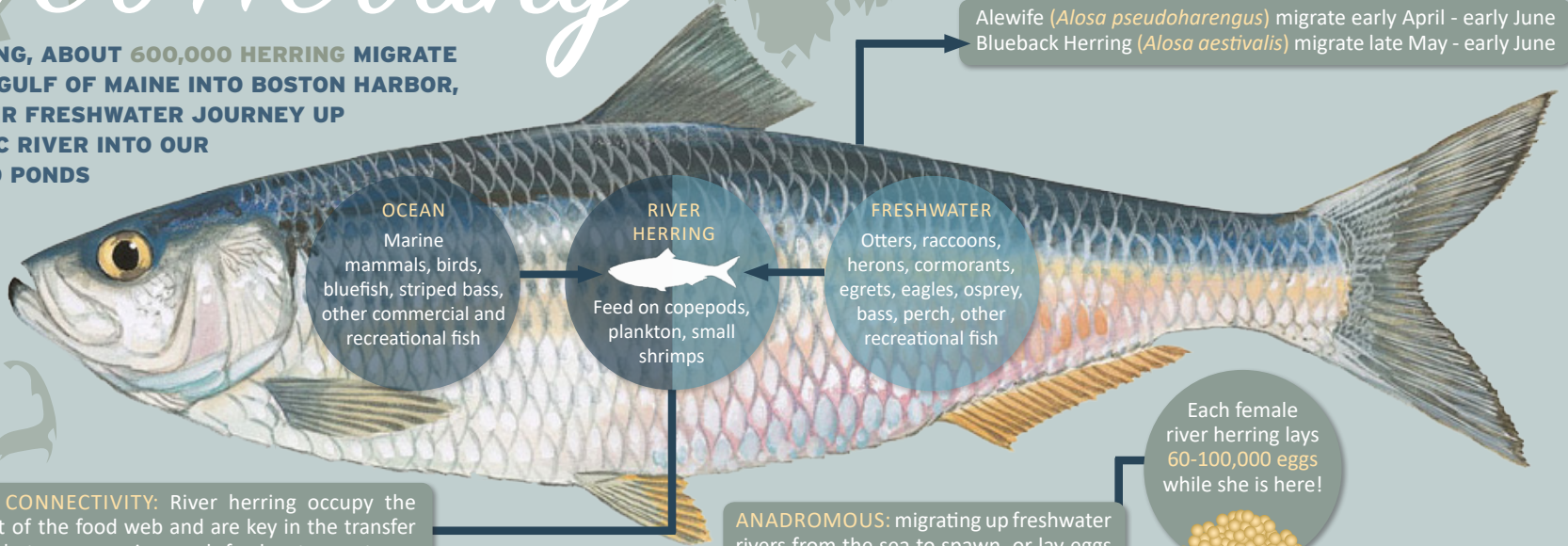


River Herring AND THE MYSTIC RIVER WATERSHED

EACH SPRING, ABOUT 600,000 HERRING MIGRATE FROM THE GULF OF MAINE INTO BOSTON HARBOR, ON TO THEIR FRESHWATER JOURNEY UP THE MYSTIC RIVER INTO OUR LAKES AND PONDS TO SPAWN.

Alewife (*Alosa pseudoharengus*) migrate early April - early June
Blueback Herring (*Alosa aestivalis*) migrate late May - early June



OCEAN
Marine mammals, birds, bluefish, striped bass, other commercial and recreational fish

RIVER HERRING
Feed on copepods, plankton, small shrimps

FRESHWATER
Otters, raccoons, herons, cormorants, egrets, eagles, osprey, bass, perch, other recreational fish

ECOSYSTEM CONNECTIVITY: River herring occupy the vital midpoint of the food web and are key in the transfer of nutrients between marine and freshwater systems.

ANADROMOUS: migrating up freshwater rivers from the sea to spawn, or lay eggs

Each female river herring lays 60-100,000 eggs while she is here!



MyRWA

MYSTIC RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

The Mystic River Watershed Association was founded in 1972 to protect and restore natural resources in the 22-community watershed.

Marine Fisheries Biologist Ben Gahagan tagging river herring



MyRWA, MA DMF and DCR work with MIT Sea Grant and other partners on research and outreach activities.



The Mystic River flows from **headwaters** in Reading, MA southeast to the Earhart Locks near **Boston Harbor**. River Herring spawn as far upstream as **Horn Pond** in Woburn.

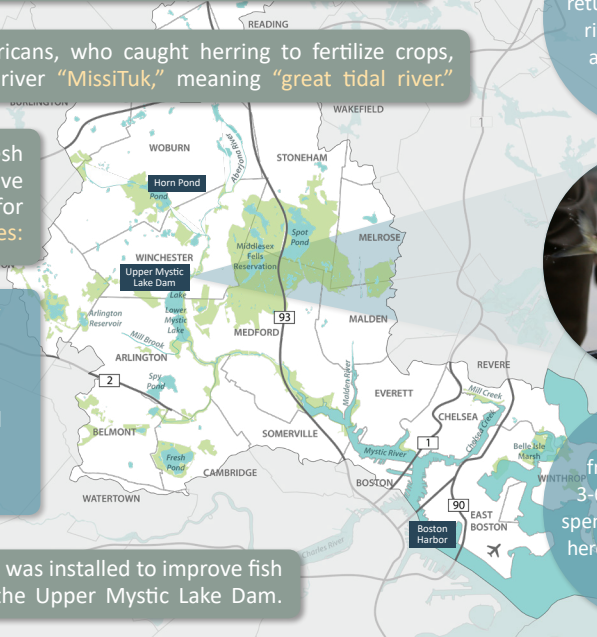
Native Americans, who caught herring to fertilize crops, named the river "**Missi Tuk**," meaning "**great tidal river**."

While river herring return to the fresh water for **spawning**, humans have used the Mystic River Watershed for a variety of **activities and purposes**:

HISTORICALLY
West Indies trade route
Tidal mills for water power
Shipbuilding

PRESENT DAY
Recreational fishing
Canoeing and kayaking
Research

A **fish ladder** was installed to improve fish passage at the Upper Mystic Lake Dam.



River herring live in the ocean and return to their home river to spawn in adulthood after 3-5 years.



Eggs hatch in freshwater after 3-6 days. Juveniles spend their early lives here before returning to the ocean.