

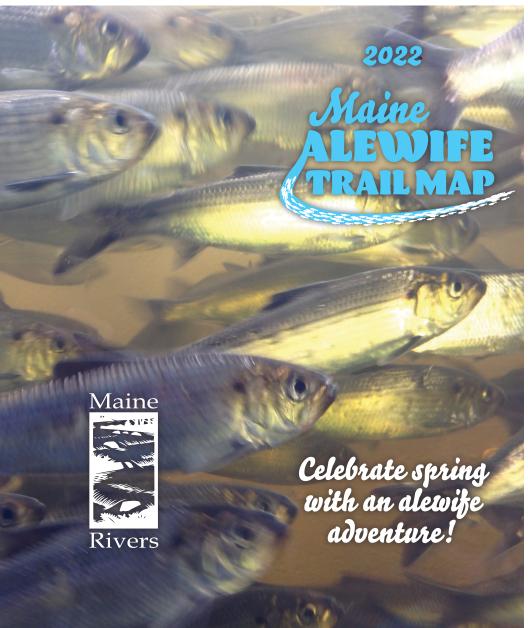
them– striped bass, bluefish, tuna, cod, haddock, halibut, American eel, rainbow trout, brown trout, landlocked salmon, smallmouth bass, pickerel, pike, white and yellow perch, seabirds, bald eagles, osprey, great blue heron, cormorants, seals, whales, otter, mink, fox, raccoon, fisher, and turtles.

A single female alewife can lay 60,000-100,000 eggs, but as few as three may survive to adulthood. Adults make their way back to the ocean after spawning, and many return the following spring to spawn again.

Commercial harvesting rights are held by towns where there are sustainable runs of alewives. The harvest can generate substantial income for a town, and it is often used for the maintenance of fishways and dams.



Harvested alewives are sold for lobster bait. To get a permit the town must show that a run is sustainable by doing annual fish counts and taking scale samples to age fish. If a site has a harvest the word harvest, is listed here as \(\mathbb{I}\) with the day and time.





Maine's annual spring alewife migration is inspiring. We created a map to help you find locations to witness this natural wonder.

We recommend using a mapping program like Google Maps, with the local information included here. In many instances you can see a fish ladder or dam in Google Maps, satellite view.

Alewives are anadromous (sea-run) fish that spend the majority of their lives at sea but return to freshwater to spawn. Alewives (also known as river herring) are guided by their sense of smell to migrate upstream from the ocean to rivers, streams, ponds and lakes to spawn. Runs generally occur between May 15 to June 15 depending on water temps and river flows.

Pilgrims were taught by Native Americans to put a fish in the ground as fertilizer when planting corn. Those fish were very likely alewives. Back then nearly every stream would have been swarming with alewives just as the planting season arrived. When dams were built to power the industrial revolution alewife runs were decimated. Today because of many substantial efforts to remove dams and install fish ladders, alewives are returning to Maine rivers by the millions. Rebounding numbers of alewives mean more food for the creatures that eat

(A) Mousam River Kennebunk

Alewives and shad can't make their way past the first dam in the Mousam River, located next to Route 1 in Kennebunk, but in the spring you can see them schooling below the Kesslen dam by walking down to the river from the park adjacent to Route 1. Bring your underwater camera!

B Presumpscot River S Mill Brook S Highland Lake Westbrook

The Presumpscot Regional Land Trust's Mill Brook Preserve provides a trail system along Mill Brook stream, to see alewives migrating upstream to Highland Lake. It can be difficult to see alewives underwater so use polarized sun glasses and search for places like riffles that concentrate the fish. Viewing is possible from bridge on Duck Pond Road. The best spots are two pools in Mill Brook labeled on the map at https://www.prlt.org/mill-brook-preserve

C Nequasset Stream S Nequasset Lake Woolwich 🗓

Woolwich, just north of Bath, is home to a historic run of alewives into Neguasset Lake. The Neguasset fish ladder was restored in 2014. With active harvesting operation at the fish ladder visitors can at times, purchase smoked alewives. Take U.S. Hwy 1 to George Wright Road to Hummingbird Drive or enter



Hummingbird Drive, Woolwich, ME in your GPS system. Hummingbird Drive is a short, narrow dirt road marked at the entrance by two concrete columns but limited parking at the dam. You may park along George Wright Road The river is tidal up to the dam so visit at high tide. Kennebec Estuary Land Trust volunteers count fish: kennebecestuary.org/fish-counting. Harvest is Thursday through Sunday, near hightide.

(D) Androscoggin River Brunswick

Located on the Brunswick Dam, a large hydropower dam located behind Fort Andross, the Brunswick Dam fishway has a see-through panel allowing visitors to watch the fish pass over the dam before they are trucked upstream to reproduce. It normally opens May 1st until early June, Wednesday-Sunday from 1:00 to 5:00 PM

E Cobbosseecontee Stream > Pleasant Pond Gardiner



This fish migration is blocked by a small, privately owned 1840's dam about one mile upstream from where the stream flows into the Kennebec. It is often possible to view the alewives just below the dam, using the trail on the Harrison Avenue side of the stream. The Maine Department of Marine Resources has trucked alewives

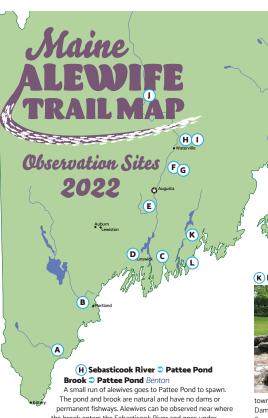
from other locations to Pleasant Pond above the dam and a small run does return to the base of the dam each year. Before dams, this stream hosted millions of alewives making their way to the lakes and ponds that feed the stream. Read the book Alewife by Douglas Watts for many interesting alewife tales and check out "Upstream" on Facebook to learn about restoring Cobbossee's fish passage.

F Seven Mile Brook Webber Pond Vassalboro

Alewives have had access to Webber Pond since the removal of Edwards Dam and the construction of a fish ladder at the Webber Pond dam. This is a great place to see a medium size run and has good access. There is a boat ramp and small parking lot at the dam where visitors can watch the alewives ascend the ladder into the pond. Take Route 201 north from Augusta to Webber Pond Road. Turn right and follow Webber Pond Road to Dam Road and the dam. The harvest typically is Sunday through Wednesday in the mornings.

G China Lake Outlet Stream Vassalboro

After 7 years of work at 6 dams alewives are now able to make their way safely to and from China Lake. Visit the new Box Mill fishway at Olde Mill Place, 934 Main Street, Vassalboro.



the brook enters the Sebasticook River and goes under

Garland Road. The concrete foundation of the bridge creates a small waterfall that the alewives cannot pass so high school students install wooden fish ladders each May. For directions see the next entry. Continue down Falls Road to where it crosses Pattee Pond Brook. There is a small turnout for parking.

Sebasticook River Dam Benton

The Sebasticook's alewife run is Maine's largest. The fish lift at the Benton Falls hydroelectric dam lets fish reach Sebasticook Lake and other ponds north of the dam. A commercial harvest at the dam typically occurs every day of the week after 250,000 have passed through the fishway. Alewives congregate in large numbers below the dam but the public cannot descend to the river from the dam access off Clinton Ave (Route 100) downstream from the Route 139 bridge. The best viewing is from the opposite side of the river but you will still be well above the river. From the Clinton Ave side use the Rt 139 bridge to cross the river, turn right onto Falls Road and then right onto Brimstone Hill Road where harvesters access the river. Bring binoculars to observe the harvest and eagles but stay clear of heavy equipment and trucks.

J Sebasticook River ⇒ Sebasticook Lake Newport

This is a large run with great viewing. At the Sebasticook Lake dam, a fish ladder provides fish access to this large lake. A small parking lot on North Street next to the ladder provides convenient viewing of the alewives ascending the ladder and moving into the lake. Fish congregate by the thousands below the dam as they await their turn to go up the fish ladder.

K Damariscotta River 🗢 Damariscotta Lake Damariscotta Mills 🚻



Q

P

The historic fish ladder along this river has been restored and provides fantastic spots to watch this large alewife run. In 2018 the escapement of alewives into Damariscotta Lake was over 1 million fish The website https://damariscottamills. org/ has good background information about alewives, the fish ladder restoration, great photographs and good directions to the site. The Ladder Restoration Festival typically takes late in May. Damariscotta Mills is located a few miles north of the

town of Damariscotta. To get there if you are heading north on Route 1, take the Damariscotta exit to business Route 1. Go straight at the 4-way stop just past the Congregational Church. Take Route 215 north for approximately 1.6 miles. Look for a parking area just past the Austin Road on the left. Or, take the next left into the Fish House parking lot. From the fish house, follow the path behind the building; the harvesting area is ahead on the left and the fish ladder makes a right turn. The harvest takes place twice daily Monday through Friday, once at 5:00 AM and again at 3:00 PM.

(L) Pemaquid River above Boyd Pond Bristol

Bristol Mills Fishway is located in Bristol Mills just off Rt 130. Park at the Bristol

(M) Bagaduce River S Mill Brook Pierce Pond Penobscot

Pierce Pond, 112 acres, hosts a small run of alewives that run up the Bagaduce River from Penobscot Bay. A newly constructed, natural looking fishway is adjacent to a small parking area and a boat ramp. Penobscot is a small town just north of Castine. From Route 1 take Route 175 through Orland and south towards Castine. Stay on 175 towards Penobscot, turn left on Pierce Pond Road and then stay left on Mill Creek Road to the boat ramp.

(N) Bagaduce River \Rightarrow Black Brook \Rightarrow Walker Pond Brooksville

Walker Pond, just south of Penobscot, hosts a small run of alewives that run up Black Brook from the Bagaduce. Alewives enter the pond using a small fish ladder that runs around the old dam. The top of the ladder is on the north side of Route 175 near a residential driveway and not next to the dam. The brook then goes under Route 175 into a marshy area on the south side of 175.

O Orland River Alamoosook Lake Orland

The Orland River hosts a large run of alewives that meet their first barrier at the head of tide near Orland. The run is harvested Monday through Thursday using a weir and pully system. From Route 1 take Route 175 (Castine Road) towards Orland and cross the bridge to the west side of the Orland river. Take the first right immediately after the bridge onto a dirt road and park in the area provided. Walk down the dirt road to the harvest area. Please use caution around the harvest trucks and equipment if a harvest is in progress. The fish ladder on the east side of the river is on private property.

P Blackman Stream Chemo Pond at the Maine Forest and **Logging Museum** Bradley

The Maine Forest and Logging Museum collaborated with the Atlantic Salmon Federation to install a fish ladder at the original Leonard's Mills dam site. There are 17 weirs and rock pools that enable fish to pass over the dam. Visitors can view the fishway from the logging museum property. There is a small admission fee for anyone over 12. See www.maineforestandloggingmuseum.org/riverrestoration-fish-ladder for directions.

(Q) Penobscot River > Pushaw Stream > Pushaw Lake W. Old Town



This large run of alewives migrates up the Penobscot River past Bangor and Orono to Pushaw Stream and Pushaw Lake. Fish congregate below the fishway at the low dam that sets the lake level at the end of the stream. The site is about 10 miles from the I-95 exit on Stillwater Ave in Orono, main campus of the University of Maine. From the I-95 exit go to Bennoch Road then turn left onto Kirkland Rd, then left on Poplar St, then at Old Town

Landing turn right on Woodland Ave, then right on Lakeside Lane, then right on Beechwood Ave. Stay on Beechwood until Driftwood Lane on the left and the house at 393 Beechwood on the right. Just past this house there is an un-marked dirt road on the right that leads to the dam. The dam is about 1/4 miles from Beechwood, A 4-wheel drive, high clearance vehicle may be required to traverse this road or you can easily walk to the dam. The dam and fishway are visible on Google map, satellite view.

(R) Somes Stream Somes Pond Somesville (Mt Desert Island)

Alewives travel out of Somes Harbor and into Somes Pond (also called Somesville) Mill Pond) in Mount Desert each year. After a 2005 restoration of the fishways on the stream, alewives can now again be seen traveling into the pond. Parking is located at the Historical Society Museum, where there is an interpretive sign explaining the fish ladders. FMI: www.downeastfisheriestrail.org/sites/somesville-mill-pond/

(S) East Machias River Cardiner Lake East Machias

Alewives travel out of Machias Bay into the river to the dam at the outlet of Gardiner Lake. The dam has a fishway where the alewives can be viewed. There is also a unique harvest here. The fishway enters the lake next to a small beach. Since the fishway doesn't have a pen, nets are strung out around the beach to trap the alewives and once enough are enclosed, the nets are pulled to the beach. From Highway 1 take Chases Mill road to the dam. A large parking lot and boat ramp is located just past the dam. This is a medium size run.



Disclaimer: Information is provided here with no strictly at your own risk. Please be mindful if crossing private property. But we'd like to hear from you! Please contact info@mainerivers.org with recommendations or corrections.

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