

# Rainbow trout make annual spawning run up the Rouge

With the mercury showing upward movement on the thermometer and the sun melting what remnants of snow that remain, it appears spring is here.



Mike Hayakawa

If you don't believe it, just go to the Milne Dam site in Markham.

There you'll see one of the rites of spring as rainbow trout migrating from their summer home in Lake Ontario are swimming their way up the Rouge River to reach suitable spawning grounds.

Despite spring's rather late arrival, Mark Heaton, a fisheries biologist with the Ministry of Natural Resources' Aurora District office, feels this year's annual run is on schedule and should peak soon.

Conducting a one-day electrofishing course with a group of students from Niagara College last week at the Milne Dam, Heaton noted plenty of rainbows had congregated at the site. This is as far as they can travel upstream without some form of assistance to get them above the concrete structure. During the session, Heaton said they assisted 40 rainbow trout.

Among the fish captured was one male rainbow weighing close to 17 pounds. In addition, Heaton said they transferred two northern pike, one black crappie and some yellow perch.

Transfer work continued last Sunday with volunteers from the Metro East Anglers assisting around a dozen fish and collecting eggs and milt from around 20 mature rainbows for rearing at their Parkview Golf Club hatchery.

On Tuesday, the ministry worked with 12 youngsters between 17 to 20 years of age who were from the Second Chance program and transferred 44 rainbow trout.

Based on his observations, Heaton said plenty of fish were still a ways yet from spawning. But he noted a few were seen spawning below the Milne Dam.

Before the run concludes, Heaton hopes they can transfer anywhere from 100 to 120 fish.

With the runoff produced from the downpours late in the week, Heaton expects more fish will work their way to the dam. In turn, he intends to be back on the river next Tuesday to carry out further transfer work.

As for the success in the annual transfer program, which is now in its sixth year, Heaton felt there appears to be more fish entering the Rouge River each year.

"I'd say we're seeing more now than what we used to." Those wishing to see the fish work their way upstream can also do so at the Toogood Pond fishway site in Unionville.

Heaton suggests the best time to see these fish is late in the afternoon when water temperatures are at their warmest and fish are most active.

## Lake Simcoe walleye transfer delayed

While the weather might be warming up, plenty of ice still

remains on Lake Simcoe and because of this, the annual wall-eye spawning run on the Talbot River has been delayed by at least a week due to cold water temperatures.

Pam Fulford, a fisheries biologist from the ministry's Aurora District office, anticipates the run could begin next week. She said the ministry hopes to begin their annual walleye transfer and egg collection work on the Talbot River on April 19.

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Location	Date	Time
Richmond Hill Municipal Tower, 225 East Beaver Creek Rd., Richmond Hill	Monday, April 23	8:30 to 10:00 a.m.
Vaughan Police Station, 2700 Rutherford Rd., Vaughan	Tuesday, April 24	8:30 to 10:00 a.m.

Location	Date	Time
Richmond Hill Municipal Tower, 255 East Beaver Creek Rd., Richmond Hill	Tuesday, April 24	7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
Georgina Civic Centre, 26557 Civic Centre Rd., Keswick	Wednesday, April 18	7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
	Wednesday, April 25	1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
Whitchurch-Stouffville Municipal Offices, 37 Sandiford Dr., Stouffville	Wednesday, April 18	1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
	Wednesday, April 25	7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
Aurora Town Hall, 100 John West Way, Aurora	Thursday, April 19	1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
	Thursday, April 26	7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

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