



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 April 12.](#)

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](#)



You have two more weekends to experience the thrill of catching a trout at one of our urban trout lakes.

Check the [Spring Urban Trout Stocking Schedule](#) to find an urban lake close to you.

Invite a kid, your best friend or the whole family to come along.

NORTHWEST

[Black Hawk Lake](#)

Bluegill - Good: Use waxworms and crawlers in Town Bay and along Ice House Point,

the floating dock, and from the inlet bridge. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Some perch are being picked up from the floating dock in Town Bay and from the inlet bridge. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Use crawlers and minnows fished from shore and from the floating dock.

[Storm Lake \(including Little Storm Lake\)](#)

Walleye - Fair: Throw twisters or fish minnows under a bobber from the state marina. Expect good walleye action along the east and north shores as water temperatures continue to climb. **White Bass** - Fair: Anglers are having luck fishing from shore on the east side and from the marina. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Catch crappie from the marina using minnows and a twister.

Some western Iowa lakes are providing good shore fishing action. Water temperatures are in the low 40's. For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

[Clear Lake](#)

Clear Lake is about 40 percent ice free. The boat ramp at city beach is accessible, but that can change as the ice moves.

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

River levels are up. Try fishing the slack water areas below a dam with live bait.

[Winnebago River](#)

River levels are rising with the melting snow.

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](#)

Channel Catfish - Good: Ice out brings excellent channel catfish fishing as catfish go on a feeding frenzy. There is open water at the spillway and bridges; Lower Gar Lake has extensive open water. Fish these areas for some early "pole bending" action.

[Silver Lake \(Palo Alto\)](#)

Walleye - Fair: Numbers of fish are reported caught using twister type lures.

Very limited ice fishing activity on the Iowa Great Lakes. For more information throughout the week, contact the Spirit Lake Fish Hatchery at 712-336-1840.

NORTHEAST

Cedar River (above Nashua)

With the recent cold snap, skim ice is covering backwaters. Impoundments are fishing well. **Walleye** - Good: Fish below the dams with a variety of baits for a pre-spawn walleye. A jig tipped with a minnow or nightcrawler is best. **Channel Catfish** - Excellent: Anglers fishing impoundments are catching catfish with a hook tipped with dead chubs.

Decorah District Streams

Catchable trout are stocked in all streams as weather and water conditions permit. Listen to the trout stocking hotline (563-927-5736) for daily plans. Plan a trip to your favorite trout stream. Check out [this year's trout stream stocking calendar](#). Use care when accessing streams. Bank conditions remain variable. **Brook Trout** - Good: 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**- Excellent: Float a feathered spinner or crankbait past a freshly stocked fish. A piece of worm under a bobber also works in the deeper holes.

Lake Hendricks

Few anglers have been out. The lake is over half covered with ice still.

Lake Meyer

Anglers have not been out. Lake Meyer has some ice on the south side of lake; smashed the record for latest ice out.

Upper Iowa River (above Decorah)

Anglers are finding fish below the dams and in deeper holes. Water levels are unseasonably low. **Walleye** - Good: Use jigs with twister tails and crankbaits. **White Sucker** - Fair: Warming temperatures are turning suckers on. A worm fished on the bottom works best.

Upper Iowa River (below Decorah)

Water levels are low, but clarity is good. Anglers are noticing an up tick in perch bite on the river. **Walleye** - Good: Float a worm through a deeper hole. **Smallmouth Bass** - Good: Use small crankbaits and spinner baits. **White Sucker** - Fair: Shore anglers using a worm fished on the stream bottom will catch a hungry sucker.

Volga Lake

Few anglers have been out.

Rain/snow/mix likely through Sunday. Temperatures start dropping after Friday into the upper 30's for highs dipping into the 20's at night. Rivers and streams are fishable. For current fishing information, please call the Decorah Fish Hatchery at 563-382-8324.

[Cedar River \(Nashua to La Porte City\)](#)

Walleye fishing and catch has been sporadic, some days are good while others are not so good. River conditions remain in good condition, but temperatures need to warm up. **Walleye** – Fair: Cast and retrieve a jig with plastics tipped with a minnow below low head dams or look for the sandbar drop-offs. **Smallmouth Bass** - Fair: Cast and retrieve a jig with plastics tipped with a minnow. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Cast and retrieve larger spinnerbaits or float a chub or shiner under a bobber in slack, off main channel deep water areas.

[Heritage Pond](#)

This Saturday, April 14th, there will be a trout stocking event beginning at 10:00 a.m. Bring the whole family for this fun outing and opportunity to catch some trout. **Brook Trout** - Good: Cast and retrieve flashy spinner baits like a panther martin jig or similar jigs and spinners. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Cast and retrieve flashy spinner baits like a panther martin jig or similar jigs and spinners.

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

There has been a lot of angling activity near the whitewater park recently in Delaware County, but few reports.

[North Prairie Lake](#)

This Saturday, April 14th, there will be a trout stocking event beginning at 11:00 a.m. Bring the whole family for this fun outing and opportunity to catch some trout. **Brook Trout** - Good: Cast and retrieve flashy spinner baits like a panther martin jig or similar jigs and spinners. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Cast and retrieve flashy spinner baits like a panther martin jig or similar jigs and spinners.

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

The Shell Rock River has been hit and miss for walleye fishing. **Walleye** - Fair: Cast and retrieve a jig with plastics tipped with a minnow below low head dams or look for the sandbar drop-offs for some good walleye action.

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

Reports of anglers targeting and catching smallmouth bass on the Wapsipinicon River. **Smallmouth Bass** - Good: Cast and retrieve a jig with plastics tipped with a minnow.

Fishing reports have been mixed this past week with the roller coaster of weather. Walleye fishing is spotty and anglers are catching a few smallmouth bass and northern pike. Trout stocking season has started; trout streams remain in excellent condition. Call the N.E. Iowa district office at 563-927-3276 for more information.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER

Mississippi River Pool 9

River level at Lansing has stabilized at around 8.4 feet and is predicted to remain steady. Water temperature is upper 30's. Expect the bite to pick up more as temperatures warm. **Walleye** - Slow: Walleye are in spawning mode, but recent cool down in water temperatures will prolong the spawn. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Perch are still in spawning areas along the rocky shorelines and near the tailwaters of the dam. Expect the bite to pick up again once temperatures rise. **Sauger** - Slow: Sauger are in spawning mode, but recent cool down in water temperatures will prolong the spawn. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Pike spawn is ending; anglers report catching some nice pike with live bait.

Mississippi River Pool 10

River level at Lynxville is steady at 17.1 feet and is expected to remain stable over the next week. Water temperature is 37 degrees at the dam. Expect the bite to pick up in the tailwaters with warmer weather. **Walleye**- Slow: Walleye are in spawning mode, but recent cool down in water temperatures will prolong the spawn. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Perch are still in spawning areas along the rocky shorelines and near the tailwaters of the dam. Expect the bite to pick again once temperatures rise. **Sauger** - Slow: Sauger are in spawning mode, but recent cool down in water temperatures will prolong the spawn. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Pike spawn is ending; anglers report catching some nice pike with live bait.

Mississippi River Pool 11

River level at Guttenberg has stabilized around 8.2 feet is expected to remain steady this week. Water temperature is 37 degrees at the dam. The bite has been slow, but expect activity to pick up once water temperatures are over 40. **Walleye** - Slow: Walleye are in spawning mode, but recent cool down in water temperatures will prolong the spawn. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Perch are still in spawning areas along the rocky shorelines and near the tailwaters of the dam. Expect the bite to pick again once temperatures rise. **Sauger** - Slow: Sauger are in spawning mode, but recent cool down in water temperatures will prolong the spawn. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Pike spawn is ending; anglers report catching some nice pike with live bait.

Upper Mississippi River levels are stabilized this week. The bite has slowed down with water temperature falling into the upper 30's. Warmer weather is just around the corner and should trigger fish to be more active.

Mississippi River Pool 12

Water levels are rising at 7.6 feet at the Dubuque Lock and the RR bridge is 10 feet. Overall levels are lower than last week. The channel water temperature is still only around 39 degrees, but got as low as 36 degrees over the weekend. **Yellow**

Perch- No Report: Some scattered reports of ring perch catches earlier, but not many people out fishing for them. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Some reports of northern pike being picked up by tailwater anglers and in the backwaters but people searching for bass. **Walleye**- Slow: Fishing has been good at times for walleye and sauger this spring, but poor weather is limiting activity and slowing the spawning season. Walleye spawning is well underway.

[Mississippi River Pool 13](#)

Water levels at Bellevue are 8.5 feet and rising. Both Bellevue City ramp and the DNR ramp are open, but no courtesy dock is available yet at the DNR ramp. April 15th is the last day you can snag paddlefish this season. Please review the [Paddlefishing regulations](#). The channel water temperature is around 40 degrees. **Yellow Perch** - No Report: Last week seen several perch caught. **Paddlefish** - Slow: Not much has been reported since the opening few days. April 15th is the last day you can snag paddlefish this season. **Sauger** - Slow: Hit or miss. Some good reports of nice sauger. Most are being taken on minnow rigs. **Walleye** – Slow: Nice slot fish are still being reported, but fishing is slow. Minnow and jig or pulling crank baits are the most popular strategies. **Northern Pike** - No Report: Some were caught last week.

[Mississippi River Pool 14](#)

Water levels are rising and are 7.9 feet at Fulton, 11.4 feet at Camanche and 6.2 feet at LeClaire. This is slightly lower than last week. The water temperature is around 42 degrees. April 15th is the last day you can snag paddlefish this season. Please review the [Paddlefishing regulations](#). **Paddlefish** - Slow: Good fishing seen early in the season; it has slowed greatly. April 15th is the last day you can snag paddlefish this season. **Sauger** - Slow: Just not many people out walleye or sauger fishing in the cold weather. Both species are still spawning due to the extended cold water season. **Walleye** - Slow: Not many being caught, but reports of some very nice sized fish.

[Mississippi River Pool 15](#)

Water levels are 8.5 feet at Rock Island. Water levels are down from last week, but remain somewhat steady this upcoming week. Water conditions should remain favorable for angling, but weather has not.

The River levels have stabilized, but may slowly rise this upcoming week. Water levels are very conducive to angling, but the weather has not. April 15th is the last day you can snag paddlefish this season. If you have any angling questions, please contact the Bellevue Fisheries Station 563-872-4976.

[Mississippi River Pool 16](#)

Tailwater stage is 8.35 feet at Lock and Dam 15 in the Quad Cities and has been slowly

falling the past few days. There has been some walleye and sauger fishing in Sylvan Slough. **Sauger** - Slow: Some saugers are being caught in Sylvan Slough. Try fishing with jigs and minnows or pulling three-way rigs with stick baits.

[Mississippi River Pool 17](#)

Tailwater stage is 6.81 feet at Lock and Dam 16 in Muscatine and has been slowly falling the past few days. We have not received any fishing reports for this pool this week. **Sauger** - Slow: Try fishing with jigs and minnows or pulling three-way rigs and stick baits. **Walleye** - Slow: Look for walleyes in the tailwaters or down by GPC. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with stick baits.

[Mississippi River Pool 18](#)

Tailwater stage is 8.27 feet at Lock and Dam 17 at New Boston and has been slowly falling. We have not received any fishing information for this pool this week.

[Mississippi River Pool 19](#)

Tailwater stage is 5.20 feet at Lock and Dam 19 above Burlington and has been slowly falling. We have not received any fishing information for this pool this week.

River stages have been falling slowly the past few days. Main channel water temperature is around 43 degrees; water clarity has been fair. We have not received much for fishing reports this week. If you have questions on fishing Pools 16-19, contact the Fairport Fish Hatchery at 563-263-5062.

SOUTHEAST

[Lake Sugema](#)

Try using cut bait for channel catfish. The water temperature is in the low 40's.

[Lake Wapello](#)

Use cut bait on the windblown shorelines to catch channel catfish this time of year. Catch largemouth bass around brush piles.

[Ottumwa Park Pond South](#)

Trout were stocked on March 30th. Try small tube and twister jigs, in-line spinners or casting spoons.

[Rathbun Reservoir](#)

The current lake level is 903.64 msl. Normal operating elevation is 904.0 msl. Lake Rathbun has zebra mussels, so make sure to properly drain, clean, and dry equipment before transporting to another water body. The water temperature is in the low 40's. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Use shad sides or cut bait on the windblown shorelines.

[Red Haw Lake](#)

Try cut bait near shorelines with the wind blowing in for channel catfish.

The district includes Mahaska, Lucas, Wayne, Monroe, Appanoose, Wapello, Davis and Van Buren counties. Contact the Rathbun Fish Hatchery at 641-647-2406 with questions about fishing in south central Iowa.

SOUTHWEST

[Banner Lake \(south\)](#)

Rainbow Trout - Good: Trout were stocked on April 7th. Use inline spinners, small casting spoons, 1/8 ounce or smaller jigs with twister tails, and waxworms or minnows under a bobber.

[Big Creek Lake](#)

Walleye - Fair: Some anglers are starting to catch walleyes off points and rip rap shorelines in the mid and lower lake. They are being caught on jig and twister tails, jig and minnow, or slow trolling minnow rigs.

[Des Moines River \(Saylorville to Red Rock\)](#)

Walleye - Fair: It is a good time to fish below the Saylorville and downtown dams. Jigs tipped with twister tails and/or minnows work best. The best walleye fishing will be through April if flows do not get too high. **Channel Catfish** - Good: Catfishing with dead shad has been good in the river from Saylorville through downtown Des Moines.

For more information on Central Iowa lakes and rivers, contact Andy Otting or Ben Dodd at 515-432-2823.

[Farm Creek Lake](#)

Farm Creek Lake will offer good early spring crappie fishing in the upper end as water temperatures warm.

[Lake Anita](#)

Crappies were caught this week at Lake Anita. As water temperatures warm, crappies will move into the pontoon area of the lake. **Black Crappie** - Slow: A few reports of good crappie fishing this week. Cast a jig two feet under a bobber in the pontoon area of the lake. Warm sunny days are best.

[Lake Manawa](#)

Warm sunny days offer good crappie fishing in the canals. Lake Manawa is also a good

destination for early spring catfishing. **White Crappie** - Slow: A few crappies are being caught in the canals. Warm sunny days are best. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Fish the windy shoreline with shad sides or cut bait. Channel catfish in Manawa are all sizes.

[Meadow Lake](#)

Meadow has a good population of 10 inch black crappie.

[Prairie Rose Lake](#)

Prairie Rose will offer good panfishing this spring. The lake has quality sized bluegills and crappies are acceptable size. Target the brush piles.

[Viking Lake](#)

Find early spring crappies in the campground arm and behind the pontoon area. A few bass are being caught in the deeper brush piles. **Largemouth Bass** - Slow: Jig plastics in deeper brush piles.

Anglers can catch crappie on the right day. Overall there has been little fishing activity in the southwest district due to cold windy conditions. For more information, contact the Cold Springs office at 712-769-2587.

[Green Valley Lake](#)

Largemouth Bass - Slow: Catch largemouth bass up to 19 inches using crankbaits fished along the silt dams and rocky shoreline areas.

[Little River Watershed Lake](#)

Walleye - Slow: Catch walleyes up to 22 inches with jigs tipped with a minnow fished along the roadbed or along the dam.

[Summit Lake](#)

Black Crappie - Slow: A few crappies up to 9.5 inches have been caught using jigs under a bobber fished along cedar tree brush piles.

Lakes in the Mount Ayr district are 100% ice free. Water temperature in most district lakes is about 45 degrees. Limited fishing activity observed this week. For more information, please call the Mount Ayr Fisheries office at 641-464-3108.