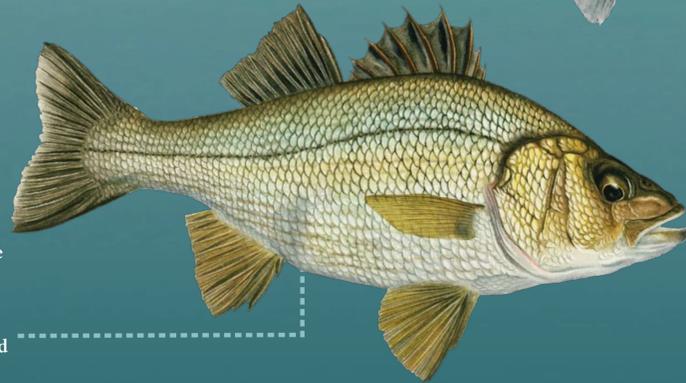




Striped bass (*Morone saxatilis*): This voraciously feeding fish can grow to over 4 feet long, weigh 60 pounds, and live up to 30 years. Norwich Harbor's over-wintering population of stripers is remarkable; stripers caught in the harbor likely spawned in the Hudson River.



White perch (*Morone americana*): A close relative of the striped bass, this prolific species typically grows to 10 inches, weighs up to 1 pound, and is available to anglers from shore and boats as it is found in a variety of habitats.



Bluefish (*Pomatomus saltatrix*): This highly sought game fish that may grow to over 3 feet long and weigh more than 30 pounds visits the Thames River in summer. A predatory fish with razor sharp teeth, bluefish can churn the surface of the water as they feed on smaller fish.



American eel (*Anguilla rostrata*): This unusual fish with a snake-like body and one continuous fin spends most of its time buried in gravel or mud and can grow up to 3 feet long. It spawns in only one place in the world—the Sargasso Sea northeast of the West Indies.



American shad (*Alosa sapidissima*): Growing up to 2 feet long, this silvery, schooling fish is the Connecticut State Fish in recognition of its value as a colonial food source. Historically, the Shetucket River was one of the more productive shad rivers in New England.



Alewife (*Alosa pseudoharengus*): A river herring that may grow to 12 inches long, this fish is an important source of food for striped bass and other game fish. Many species of wildlife also depend on healthy alewife populations as a source of food.

Fish of the Harbor

Norwich waterways provide exceptional fish habitat. Fresh water from the Shetucket and Yantic rivers flows into Norwich Harbor where it mixes with salt water in the Thames River. This diverse environment supports a variety of fresh water and salt water fish, along with anadromous fish that live most of their lives in the ocean but swim upstream to spawn in fresh water. For centuries, these fish sustained Native Americans who gathered nearby each spring for rich harvests of the seemingly unlimited shad, salmon, eel and other species. Early settlers and colonists also depended on these migratory fish now pursued by recreational anglers.

Dams built across the Shetucket River and its tributaries in the 1800s harnessed water power for manufacturing but blocked the spawning runs of shad, alewife and other anadromous species. These fish were eliminated from their natural habitat in the entire watershed upstream of the Greenville Dam. To allow fish to swim past the dam, Norwich Public Utilities worked with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to install a fish lift in the dam in 1996. Thousands of shad and many other fish species now pass through the Greenville fish lift each year. Restoring anadromous fish to their natural habitat provides recreational, economic and environmental benefits.



Shad and other anadromous fish trying to reach their natural spawning grounds in the Shetucket River swim into an opening in the Greenville Dam where a "fish elevator" carries them over the dam so they can continue their journeys upstream.

Fish illustrations by © Flick Ford / www.flickfordart.com

Dam photo: Courtesy of State of Connecticut DEEP/ Inland Fisheries Division

This project by the Norwich Harbor Management Commission was funded by the Long Island Sound Study, Long Island Sound Futures Fund.

