

Atlantic salmon returns on the rivers

Québec

Indications of early runs of numerous salmon and grilse.

Lower St-Lawrence:



Causapsal - Denise-and-Bateau Pool photo: Charles Cusson/ASF

To date, the **Matapedia, Causapsal, Patapedia Rivers** are continuing their phenomenal success, 1,493 fish landed including 205 salmon released compared to same date in 2010 where 669 fish were landed which included 112 salmon released. Both the Causapsal (season ended July 15th) and the Matapedia have seen the greatest increases in traditional lesser productive sectors.

Rain will be necessary as levels have dropped steadily for the last week.

Matane River:

Since the season start, 711 salmon and 231 grilse have made their trek through the fish ladder. 251 fish have been landed, only a few releases reported. These numbers bode well for the remainder of the season due to the fact that Matane runs historically don't really get going until late July. Rain is becoming a necessity since water flows have dropped by half in the last week.

Bonaventure:

Water levels have dropped during the last seven days which has been reflected in the angling success, releases are slightly higher than last year at 587 but the number of retained grilse has increased considerably over last year. The number of rod days is almost at par with last season to date.

Cascapedia:

Following a great month of June, angling success is holding. To July 14th, 420 fish were landed (a trend to match June) keeping in mind that angling was suspended for a few days because of very high water. This brings the total since June 1st to 1,418 salmon released and 11 grilse retained. Rain has just made conditions better. Water levels are a concern, having dropped to 35 cubic meters/second from 70 a week ago.

Gaspé:

The York, Dartmouth and St-Jean continue to report excellent angling results, releases continue higher than last year with many unreported; overall fish landings continue to go well. A new injection of water is needed at this point. The in-river count is scheduled for late July.

Cap-Chat River:



Cap Chat River - Coté Pool. Photo Charles Cusson/ASF

The overall phenomenon is reflected in this small river also, there are fish in all the pools. During the 1st week of July, water levels were perfect reports Quebec Director Charles Cusson and the success rate reflected this.

North Shore:

Moisie water conditions are ideal at the present time with a flow of 550 cubic meters/second. Many more reported releases, up from last year, number of fish landed also.

Godbout River:

To July 10th, 171 salmon and grilse had been landed, including 112 fish released. This surpassed by far numbers at the same date in 2010. The Escoumins, Laval and Trinité Rivers are also witnessing the same kind of increases.

Saguenay Region:

The Sainte-Marguerite River, very good water conditions continue, 147 salmon and grilse have been landed including 122 releases. Last season is a mere shadow to this year's dream world.

To July 18, the Saint-Jean is reporting out of this world angling when compared to prior years. 114 fish have been landed with 84 reported releases...Compared to 29 fish landed with 9 reported releases.

Maine

Penobscot – As of July 18, **2,913** Atlantic salmon that had reached the trap at Veazie. But the warmer water has brought the salmon movement almost to a standstill.

Narraguagus – The fence at Cherryfield had counted 153 fish as of July 18, by far the best return of the past generation. Elsewhere in the Downeast rivers, the Dennys has seven – not many, but better than in any recent year.

Nova Scotia

Sackville River – Water temperatures are now high, but by July 15 a total of **41** Atlantic salmon, 9 multi-seawinter and 32 grilse, had made it up the Sackville River. For the past two weeks most have been grilse.

New Brunswick

Be aware that if you check the NB and NS counts from DFO, the way their website works, some of the numbers may be from two weeks earlier, and there is no warning of which numbers are not current. The only way to tell is by actually comparing them date to date.

While DFO has not updated all the “trap” info, but there are some positive signs for large salmon returns as of July 15.

Miramichi – At the Northwest Cassilis Barrier there were 270 large salmon, as opposed to 171 last year and 83 in 2009. And at Millerton on the Main SW, there have been 395 large salmon this year, almost the same as the 393 last year but way ahead of the 272 in 2009 and 113 in 2008. Grilse numbers have also been doing fine, especially when compared to the very good 2010 runs. At Millerton there had been 1256 returns by July 15 vs. 1222 in 2010. At the NW Cassilis net, numbers are down slightly – 950 in 2011 vs 1001 in 2010.

Saint John and Nashwaak – At Mactaquac numbers are definitely positive with 379 large salmon as of July 15 vs. 296 in 2010, and on the Nashwaak a very nice 143 large salmon compared to a mere 72 in 2010 and 105 in 2009. Grilse numbers have dropped very significantly, however. This year only 688 grilse have made it to Mactaquac vs 1957 in 2010. That is about a third of last year's run, alas. That grilse ratio isn't far off the returns on the Nashwaak – 291 to July 15 vs 618 in 2010.

Restigouche and Upsalquitch – Counts are not in yet, but at Larry's Gulch, this year there was a record set, when one angler caught and carefully released four fish totalling 121 pounds. There really do seem to be more multi-seawinter Atlantic salmon returning.

Source ASF newsletter <http://atlanticsalmonfederation.org/rivernotes/>