

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT

Report Date: May 31, 2016



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	SEA-RUN TROUT	AMER. EEL
Rainbow* (Farmington)	0	150	0	0	0	0	416	2	0
Leesville (Salmon)	0	-	0	some below	-	-	0***	1	0
StanChem* (Mattabeset)	0	36	303	0	87	-	12	3	0
Moulson Pond* (Eightmile)	0	7	83	2,948	0	0	24	0	-
Mary Steube* (Mill Brook)	-	-	406	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rogers Lake+ (Mill Brook)	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
WestSpringfield (Westfield- MA)	0	5,204	0	0	0	0	323	0	1
Holyoke (Connecticut- MA)	1	344,020	0	113	460	0	32,500	SNS= 20	0
Manhan River* (Manhan- MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
Turners Falls* (Connecticut- MA)	0	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=	1	349,417	792	3,062	547	0	33,278	5	1
(last year's totals)	22	416,355	237	11,822	93	21	24,573	9	20,305

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.

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:

Holyoke continued to pass shad daily, although at a lower rate—mostly single digit thousands. While the number lifted at Holyoke has not surpassed last year's numbers, it has exceeded the long-term average. The water temperature remains close to normal—maybe a little cool-- for this time of year (22C /72F), although the temperatures in the tributaries are much higher, up to 24 and 25 C at times (74 – 77 F). That really hot weather warmed things up and although it did not pick up the pace for the shad, it lit a fire under the Sea Lamprey. We reported last week that the run was abnormally low but in the past week around 26,000 lamprey were passed at Holyoke. That's more than were passed all last year. It was an incredible week and one day when we were at Holyoke to collect shad it seemed like there were more lamprey than shad. We did see a bump at Rainbow and other locations but not to the extent seen at Holyoke. We did observe active spawning at Leesville on Thursday with many attendant spottail and common shiners as well as eels ready to gobble down the eggs. The shad netters have ended their season at the mouth of the river and if the upriver netters have not done so yet, it is probably happening soon. The blueback herring run seems just about over. Our volunteers are not reporting much. A few in the Salmon, Moodus, and Pine brook but no reports from other streams. Most of the fish in Ken Sprankle's electrofishing samples are spent. While data need to be reviewed, it appears as though it has been a very poor blueback herring year—again.

We have begun to truck shad from the Holyoke lift to various streams in Connecticut targeted for restoration, such as the Farmington, the Naugatuck, the Quinnipiac, etc.

The first salmon of the season showed up at the Holyoke Dam Fishlift. There have been other unconfirmed observations but no others entering a fishway trap yet. In the past during the restoration program, the peak of the return was always during the Memorial Day season. While we can say that it has been a strange year and the mountain laurel has not bloomed yet, the salmon are generally more loyal to the calendar rather than the conditions so I think it is safe to conclude the returns this year will be quite low. The elver run this past week was amazing—at least in some locations. See the photo below and to see a video taken by Sally Harold of eels climbing rocks, go to TNC's website- <https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=connecticut%20nature%20conservancy#>

You can see by the font color above that we are starting to close smaller fishways that specialize in mostly river herring. We pulled the Moulson Pond video recording equipment due to a bad ant infestation in the equipment locker. If we can defeat it, we may re-install but the runs there are about over anyway. Still no data from upriver fishways even though we know they're passing shad and probably now lamprey.



American Shad in the transport tank of our truck. Heading for the Farmington River.



American Eel climbing the rocks at Leesville Dam on May 26, a great dam for elver passage. Normally a nighttime occurrence, this was happening in broad daylight.

OTHER LOCATIONS WITHIN CONNECTICUT

FISHWAY (RIVER)	AMER. SHAD	ALEWIFE	BLUEBACK HERRING	GIZZARD SHAD	STRIPED BASS	SEA LAMPREY	SEA-RUN TROUT	AMER. EEL
Greenville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	1,977	1,456	56	41	0	0	0	5
Taftville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	33	0	2	0	0	0	0
Occum* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tunnel* (Quinebaug R., Preston)	4	34	0	5	0	0	0	0
Kinneytown* (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	0	5	0	11	0	43	1	0
Hallville Pond* (Poquetanuck Br. Preston)	-	15	0	1	lots of trout	-	0	0
Trading Cove Brook** - (Trading Cove Brook, Montville)	-	0	0	open/not counting		-	-	0
Jordan Brook** - (Jordan Brook, Waterford)	-	109	FINAL	0	-	0	0	0
Latimers Brook** - (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)	-	4,226	FINAL	-	-	-	0	-
Brides Brook** (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		148,596	FINAL					
Branford Supply Pond Dam** (Queach Br., Branford)		1,514	FINAL	-	-	-		
Lower Guilford Lake** (East River, Guilford)		4,300	?			- 0	0	
Haakonsen Fishway* (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	0	1,207	72	41	0	118	2	2
Hanover Pond Fishway* (Quinnipiac R., Meriden)		5	0	0	-	3	-	0
Bunnells Pond* (Peqonnock R., Bridgeport)	-	3,175	0	9	0		1	
Wood Dam** (Saugatuck R., Westport)		1,666	2,951					
Mianus Pond* ** (Mianus R., Greenwich)		11,940	3,333	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:

Greenville= 5/14 Taftville= 5/14. Occum= n.a. Tunnel= 5/22 Kinneytown= 5/29 Haakonsen= 5/29 Hallville= 5/29

**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.

+This location has a fish trap and fish are enumerated prior to release.

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:

Observations for our coastal streams are very similar to last week's. Not a lot of action but a few here and there. Cynthia and Sally report over 2,000 hits on the Wood Dam counter last week and we're trying to figure out if they were all bluebacks or if some lampreys got in the tubes and spiked the numbers. More on that in the future. But many of the sites are being shut down for the spring—you can see by the gray font in the table above. And we're marking those numbers as final. Still a few tricking in at Lower Guilford Lake, which we suspect hosts more bluebacks than some nearby streams. Last week I mentioned the arrival of the downrunning (spent) alewives at our Bride Brook trap. We pulled the trap to avoid a mass mortality—see the photo below, right.

We don't report Atlantic salmon passage on the Shetucket and Naugatuck rivers because those are stocked broodstock for the fisheries and not wild, migratory fish. But Kinneytown Fishway has passed 8 salmon and the Greenville Fishlift has passed 13 salmon. Some of those may have passed up through the Taftville Fishway as well but those counts are way behind, as First Light contracts those out to students and they have not been very quick to review the video. Modified Denil baffles at Taftville have reduced the entrained air in the Taftville window but not to the point where Bob Stira of First Light is willing to resume video there. The air triggers the SalmonSoft software and makes counting much more tedious. No updates from New England Hydro at Hanover Pond on the Quinnipiac—and I don't know why.

EEL PASSAGE: Fishing Brook= 6,428 glass/176 yellow; Mill River= 64 glass/159 yellow; Greenville= 10 glass/403 yellow, Lower Millpond= 210 glass/18 yellow; Clarks Pond= More this week (but not enumerated).

I will be traveling to Germany next week for the annual NASCO meeting for salmon. Tim Wildman will be taking over the reins of this report for the next two weeks. Volunteers- send your reports to Tim via Alicea. There will be no report for June 21 because all of us and many of our fish passage partners will be attending the Fish Passage 2016, an international fish passage conference in Amherst, MA and no one will be available to write the report. CRASC meets on the following Tuesday, the 28th, so we'll resume the report on June 29 when we will likely be in 'wrap-up' mode.

Bunnell's Pond Fishway in Bridgeport, streaming video:<http://www.ctenvironment.org/#!/fish-cam/c1ei1>.

Hallville Fishway in Preston, streaming video: <http://conservect.org/eastern/CurrentProjects/tabid/528/Default.aspx>

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 and 8 am on Saturday. In addition to updates on fish runs, this week we'll be talking about Atlantic salmon and its marine management by NASCO.



Bob Stira of First Light Power demonstrates the automated software at the Tunnel Dam Fishlift to staff from Rhode Island DEM during a recent tour of the facility. The RIDEM folks were visiting to learn more about smaller fishlifts and how such a design might be suitable for some RI sites.



Spent alewives leaving Bride Lake. The upstream counter and trap are detached to allow this emigration. Spent alewives depart in large numbers all at once and we have to open the spillway to avoid mass mortalities.