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P R E S S R E L E A S E

DEP BEGINS FALL BROODSTOCK ATLANTIC SALMON STOCKING

Atlantic salmon are renowned for their size, beauty and fighting ability when caught by angling. If hooking-up with one of these exceptional fish sounds like an exciting way to spend a beautiful crisp late fall day, then the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has a fantastic opportunity for you! The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) today announced the beginning of its annual stockings of surplus broodstock Atlantic salmon. In the first of several stockings, DEP's Inland Fisheries Division will be releasing a total of 370 salmon into the Shetucket River and the Naugatuck River this week (October 6th-9th). An additional 80 salmon will be released into Crystal Lake (Ellington) and Mashapaug Lake (Union).



Staff of DEP's Kensington Hatchery with some of the larger broodstock Atlantic salmon during spawning in October, 2007. Most of the salmon stocked each year range in weight from 2 to 15 lbs each, but some, like the fish in this photo can weigh from 15 to 25 lbs.

“The broodstock Atlantic salmon stocking program is quite popular,” said DEP Commissioner Gina McCarthy. “Catching an Atlantic salmon is very special to many anglers. Until this program was started in the early 1990’s, the thought of fishing for Atlantic salmon in Connecticut was only a dream.” The fish being stocked are the progeny of sea-run salmon that returned to the Connecticut River. They

were raised in hatcheries to provide eggs for the Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Restoration Program. Having served this purpose, they will provide a unique opportunity for Connecticut anglers.

The 450 fish that are being released this week are surplus and barren fish from the Kensington State Fish Hatchery and weigh between 2 and 15 pounds each with some fish up to 20 pounds. Following spawning, the DEP expects an additional 500 salmon from the Kensington Hatchery will be available for stocking in November. Salmon from the White River National Fish Hatchery in Vermont may also become available for stocking during late October and November.

For the second consecutive year, DEP will be stocking several lakes with broodstock Atlantic salmon. DEP began stocking surplus Atlantic salmon in 1992, and until last year (2007), all fish had been stocked only into the Naugatuck and Shetucket Rivers. However, in October 2007, stream flows in the Shetucket River had declined to levels unsuitable for stocking large salmon and the first group of salmon scheduled for the river were instead stocked into Beach Pond (Voluntown) and Crystal Lake. The DEP took advantage of last year's lake stockings by collecting data on the resulting fisheries which indicated that salmon fishing in lakes might be popular. As a result, the DEP decided to stock Mashapaug Lake and Crystal Lake on an experimental basis with salmon from this year's allotment. More extensive data on angler activity and catch rates will be collected throughout the fall and winter. This information will be used to determine future stocking decisions

Anglers should be aware that the regulations for broodstock Atlantic salmon released into lakes and ponds are different from the regulations for salmon that they are accustomed to on the Naugatuck, Housatonic and Shetucket Rivers. **In each lake, the regulations for methods, seasons and minimum lengths for salmon are the same as for trout in that specific water body but the daily creel limit will be one salmon per day.** As such, specific regulations for salmon fishing in Crystal Lake, Mashapaug Lake and Beach Pond can be found in the *2008 Connecticut Angler's Guide* and are provided at the conclusion of this news release.

Atlantic salmon broodstock are stocked into three designated Atlantic Salmon Broodstock Areas: the Shetucket River between Scotland Dam (Scotland) and Occum Dam (Norwich); the "Campville Section" of the upper Naugatuck River from Route 118 downstream to the Thomaston Flood Control Dam (Litchfield-Thomaston); and the "Beacon Falls Section" of the lower Naugatuck from Prospect Street (Naugatuck) downstream to Pines Bridge Road (Route 42 bridge, Beacon Falls).

Anglers are allowed to fish for salmon in the Naugatuck River from the confluence of the East and West Branches (Torrington) downstream to the Housatonic River (Derby). Anglers may also fish for Atlantic salmon in the Housatonic River downstream of Derby Dam. On the Shetucket River, anglers

can fish for salmon downstream from the Scotland Dam (Windham) to the Water Street Bridge in Norwich (the first bridge upstream of Norwich Harbor).

In the Naugatuck, Housatonic and Shetucket Rivers, angling for Atlantic salmon is restricted to **catch-and-release only** through November 30. From December 1, 2008, through March 31, 2009, the daily creel limit for Atlantic salmon will be one. During the open season in the rivers, the legal method for taking Atlantic salmon is limited to angling using a single fly, or an artificial lure with a single free swinging hook and no additional weight can be added to the line above the fly or lure. Also, from October 1st through March 31st, fishing for other species in the designated Atlantic Salmon Broodstock Areas is restricted to the gear legal for Atlantic salmon.

The regulations for broodstock Atlantic salmon stocked into lakes and ponds will be posted at each water body. Anglers can also contact the DEP Inland Fisheries Division (860-424-FISH) for more information and stocking updates. All other regulations, including those for broodstock salmon in the Naugatuck, Housatonic and Shetucket Rivers, can also be found in the *2008 Connecticut Angler's Guide*. Guides are available from Town Clerks, many bait & tackle stores, or by contacting the DEP Inland Fisheries Division (860-424-FISH). The Angler's Guide, Weekly Fishing Reports and news releases can all be found on the DEP web site at: www.ct.gov/dep/fishing

Regulations for Atlantic salmon fishing in Crystal Lake, Mashapaug Lake and Beach Pond (not stocked in 2008, but some salmon may remain from 2007) are as follows:

Crystal Lake

- Legal Methods: Angling and Ice Fishing - Fishing with hook and line. May include fishing with bait, flies or lures.
- Open Season: Third Saturday in April through last day in March.
- Minimum Length: Salmon must be greater than or equal to 16 inches to keep.
- Daily creel limit: 1 Atlantic salmon

Mashapaug Lake

- Legal Methods: Angling and Ice Fishing – Fishing with hook and line. May include fishing with bait, flies or lures.
- Open Season: Third Saturday in April through last day in February.
- Minimum Length: None
- Daily creel limit: 1 Atlantic salmon

Beach Pond

- Legal Methods: Angling and Ice Fishing – Fishing with hook and line. May include fishing with bait, flies or lures.
- Open Season: Third Saturday in April through last day in February.
- Minimum Length: None
- Daily creel limit: 1 Atlantic salmon

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