



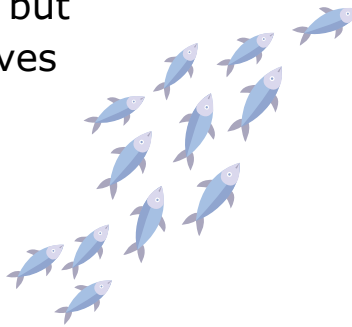
Friends of Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge

All About Herring

Herring Biology



River herring are anadromous, meaning that they spawn (lay eggs) in rivers and streams but spend other parts of their lives in the ocean. There are two species of river herring, the Alewife and Blueback.



Herring and the Tribe

Herring are revered by the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe and serve many purposes, such as fertilizer, food, and medicine. The tribe prepares herring to eat in a variety of ways such as frying, pickling, and smoking.

Herring Runs

The migration of the herring upstream to the spawning grounds marks the beginning of spring here on Cape Cod. However, herring populations have declined significantly due human influences, such as dams that block their passage. To protect herring, which are vital to the ecosystem and human livelihoods, manmade herring runs have been constructed in several towns across the Cape to allow the herring to move upstream to spawn.



Herring run at the Mashpee Wampanoag Museum.

