

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT

Report Date: April 24, 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
StanChem* (Mattabeset)	0	0	283	0	0	-	0	1	0
Moulson Pond* (Eightmile)	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	-
Mary Steube* (Mill Brook)	-	-	1,586	-	-	-	-	-	-
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	1,876	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.

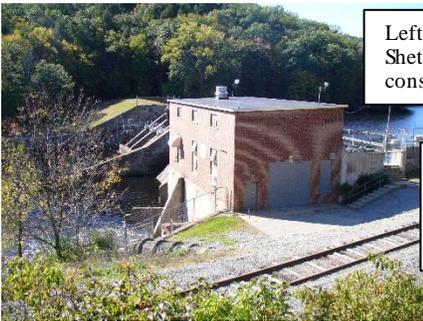
*There is a video camera that records passage. There is a considerable lag between the date a tape is recorded and when staff is able to count fish from the tape, so these numbers will not represent up-to-date counts until after the end of spring season.** Population estimates based on end-of-the-season 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:

The Connecticut River is still muddy, and cold with lots of logs and debris floating down but it is actually below average for flow—at 33,000 cfs. I measured the water temperature at Haddam on Sunday at 9 C (48 F), which is supposed to be too cold for shad but the next day Saybrook Seafood was advertising Connecticut River shad, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service reported catching a few shad in the Mattabeset River and that some anglers were catching shad in the lower Farmington River. The Holyoke Dam Fishlift began operation for the season yesterday but no fish were lifted. Not much action at Rainbow yet but StanChem is passing a few fish, including one sea-run trout. Not much other than a few suckers seen in the lower river tributaries, although we have more reports of Alewife below the Rt. 151 bridge on the Salmon River. Rowan reports the stripers he is seeing are too small to eat the adult Alewives. The suckers are moving up at Moulson Pond and Leesville fishways.

We had a great day for World Fish Migration Day. I started the day at Eagle Landing State Park on the river in Haddam and joined by Commissioner Klee, Deputy Commissioner Whalen, Director Pete Aarrestad and other enthusiastic fans of migratory fish. More on that in the separate attachment. Afterwards, Commissioner Klee and I traveled to the Scotland Dam on the Shetucket River in Windham to celebrate WFMD by having the Commissioner preside over the ribbon cutting of the new multi-million dollar fishlift built by FirstLight Power over the winter. And that is the subject of our weekly “Fish Passage Project From Over the Winter”.

Scotland Dam is the fourth dam up on the Shetucket River and all of the lower three dams (Greenville, Taftville, Occum) have fishways. Scotland recently underwent FERC relicensing and conditions of the new license and DEEP permits included upstream & downstream fish passage, expanded eel passage, and run-of-river operation (no more storage-and-release, which causes the river level to fluctuate abruptly). To accomplish this, FirstLight Power installed a modern, adjustable turbine and constructed a fish lift. The site had considerable constraints including a nearby active rail line and physical limitations of the powerhouse. The solution was to have the hopper lift the fish well above headpond level and dump them into a pipe that slopes downward to the headpond at a modest slope over 250 feet. Fish enjoy a water slide (free of charge!) and slide into the river upstream of the dam while being video-taped to allow enumeration. It may be the first of its kind on the East Coast. FirstLight will be working with the DEEP, the USFWS, and NOAA to evaluate this lift over the next three seasons and we will soon be hauling shad up from Greenville to assist with this effort, including tagging studies.



Left: The Scotland Dam on the Shetucket River prior to the construction of the fishlift.



Right: The newly completed fishlift showing the long discharge pipe alongside the powerhouse.



The entrance of the fishlift at river level below. The water enters the river below the person with the blue jacket. The large pipe delivers extra attraction water to the fishway.



DEEP Commissioner Rob Klee cutting the ribbon of the Scotland Dam Fishlift just before its first lift of the day. Windham Mayor Victor Funderburk looks on from the right.

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	1	0	0
Hallville Pond* (Poquetanuck Br. Preston)	-	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
Jordan Brook ** (Jordan Brook, Waterford)	-	121	0	0	-	0	0	0
Latimers Brook** (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)	-	1,748	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gorton Pond** (Pattagansett R., East Lyme)		0	no counter this year, alewives seen			-	-	
Brides Brook** (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		152,211						
Chapmans Pond* (Menunketesuck R., Clinton)		1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Branford Supply Pond Dam** (Queach Br., Branford)	457		0	0	-	-	-	-
Lower Guilford Lake** (East River, Guilford)		192	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)		5,000	0	-	-	-	-	-
Mianus River Pond* ** (Mianus R., Greenwich)		25,592	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= 4/23
Bunnells= 4/15*

******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 runs are starting to pick up now. We're seeing decent numbers in Brides and Mianus, which picked up another 5,000 fish this past week. You can see that most sites are reporting passing Alewives. We have not been able to view Greenville video and we know that number is not accurate and we're waiting on updates from FirstLight for Taftville and Tunnel but suspect they have been passing some fish, as well. Norwich Public Utilities is just training its seasonal worker for Occum and we hope to have a report from there next week. We also hope to add Scotland Fishlift (see photos in previous section) to the tally sheet. Tom Cleveland was swinging by Latimers Brook and saw a large school of Alewives exiting that fishway and they were probably in addition to the numbers posted. We don't have data to report for Kinneytown yet but as Tim was installing a new camera there, a Sea Lamprey swam past the window—the first counted anywhere this season. We have lost some data at Kinneytown due to a bad camera but should get some images for next week. No Alewives through Hanover yet but it's passing white suckers and brook trout.

Other reports - Lauren reports a couple of schools of river herring in the lower Housatonic, along with osprey and eagles. And there's a report of 63 Black Crowned Night Herons at Beardsley Zoo on the Pequonock River! That's a lot! Obviously drawn to the river by the Alewife run and the Bunnells Pond Fishway is having a strong start to its run. That number will rise—the river is full of scales. Ray has seen Alewives in the lower part of the Clarks Pond Fishway in Milford and is doing temporary patches to the pool-and-weir fishway to get us through the season. Jon of *Save the Sound* continues to log a steady stream of Alewives coming through the old Hyde Pond area on Whitford Brook in Stonington and Greg of *Save the Sound* got his first Alewife on the West River today. The Yale University study of Alewives in Rogers Lake continues and our team has transplanted 3,392 Alewives from Bride Brook to Rogers Lake to support the study. I forgot to report last week that NYC Parks and Rec reported passing their first Alewife of the season going up the Bronx River fishway on April 11 (see window shot below). The run at the Peconic River on Long Island is up to 20,000 (Hey, anyone out there have data for the Beaver Lake Fishway?) and Gilbert Stuart in RI is over 30,000.

Last week I reported the sand blockage at the mouth of Bride Brook. The next day, staff from the Wildlife Division came down with an excavator and was able to open it up. After that, all the backed up water flushed the remaining sand and by the weekend, you couldn't tell it was ever there. We counted 25,000 alewives coming up the next day and over this last weekend we had an additional 60,000 fish. Thanks to Roger and Steve of the Wildlife Division and, of course, Park Manager Gary.

We had another wave of glass eels at our Fishing Brook trap yesterday with State Senator Craig Minor in attendance to learn more about our eel conservation efforts. We also visited the eel pass at Chapmans Pond in Clinton where we logged our first glass eels of the season.

Glass eels- Fishing Brook = 13,351 glass/32 yellow; Chapmans Pond= 12 glass; 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.



In order to get good count data from video systems, the viewing windows must be kept clean. Seasonal worker Kirk McPherson cleaned up the window at the Haakonsen Fishway before the weekend.



Dave Ellis installing the electronic fish counter into the locked cabinet at the Branford Water Supply Pond Fishway on Queach Brook in Branford.



First Alewife of 2018 at the Bronx River!