

Masters of Migration: Fishes

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World Fish Migration Day is on Saturday, October 24. Communities around the globe will be celebrating the fishes that migrate through rivers and streams. Numerous natural challenges must be overcome for fishes to make it to their spawning grounds and, as is nature's way, many of them will become food for other animals before they reach their home waters to start the next generation and renew the cycle of life. Other impacts are due to us. Historically, as towns and cities were built along rivers natural fish passageways were blocked by dams and waterways were polluted by sewage and industrial waste. *But there is good news!*



Communities worldwide have been working to reduce water pollution and to improve migration conditions for fishes by removing man-made barriers such as dams, installing fish ladders for species that can jump, and by providing educational

materials to the public about the importance of free flowing rivers and streams to fish and the overall health of river habitats and resulting groundwater aquifers. One such project, *Wishes for Fishes*, highlights the artwork by children from the communities in Cobbossee Watershed, Maine and the alewife research conducted by students at Gardiner's High School in partnership with the Maine Department of Marine Resources in a series of banners in Gardiner's Waterfront Park along the Kennebec River.



Interesting Facts

- Alewife are also known as "sawbelly" because of their overlapping belly scales that form a saw-like keel.
- Anadromous fish migrate from the sea up into fresh water to spawn. Catadromous fish migrate from fresh water down into the sea to spawn.

Activities for Children & the Young at Heart

1. Watch [Love Flows](#) – a World Fish Migration Day documentary narrated by Joshua Royte, Maine based conservation scientist for The Nature Conservancy.
2. Draw a fish that migrates. Is it anadromous or catadromous? What obstacles to migration might your drawn fish find on its journey? Here are some fish fact sheets and resources to get you started:
 - a. [Fish Fact Sheets](#) and [Maine Stream Habitat Viewer](#) - by the Maine Department of Marine Resources
3. Find out if there is a fish passageway near your community where you can watch the migrations.

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