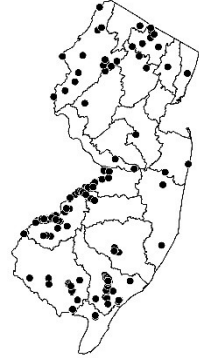


Alewife (*Alosa pseudohareugus*)

Historical Presence	Abundance	Life History	Management
Native	Common	Anadromous/Landlocked	Baitfish/Conservation

General Information

A river herring species similar in appearance to Blueback Herring, Alewife have a larger eye (diameter greater than snout length), deeper body, fewer gill rakers, and gray peritoneum. Sustainable landlocked populations exist in several waters in NJ, while anadromous stocks are in decline along the east coast due to damming and pollution. Marine populations spend most of their adult lives at sea, migrating to freshwater to spawn during the spring.



Geographic Range

Atlantic coastal drainage from Red Bay, Labrador to SC. Many landlocked populations exist. Native to Lake Ontario, introduced to into other Great Lakes. Introduced elsewhere, primarily e. United States. Within NJ, anadromous runs are evident in most major river systems and landlocked populations are found in several lakes throughout the State.

Habitat Description

Found in major river systems during spring migrations and will move further upstream than the similarly related species American Shad. In lakes, they will occupy all strata of a landlocked waterbody throughout the year; however, most time is spent in the limnetic zone. Movements are made into littoral areas in late spring and summer for spawning and then to deeper water in the fall. They also move into shallow areas at night and return to deeper waters during the day. They move in large schools and are attracted to light.

Optimum Habitat Requirements

Dissolved Oxygen	> 5 mg/L (river)
Temperature	4 – 7 °C (ocean)
pH	5 – 7.3 (river)
Turbidity	
Current	Slow (river)

Diet

Fry	Zooplankton
Juveniles	Zooplankton, diatoms
Adults	Zooplankton, mysids, ostracods
Notes: Insect/fish larvae (inshore adults); fish, shrimps, squids, fish eggs (marine adults).	

Reproduction

Time of Year	March – April	Age Males Mature	1 – 5
Temperature Range	10 – 22 °C	Age Females Mature	1 – 5
Water Depth	0.15 – 3 m	Nest	None
Substrate	Gravel/sand/detritus/SAV	Egg Type	Demersal
Time of Day	Night	Parental Care	None
Critical pH	5 – 8.5	Days to Hatching	3 – 6
Velocity Range	Slow/moderate	Oxygen Level	5 mg/L
Notes: Adults (anadromous) leave inshore waters immediately after spawning. Eggs broadcast at random.			

Size and Growth

Growth, maturation and longevity variable whether landlocked/anadromous. Up to 380 mm in length; usually less than 250 mm in landlocked populations. Maximum age 3-4 (landlocked), 9 (anadromous) years.