



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa Fishing Report

Conservation and Recreation



[Top Iowa Fishing Spots for the Week of November 21.](#)

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.

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NORTHWEST

[Arrowhead Lake](#)

The courtesy dock is removed for the season.

[Bacon Creek Lake](#)

About 1,600 rainbow trout were stocked on Nov. 7. Use small tube and twister jigs, in-line spinners, casting spoons, and live minnows or crawlers fished under a bobber.

[Black Hawk Lake](#)

As of Nov. 21, the lake was covered with skim ice. There has been open water under the newly constructed fishing shelter along Ice House Point that is providing a good fishing

opportunity. **Bluegill** - Fair: Anglers have taken fish from the newly constructed fishing shelter along Ice House Point. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Crappie up to 12 inches have been taken from the fishing shelter on Ice House Point.

[Brushy Creek Lake](#)

Courtesy docks are removed for the season.

[Moorland Pond](#)

About 1,500 rainbow trout were stocked on Nov 1. Use small tube and twister jigs, in-line spinners, casting spoons, and live minnows or crawlers fished under a bobber.

[North Twin Lake](#)

Courtesy docks at the two south ramps are removed for the season.

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

There has been little fishing activity. Storm Lake has been frozen over, but ice conditions are unsafe for travel.

Most lakes in the Black Hawk District have frozen over but ice conditions are unsafe for travel. There has been little fishing activity. For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

[Blue Pit](#)

The Iowa DNR stocked 2000 rainbow trout today. You must have fishing license and trout stamp to fish for and/or possess trout.

[Clear Lake](#)

Ice thickness is 1.5 to 4 inches.

[Rice Lake](#)

Ice thickness is 2 to 4 inches.

Most of the lakes in north central Iowa have frozen over. Very little fishing activity has been reported. If you do venture out, use extreme caution and check ice thickness as you go. 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](#)

Limited fishing activity.

[Scharnberg Pond](#)

Brook Trout - Good: 3000 trout were stocked on Nov. 17th. You must have fishing

license and trout stamp to fish for and/or possess trout.

Spirit Lake

Anglers are ice fishing Templar Park Lagoon, foot traffic only. Anglers are catching a mixed bag of panfish. **Walleye** - Good: Wader angler action is the best bite during the evening hours.

West Okoboji Lake

Lake is ice free. Limited fishing activity.

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

NORTHEAST

Cedar River (above Nashua)

Water levels are stabilizing with excellent water clarity. Flows remain high. Backwaters are starting to freeze. Ice fishing is not recommended. **Walleye** - Good: Find walleye in pockets and deeper water. Fish are taking a variety of bright colored lures or jigs tipped with worms or minnows. **Smallmouth Bass** -Slow: Use a slow presentation with a small spinnerbait. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Pike are aggressively taking lures tipped with minnows.

Decorah District Streams

Iowa's trout season stays open all year long; many catchable size trout stay in the streams to challenge even the best anglers. Fish a trout stream in winter for an experience to excite all your senses. A good trout stream does not freeze in the winter. Water temperatures stay between 40-45 degrees. **Brown Trout** - Good: Watch the stream bottom for cleared areas in gravel (trout nests or redds). Avoid stepping in the nests. Use larger flies or lures mimicking minnows. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Fish near bottom if no hatches are occurring. Use a weighted caddis stonefly or mayfly nymph. **Brook Trout** - Good: Brook Trout spawn is here; brook trout build nests in the stream bottom. Good insect hatches occur on warm sunny afternoons. Try nymphs, emerger or topwater patterns.

Lake Hendricks

Lake Hendricks is covered with a thin layer of ice. Ice fishing is not recommended.

Lake Meyer

The entire lake is covered by a very thin layer of ice. Ice fishing is not recommended.

Turkey River (above Clermont)

The Turkey River water levels are stabilizing with excellent clarity. **Smallmouth Bass** –

Slow: Use lures mimicking minnows in off channel areas or deeper water. **Walleye** - Fair: Try jigs tipped with a minnow, worms and a variety of lures in current breaks and deeper water.

[Upper Iowa River \(above Decorah\)](#)

Water levels are stable with excellent clarity. Ice is forming in slack water areas. Visit the [USGS Water Data website](#) for current information. **Walleye** - Fair: Use crankbaits or a hook tipped with a minnow in eddies and deeper water. Catches are highly variable. **Smallmouth Bass** - Fair: Look for bass in deeper pocket eddies and near undercut banks. A variety of lures and baits are working.

[Upper Iowa River \(below Decorah\)](#)

Water levels are stabilizing with excellent clarity. Fish are currently searching for overwintering holes out of current. **Smallmouth Bass** - Slow: Use bright colored lures fished in deeper water and rock ledges. **Walleye** - Fair: Try a jig tipped with minnow or slow action plastic tail fished deep. Shore fishing should yield better catches.

[Volga Lake](#)

Ice is starting to form. Rain could melt or weaken the ice. Ice fishing is not recommended.

Snow/rain is in the forecast for Friday. Ice is forming on lakes, ponds and slack water areas. Ice fishing will start soon, but is not recommended now. Most ice is not thick enough to hold anglers. For current fishing information, please call the Decorah Fish Hatchery at 563-382-8324.

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

Reports of anglers catching walleye and smallmouth bass on the Cedar River in Black Hawk and Bremer Counties. **Walleye** - Good: Anglers are doing well with jigs and plastics. Water temperatures have fallen quickly; look for deeper holes as walleye move into over wintering areas. **Smallmouth Bass** - Good: Try jig and plastics or crankbaits. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Cast and retrieve spoons or crankbaits.

[Heritage Pond](#)

Heritage Pond was stocked with trout Nov. 9. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Cast and retrieve lighter jigs or flies.

Manchester District Streams

[Spring Branch Creek](#) has been busy with angling activity as many trout escaped with the recent flooding event.

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

The Maquoketa River is in good condition as water levels continue to fall, but flows remain swift. **Walleye** - No Report: Water temperatures have fallen quickly; look for

deeper holes as walleye move into over wintering areas. **Smallmouth Bass** - No Report: Try jig and plastics or crankbaits. **Rainbow Trout** - No Report: With recent flooding at the fish hatchery, many trout moved to the Maquoketa River.

Shell Rock River (Greene to Shell Rock)

Reports of anglers catching walleye and smallmouth bass on the Shell Rock River in Bremer and Butler Counties. **Walleye** - Good: Anglers are doing well with jigs and plastics. Water temperatures have fallen quickly; look for deeper holes as walleye move into over wintering areas. Anglers are still having luck fishing the shallower water. **Smallmouth Bass** - Good: Anglers are doing well with jigs and plastics.

Reports of anglers fishing the interior rivers and doing very well on walleye and smallmouth bass. Smaller lakes and ponds are now starting to ice over. Trout streams are in excellent condition for the upcoming weekend. 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 fallen to 8.6 feet and is expected to remain stable this week. Water temperature is near freezing with ice forming in the backwaters. **Walleye** - Slow: Try vertical jigging with hair jigs tipped with a minnow below the Lock & Dam. **Sauger** - Fair: Jig spoons or a hair jig with minnows in the tailwaters of the Lock & Dam.

Mississippi River Pool 10

River level at Lynxville has fallen to 17.2 feet and is expected to stabilize next week. Water temperature is 35 degrees at the Lock and Dam 9. Ice in the backwaters may not yet be safe. **Walleye**- Slow: Try vertical jigging with hair jigs tipped with a minnow below the Lock & Dam. **Sauger** - Fair: Jig spoons or a hair jig with minnows in the tailwaters of the Lock & Dam.

Mississippi River Pool 11

River level at Guttenberg is 8.8 feet and is predicted to stabilize near 8 feet next week. Water temperature is 33 degrees at Lock and Dam 10. **Walleye** - Slow: Try vertical jigging with hair jigs tipped with a minnow below the Lock & Dam. **Sauger** - Fair: Jig spoons or a hair jig with minnows in the tailwaters of the Lock & Dam.

Upper Mississippi River levels have come down and are expected to stabilize this week. Backwaters are forming ice, but ice thickness is variable with open water areas. Some ice in the main channel coming down may impact fishing.

Mississippi River Pool 12

Water levels are receding and are 8.5 feet at the Dubuque Lock and Dam and at 10.7 feet at the RR bridge. Water clarity is good. The water temperature is around 35 degrees. **Walleye** - Good: Some anglers are using three way rigs with a minnow and some are pulling crankbaits.

Mississippi River Pool 13

Water levels are receding and are 9.3 feet at the Bellevue Lock and Dam. The gates are back in operation at the Bellevue dam. Water clarity is good. The water temperature is around 35 degrees. The north ramp at Sabula is not in use this year due to bridge construction. The DNR ramp at Bellevue is still somewhat flooded. **Walleye** - Good: Some anglers are using three way rigs with a crawler and some are pulling crankbaits.

Mississippi River Pool 14

Water levels are receding and are 9 feet at Fulton Lock and Dam, 12.1 feet at Camanche and 6.7 feet at LeClaire. Water clarity is good. The water temperature is around 35 degrees. **Walleye** - No Report: Expect walleye and sauger fishing to pick up soon as water levels recede.

Mississippi River Pool 15

Water level is receding and is 9.7 feet at Rock Island. Water clarity is good. The water temperature is around 35 degrees.

The water has receded off most boat ramps, but levels are still unseasonably high. Backwater ice of 1-2 inches reported throughout the district. If you have any angling questions, please contact the Bellevue Fisheries Station 563-872-4976.

Mississippi River Pool 16

Tailwater stage at Lock and Dam 15 in Davenport is 9.87 feet and has been falling this past week. Flood stage for Lock and Dam 15 is 15 feet. The Marquette St ramp is open. **Sauger** - Slow: Tailwater fishing for saugers has been slow with the cold temperature below the dam and Sylvan Slough. Try fishing with jigs and minnows or trolling three way rigs with stick baits. **Walleye** - Slow: Walleye fishing has been slow below the dam and Sylvan slough.

Mississippi River Pool 17

Tailwater stage is 9.15 feet at Lock and Dam 16 in Muscatine and has been falling the past few days. The gates are still out of the water at the dam. Tailwater fishing for walleyes and saugers has been slow due to the high water conditions.

Mississippi River Pool 18

We have received no information about fishing on this water body this week.

Mississippi River Pool 19

Tailwater stage is 8.21 feet at Lock and Dam 18 above Burlington and is falling. Flood stage is 10 feet at Lock and Dam 18. We have not received any fishing information for this pool this week.

River levels have been falling this past week. Main channel water temperature is around 35 degrees. Some ramps are still closed due to high water. Tailwater fishing for walleye and saugers has been slow. Unsafe ice conditions. If you have questions on fishing Pools 16-19, contact the Fairport Fish Hatchery at 563-263-5062.

SOUTHEAST

Lake Belva Deer

Both of the boat ramps currently remain ice free. There is some ice on the lake back in the trees, but most of the lake is still open.

Lake Darling

There is a thin layer of ice over most of the lake; about 1/4 to about 1/2 inch thick. The ice will most likely will melt if we get any warm weather. Boat docks are being pulled out today.

Lost Grove Lake

The boat docks were pulled out on Nov. 16th and the gate was closed and locked up for the winter at the boat ramp down by the dam. The west ramp was iced in, but the middle ramp still had open water and access to the rest of the lake, which was pretty much still ice free due to the wind.

For more information on the above lakes and rivers, call the Lake Darling Fisheries Office at 319-694-2430.

Central Park Lake

The lake is full after the renovation project; fingerling fish have been stocked.

Coralville Reservoir

The lake level is 689 feet on Nov. 21 and is falling. It is dropping about 1 foot per day. The ramp in Lake Macbride State Park, Curtis Bridge, and at West Overlook are now open.

[Diamond Lake](#)

Minnows are not allowed here. **Bluegill** - Fair: Use small worms or jigs tipped with worms. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Anglers are catching fish off the jetties. Jigs tipped with worms work best. Most fish are 8-9 inches.

[Iowa Lake \(Iowa Co.\)](#)

Black Crappie - Fair: Try small jigs and/or minnows in 15-20 feet of water.

[Kent Park Lake](#)

The lake is currently drained for a lake restoration project.

[Lake Macbride](#)

The motor restriction is off; any sized motor may be used at no-wake speed (5 mph). Water temperatures are around 40 degrees. The fish cleaning station at the primitive campground has been shut down. The boat docks have been removed. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Fish over structure in 15-20 feet of water. There are a lot of 12 inch fish right now. **Walleye** - Fair: Jig in 10-15 feet of water. Fish can be caught shallower towards evening along windblown rock. **Wiper (Hybrid Striped Bass)** – Fair: Minnows or jigs work best. Most fish have been in 15-20 feet of water.

[Pleasant Creek Lake](#)

The lake is still about 1 foot low. The fish cleaning station is closed. **Walleye** - Slow: Try trolling or jigging over the roadbeds or new rock structures.

[Prairie Park Fishery](#)

Trout were stocked here Nov. 2. You must have a trout stamp to fish for and/or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** – Fair.

[Sand Lake](#)

Trout were stocked here on Oct. 19. You must have a trout stamp to fish for and/or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** - Fair:

[Terry Trueblood Lake](#)

Trout will be stocked here on Nov. 2. You must have a trout stamp to fish for and/or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** - Fair.

For more information, contact the Lake Macbride Fisheries Station at 319-624-3615.

[Lake Miami](#)

Fishing pressure has been low with the recent colder temperatures. **Largemouth Bass** - Slow: Use rubber worms in the cedar tree piles. **Bluegill** - Slow: Use small jigs tipped with live bait in the brush piles and standing timber. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Try minnows or jigs tipped with a minnow around the cedar tree piles. Drifting minnows in the lower half of the lake can also produce some crappies that are suspended.

Lake Sugema

The north ramp is closed due to a parking lot construction project. Fishing pressure has been low with the recent colder temperatures. **Bluegill** - Slow: Use small jigs tipped with live bait around the fishing jetties and the standing timber. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Try minnows and jigs in the standing timber. **Walleye** - Slow: Use minnows and jigs around the dam and other rip-rapped shorelines.

Lake Wapello

Fishing pressure has been low. **Largemouth Bass** - Slow: Try rubber worms or jig-n-pig combos in the cedar tree piles. **Bluegill** - Slow: Use small jigs tipped with live bait around the fishing jetties. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Drift minnows in 6-10 feet of water. Try jig and minnows in the cedar tree piles.

Ottumwa Park Pond South

2000 trout were stocked on Oct. 26th. **Rainbow Trout** - Fair: Use small in-line spinners, casting spoons, twister tails or tube jigs.

Rathbun Reservoir

The current lake level is 906.45 msl. Normal operating elevation is 904.0 msl. Skim ice is forming along the shoreline in some areas. Lake Rathbun has zebra mussels, so make sure to properly drain, clean, and dry equipment before transporting to another water body. **Walleye** - Slow: Try jig and minnows vertically jigged around underwater humps and submerged points. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Use minnows and jigs in the brush piles.

Red Haw Lake

Fishing pressure has been low. **Largemouth Bass** - Slow: Try rubber worms or crawdad imitating baits in the brush piles and other underwater structures. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Drift minnows for suspended fish. Try minnows and jigs in the brush piles. **Bluegill** - Slow: Use small jigs tipped with live bait around the fishing jetties and along the dam.

Skim ice is starting to form around the shoreline, making shore fishing difficult. 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

Ada Hayden Heritage Park Lake

Trout were stocked Nov. 16th. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Use small in-line spinners, casting spoons, twister tail or tube jigs salmon eggs and live minnows.

Banner Lake (south)

Trout were stocked on Oct. 25th. **Rainbow Trout** - Fair: Use small in-line spinners,

casting spoons, twister tail or tube jigs and live minnows.

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

Walleye - Good: Despite the high flow, walleyes are being caught below the Saylorville and Red Rock spillways. Jig live minnows or cast shad imitating plastics. **Wiper (Hybrid Striped Bass)** - Good: Cast white twister tails, flukes or paddle tails to imitate shad below the Red Rock spillway.

[Lake Petocka](#)

Trout were stocked on Oct. 24th. **Rainbow Trout** - Fair: Use small in-line spinners, casting spoons, twister tail or tube jigs and live minnows.

[Terra Lake](#)

Trout were stocked on Oct. 24th. **Rainbow Trout** - Fair: Use small in-line spinners, casting spoons, twister tail or tube jigs and live minnows.

For more information on Central Iowa lakes and rivers, call Ben Dodd at 641-891-3795 or Andy Otting at 515-204-5885.

[Big Lake \(Including Gilbert's Pond\)](#)

Around 1000 rainbow trout were stocked on Oct. 25th. Trout are fun to catch and readily bite on lures and baits used for bluegill and crappie. **Rainbow Trout** – Fair.

There has been very little fishing activity in the southwest district this past week. Cold weather and skim ice (not safe) is keeping anglers away. For more information, contact the Cold Springs office at 712-769-2587.