



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa Fishing Report

Conservation and Recreation



FISHING

Ten categories of angling fun.

FRENZY!

[Top Iowa Fishing Spots for the Week of March 22.](#)

This weekly fishing report is compiled from information gathered from local bait shops, angler creel surveys and county and state parks staff. For current information, contact the district fisheries office at the phone number listed at the end of each district report.

- [NORTHWEST](#)
- [NORTHEAST](#)
- [MISSISSIPPI RIVER](#)
- [SOUTHEAST](#)
- [SOUTHWEST](#)

[Spring Urban Trout Stockings start this Friday](#)

Experience the thrill of catching a trout this weekend at one of our urban trout lakes - 5 will be stocked [this Friday](#) and [Saturday](#). Share the fun - invite a kid, your best friend or the whole family to come along.

[Spring Urban Trout Stocking Schedule](#)

NORTHWEST

[Black Hawk Lake](#)

Town Bay is open. The east basin is ice free. **Bluegill** - Fair: Use waxworms and crawlers fished under a bobber from the floating dock and along Ice House Point shoreline. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Catch crappie from the floating dock in Town Bay and along Ice House Point shoreline using minnows and crawlers suspended below a bobber.

Brushy Creek Lake

Any remaining ice is unsafe for travel. More reports will be available as we receive them.

Storm Lake (including Little Storm Lake)

Any remaining ice is unsafe for travel. Immediately after ice out is a good time to target channel catfish along shore using cut bait.

A few western Iowa lakes are still partially ice covered. However, open water fishing is occurring on most lakes. More reports will be available as more anglers get out on open water. For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

Beeds Lake

Ice thickness is 10-13 inches. **Bluegill** – Fair. **Black Crappie** - Fair.

Clear Lake

Ice thickness is 12-16 inches. Ice at the accesses has deteriorated; vehicle traffic is not recommended. **Yellow Bass** - Good: Try near the Baptist camp in the main lake and by the channel in the little lake. Use light tackle and be mobile to stay on fish. The best bite is still at early morning and late afternoon. **Walleye** – Fair: Try jigging spoons and minnow heads. The best bite is still at early morning and the last hour of light. **Black Crappie** – Fair.

Crystal Lake

Ice thickness is 12-16 inches. Vehicle traffic is not recommended. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Use a small jig tipped with spikes near the edge of the dredge cut. **Bluegill** - Slow: Try a small jig tipped with spikes near the edge of the dredge cut.

Lake Cornelia

Ice fishing not recommended.

Rice Lake

Ice thickness is 12-16 inches. Vehicle traffic is not recommended. **Walleye**- Slow. **Yellow Perch** - Slow.

Upper Pine Lake

Ice fishing not recommended.

Winnebago River

Northern Pike are starting to bite. Try fishing the slack water below a dam or where a creek dumps in to the river. Use live chubs or crank baits.

For information on the lakes and rivers in the north central area, contact the Clear Lake Fish and Wildlife office at 641-357-3517.

East Okoboji Lake

Yellow Bass - Good: Yellow bass action continues; best with jigs tipped with wigglers. Fish traditional sites and move often to find active fish. Catch bonus yellow perch and bluegill while fishing for yellow bass.

Five Island Lake

Yellow Bass - Good: Action has picked up, good numbers of fish have been harvested; fish the dredge cuts for the best action. **Black Crappie** - Good: Incidental catches by yellow bass anglers reflect bonus numbers in the creel.

Ingham Lake

Use caution; thin ice conditions around the aeration system.

Lake Pahoja

Bluegill - Fair: Good numbers of angler acceptable size fish are being harvested with some catfish mixed in the catch.

Lost Island Lake

Yellow Bass - Good: Good numbers of fish are being caught, but sorting is needed; fish the Stoney Point area for the best action. **Walleye** - Fair: Numbers of fish are reported from Lost Island Lake; change tactics with the changing weather conditions. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Some yellow perch and black crappie are being caught by anglers fishing for yellow bass.

Spirit Lake

Yellow Perch - Fair: Reports of yellow perch action on the south east end of the lake. Best action is early morning and evening with a jig tipped with a minnow head. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Report of crappie and bluegill from the Templar Park area.

Trumbull Lake

Foot traffic only recommended. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Persistent and patient anglers will be rewarded with good numbers of yellow perch 12 inches and larger in the creel.

West Okoboji Lake

Bluegill - Good: Bluegills continue to be fussy; persistence and patience will be rewarded with good numbers of fish caught. Best activity early is morning and evening. **Northern Pike** - Good: Tip-up action will improve in the next few weeks with large fish common in the catch.

For more information throughout the week, contact the Spirit Lake Fish Hatchery at 712-336-1840.

NORTHEAST

Cedar River (above Nashua)

Open water fishing is around the corner. Large chunks of free-floating ice are causing

hazardous boating conditions. **Walleye** - Fair: Use a worm hooked in a worm harness fished below the dams. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Anglers fishing below dams are catching catfish using a big hook loaded with nightcrawlers.

Decorah District Streams

Catchable trout stocking starts April 2 – check out [this year's trout stream stocking calendar](#). Plan a trip to your favorite trout stream. Snow melt continues. Better water clarity in the morning turning off color by afternoon. Gravel roads and parking areas are rough and mushy as the frost comes out. **Brook Trout** - Good: Early morning is a good time to catch a brookie. Use a streamer to mimic minnows or subsurface flies like scuds or pheasant tail nymphs. **Brown Trout** - Good: Melt water and run-off inputs drive Brown Trout into a feeding frenzy. Use small midge, caddis, or flashy streamer patterns. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Catch a post-spawn Rainbow Trout below a riffle. Float a feathered spinner or crankbait past a hungry mouth and hang on.

Lake Hendricks

Ice fishing not recommended.

Lake Meyer

Ice fishing not recommended. Anglers have not been out.

Upper Iowa River (above Decorah)

Upper Iowa is mostly ice-free. Anglers are finding fish below the dams and in deeper holes. **Walleye** - Fair: Use jigs with twister tails and crankbaits. **White Sucker** - Fair: Anglers report suckers are starting to hit.

Volga Lake

Ice fishing not recommended. Open water around edges.

Rain Friday night, turning to snow Saturday; snow accumulation is likely. Temperatures in the low 40s for highs, but dipping below freezing at night. Rivers and streams are fishable. Ice covers most lakes, but not safe to walk on. For current fishing information, please call the Decorah Fish Hatchery at 563-382-8324.

Cedar River (Nashua to La Porte City)

Reports of a few walleye being caught on the Cedar River in Black Hawk and Bremer Counties. Anglers have also been successful on northern pike in Black Hawk County. **Walleye** – Fair: Cast and retrieve a jig and plastic tipped with a minnow; concentrate on areas of deeper open water. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Float a live chub or shiner under a bobber in slack water areas off of the main current break.

Manchester District Streams

Trout Streams are in excellent condition. Use streamers, jigs, and crankbaits. With spring like temperatures, there have been good afternoon hatches. **Brown Trout** - Good:

Browns can be easier to catch on days where the water color is stained. **Rainbow Trout**– Slow. **Brook Trout** – Slow.

[Maquoketa River \(above Monticello\)](#)

There have been a few reports of anglers catching walleye on the Maquoketa River; river levels remain good for walleye angling opportunities. **Walleye** - Fair: Cast and retrieve a jig and plastic tipped with a minnow; concentrate on areas of deeper open water.

[Shell Rock River \(Greene to Shell Rock\)](#)

There have been a few reports of anglers catching walleye on the Shell Rock River; river levels remain good for walleye angling opportunities. **Walleye** - Fair: Cast and retrieve a jig and plastic tipped with a minnow; concentrate on areas of deeper open water.

[Wapsipinicon River \(Tripoli to Troy Mills\)](#)

There have been reports of anglers catching walleye on the Wapsipinicon River in Buchanan County. **Walleye** - Fair: Cast and retrieve a jig and plastic tipped with a minnow; concentrate on areas of deeper open water.

Eastern Iowa rivers are open; open water angling opportunities are available on the Cedar, Shell Rock, Wapsipinicon and Maquoketa. Area trout streams are in excellent condition. Anglers are beginning to catch walleye as the spring walleye spawn approaches. Call the N.E. Iowa district office at 563-927-3276 for more information.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER

[Mississippi River Pool 9](#)

River level at Lansing is 8.3 feet and is expected to rise slowly over the next week. Many overwintering fish are still in backwaters, but starting to move out as temperatures warm. **Walleye** - Good: Walleye are a couple of weeks away from spawning and should be actively feeding. Troll three way rigs with crank baits. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Perch bite is getting better; many 10+ inch fish are being reported. **Sauger** - Good: Sauger bite is picking up as fish are in pre spawn feeding mode. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Pike should be spawning soon, but some nice pike have been caught on live bait.

[Mississippi River Pool 10](#)

River level at Lynxville is 15.3 feet and is expected to rise slowly over the next week. Many overwintering fish are still in backwaters, but starting to move out as temperatures warm. Tailwaters are concentrating a lot of active fish right now. **Walleye**- Good: Walleye are a couple of weeks away from spawning and the bite is picking up in the tailwaters. Troll three way rigs with crank baits. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Perch bite is getting better along the shorelines in the tailwaters; many 10+ inch fish are being reported. **Sauger** - Good: Sauger bite is picking up in the tailwaters as fish are in pre-spawn feeding mode. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Pike should be spawning soon, but some nice pike have been caught on live bait.

Mississippi River Pool 11

River level at Guttenberg is 6.7 feet is expected to rise slowly over the next week. Many overwintering fish are still in backwaters, but starting to move out as temperatures warm. Tailwaters are concentrating a lot of active fish right now. **Walleye** - Fair: Walleye are a couple of weeks away from spawning and the bite is picking up in the tailwaters. Troll three way rigs with crank baits. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Perch bite is getting better along the shorelines in the tailwaters; many 10+ inch fish are being reported. **Sauger**- Good: Sauger bite is picking up in the tailwaters as fish are in pre-spawn feeding mode. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Pike should be spawning soon, but some nice pike have been caught on live bait.

Upper Mississippi River levels are slowly starting to rise as the spring thaw continues. Most backwater areas are now free of ice with water temperatures slowly climbing into the lower 40's. Spring fishing is starting to get better as water temperatures warm up.

Mississippi River Pool 12

Water levels are near stable at 6.5 feet at the Dubuque Lock and the RR bridge is 8.9 feet. This is up a bit from last week. A slight rise in water levels may occur this upcoming week, but it will be fairly stable. **Yellow Perch** - Slow: A few scattered reports; no big catches yet, but some might be on these elusive fish. **Northern Pike** - Fair: More and more reports of northern pike being picked up occasionally by tailwater anglers. Some of the melted backwaters also may see some pike angling. **Walleye** - Fair: Some scattered reports of walleyes being taken in the tailwaters and more along wing dams. Fishing is fair to poor, but could improve with better weather conditions. Some nice slot fish are being reported.

Mississippi River Pool 13

Water levels at Bellevue are 6.5 feet and are stable. This is up a bit from last week. Both Bellevue City ramp and the DNR ramp are open, but but no courtesy dock yet at the DNR ramp. Paddlefish season is now underway. Please review the [Paddlefishing regulations](#). **Yellow Perch** - Fair: A few scattered catches of sizable perch mostly from the tailwaters. **Paddlefish** - Fair: Some paddlefish were caught early; fishing has slowed a bit, but pods of Paddlefish could return to the tailwater. **Sauger** - Fair: Hit or miss. Some good reports of few, but nice sauger. Other reports of people really struggling. **Walleye** – Fair: Fairly slow fishing, but some nice slot fish are being picked up. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Tailwater anglers report catching a few northern pike. They will be preparing to spawn soon.

Mississippi River Pool 14

Water levels are falling and are 5.9 feet at Fulton, 10.2 feet at Camanche and 4.8 feet at LeClaire. This is up a bit from last week. Paddlefish season season is underway; please review the [Paddlefishing regulations](#). Ramps are open and ready for

use. **Paddlefish** - Fair: Good fishing seen early in the season; it has slowed greatly, but some fish are still present. **Sauger** - Fair: Anglers report sauger fishing as scattered, but it could get decent if water levels stabilize. The bite has been spotty all spring. Most anglers are using minnow rigs. **Walleye** - Fair: Not many being caught, but reports of some very nice sized fish.

Mississippi River Pool 15

Water levels are falling and are 6.8 feet at Rock Island. This is up from last week; conditions should remain favorable for angling this week. **Sauger** - Fair: Fish are scattered, but some are being reported on jigs and minnow.