



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Fishing News

Conservation and Recreation



10 fall favorite trout fishing streams

Get out and explore northeast Iowa's trout streams this fall. From easily accessible streams in state or county parks, to streams in Iowa's most wild and remote natural spaces – there's a perfect spot for everyone.

Here's our favorites:

Perfect for beginners

- [Baileys Ford](#), Delaware County – easy access with trails along much of the stream. Catch stocked, 10-12 inch rainbow trout and a few wild brown trout of all sizes. Use small bait like worms, spinners and flies. Park near the nature center and enjoy the short walk to the stream.
- [Otter Creek](#), Fayette County – easy access for anglers with limited mobility. Stream-side paths lead adventurous anglers to scenic areas in Echo Valley State Park. Stocked each year with fingerling brown trout and weekly April through October with catchable rainbow and brook trout. Trout rise to hatches of stoneflies, midges and mayflies on warmer afternoons and early mornings.

Beautiful scenery

- [French Creek](#), Allamakee County – nestled in a beautiful valley running through a wildlife management area south of the Upper Iowa River. Wild brown trout commonly exceed 1,500 fish per mile with fish reaching 20 inches. Crystal clear water and lots of aquatic plants along the stream edges make for challenging fishing. Its plentiful public areas are artificial-lure-only and brown trout is catch-and-release only. Part of this stream is on private property open to the public only for fishing.
- [Swiss Valley Creek](#), Dubuque County – trails provide fishing access in an area filled with postcard worthy scenery. Catch stream-reared browns, as well as stocked rainbows at Catfish Creek in Swiss Valley Preserve and Nature Center near attractions and convenience provided by the City of Dubuque. Use night crawlers, plastics, spinners and jigs in large pools and along bank hides for 8-13 inch trout with a few large (16 inch) brown trout.

Fun weekend getaways

- [Richmond Springs](#), Delaware County – lots of fun recreational opportunities at Iowa's oldest State Park, [Backbone State Park](#). Use jigs, spinners, prepared bait and live bait in pools or stream habitat features for 10-12 inch trout. Stay in a family cabin.
- [Trout Run](#), Winneshiek County – easy access with trails, lots of parking, modern restrooms and picnic areas. Stocked with 10-12 inch rainbow and brook trout from April through October, along with an occasional stocking of fingerling brown trout. Wander the hatchery grounds, feed the fish, catch a glimpse of the world famous Decorah eagles, walk through a prairie or explore the multiuse trail that circles Decorah. Lots of places to stay, eat and have fun in nearby Decorah.

Up for a challenge

- [Ensign Hollow](#), Clayton County – full of wild brown trout; use jigs and nymphs. Catch lots of smaller (6 – 10 inch) brown trout with a few fish up to 16 inches. All trout caught must be released back to the stream and you cannot use bait.
- [North Cedar Creek](#), Clayton County – test your trout fishing skills at this narrow stream with gin clear water and cobble substrate. Catch stocked rainbow and brook trout and wild brown trout up to 17 inches. Bring along a variety of minnow, creek chub or crawdad imitation lures or flies. Let your lure or bait drift around the boulders and just in front of the ledges.

Off the beaten path

- [Bear Creek](#), Allamakee County — 3/4 mile of fishable water with deeper pools, limestone ledges and long shallow riffles. It maintains a thriving population of

brown trout up to 17 inches with over 1,200 fish per mile. You might also nab a catchable stocked rainbow trout that made the downstream trek from North or South Bear. Use lures that imitate minnows, suckers or creek chubs.

- [Little Turkey River](#), Delaware County – in a picturesque valley just east of Colesburg. Catch stocked brook and rainbow trout and wild brown trout. Use live bait, spinners and flies. Public access is available from the Ram Hollow Wildlife Management Area.