		135,995						
Chapmans Pond* (Menunketesuck R., Clinton)		1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Branford Supply Pond Dam** (Queach Br., Branford)	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	-
Lower Guilford Lake** (East River, Guilford)		70	0	-	-	-	-	-
Haakonsen Fishway* (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	0	67	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hanover Pond Fishway* (Quinnipiac River, Meriden)		0	0	0	-	0	-	0
Bunnells Pond* (Pegonnock R., Bridgeport)	-	12	0	0	0	0	0	-
Wood Dam** (Saugatuck R., Westport)		0	0	-	-	-	-	-
Mianus River Pond* ** (Mianus R., Greenwich)		20,465	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= n.a. Taftville= n.a. Occum= n.a. Tunnel= n.a. Kinneytown= n.a. Haakonsen= 4/11 Hallville= 4/9 Hanover= n.a.
Bunnells= 4/12

**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:

The same report as last week; the same report as this time last year: the cool weather is keeping the fish runs from really ramping up. We're seeing decent numbers in Brides and Mianus but all other locations are just seeing a few here and there. However, I'll alert every one now that we're going to be lagging behind in our fish counts this season. We don't have our full complement of seasonal workers and we're scrambling to keep up with everything. Video review is time consuming and we will rarely be current every week. For example, we have yet to look at Greenville video. Those numbers have been reported to us by Jeff Lortie of Norwich Public Utilities based on what they see in the hopper from their camera. While we have only counted 12 at Bunnells Pond, the fishway was loaded with Alewives when we were over there so we expect those numbers to climb quickly. We also want to put in at least one if not two roving fish counters at other fishways but haven't had time yet.

Other random reports- We've seen a Brook Trout on the Hallville Fishway video but no Alewives yet. Ray Baldwin has not yet seen fish at Clarks Pond on the Indian River in Milford but Kevin Mace has seen some Alewives in the Pattagansett River near Gorton Pond in East Lyme. Save the Sound monitor Jon is up to 368 Alewives on Whitfords Brook (Stonington) but Save the Sound monitor Greg has not seen any yet on West River (Woodbridge). Captain Ian saw about 50 Alewives in the Mill River (Southport) but nowhere else in Fairfield County. No report from the Norwalk or Silvermine rivers. No report this week from The Nature Conservancy at the Wood Dam Fishway on the Saugatuck River but I think they have water flowing down the fishway now. Occum Fishway is not opened yet but no anadromous fish have been reported passing through the downstream Taftville Fishway yet, so no loss.

This morning we received a report that Monday's storm had washed in tons of sand on Rocky Neck beach and totally filled in the mouth of



Bride Brook. I investigated in the morning and found little trace of the channel through the beach. The brook was blocked and backing up, soon to inundate parking lots at the state park and eventually Rt. 156. We mobilized our crew with that of the State Park and dug a pilot channel through the sand but that didn't open it up. Next we tried a water pump (see photo below) and that didn't work. Tomorrow we'll meet staff from the Wildlife Division with a backhoe and hopefully open it up. There were lots of Alewives milling around upstream, not sure where to go due to the lack of current. There were likely lots of fish in Long Island Sound trying to get it. This is a bad time of year to have this kind of blockage to our premier Alewife run in the state.

We had a strong run of glass eels at our Fishing Brook trap this morning with over 10,000 captured. Staff performed mandated biological sampling on a small subsample of that catch before returning the rest to the stream. Sampling includes length and weight measurement and assessment of the degree of pigmentation (see photo below). When glass eels enter fresh from saltwater, they are completely clear. As they stay in freshwater, they take on pigment until at some point they are a fully pigmented (greenish) elver. By assigning the eels to a standardized pigment class, information can be gained on how long they have been in freshwater.

Glass eels- Fishing Brook = 10,620/ glass/25 yellow; Chapmans Pond= operational but no catch yet; Mill River Eel Trap= not operational yet; Greenville Eel Lift= not operational yet; Lower Millpond (Old Lyme)= not operational yet.

My weekly Diadromous Fish Radio show is live on iCRV (www.iCRVradio.com) at 8:00 am on Wednesday and re-played at 3:00 and 7:00 pm that day 8 am on Saturday. iCRV now archives shows so if you miss one, you can go online and click on "Outdoors" and the "Fishing" and find past shows to listen to.



Biological sampling of glass eels includes assessing their degree of pigmentation. Above, seasonal worker Shannon Simpson looks at eels under a microscope.



Dave Ellis (right) with seasonal worker Peter Grundy uses a gas-powered water pump to try to blast a channel through the Rocky Neck beach to allow Bride Brook to flow to Long Island Sound. The channel where they are standing is normally three feet deeper and lined with rocks.

