



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa Fishing Report

Conservation and Recreation



**Freeze time
with your favorite
fishing buddy.**

[Top Iowa Fishing Spots for the Week of February 14.](#)

February Fishing Podcast

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](#)

There is around 10 inches of ice near the boat ramp. **Bluegill** - Slow: Catch keeper bluegills in the middle of the lake and along the east side with a small jig tipped with a waxworm fished in 10-15 feet of water.

[Bacon Creek Lake](#)

The DNR will stock rainbow trout at Bacon Creek Lake this Saturday, Feb. 16th at 1:30 p.m.

[Black Hawk Lake](#)

The winter aeration system in Town Bay is in operation; beware of open water and thin ice in Town Bay. There is around 14 inches of ice off the boat ramp of Ice House Point. Be aware of thin ice or open water near Ice House Point, along the Denison Beach area, and in the east basin near the outlet. Conditions are improving, but they are still variable throughout the lake. Check ice thickness often. **Bluegill** - Fair: Use a small jig tipped

with waxworm in the rock pile out front of Gunshot Hill. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Use a small jig tipped with waxworm near the Ice House Point boat ramp.

[Black Hawk Pits](#)

There is around 10 inches of ice near the boat ramp. Ice is variable; check ice thickness often when venturing out. **Bluegill** - Fair: Use waxworms fished near the bottom.

[Brushy Creek Lake](#)

Anglers are fishing mostly near the north boat ramp, in the northeast arm of the lake, and near the southeast boat ramp near the big island. Look out for thin ice near the beach and in the main lake. Ice conditions are improving; check ice thickness often. **Bluegill** - Fair: Try waxworms fished on a small jig in the northeast arm of the lake. **Black Crappie**— Fair: Use a minnow and spoon in about 20-30 feet of water near submerged structure. Try also waxworms and spikes on a small jig. **Yellow Perch** - Slow: Anglers are picking up a few yellow perch while fishing for crappie.

[Moorland Pond](#)

The DNR stocked rainbow trout on Feb 9.

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

Ice conditions on Storm Lake are improving, but are still variable. Most areas of the lake have 15-18 inches of ice. Avoid ice along pressure seams, in the middle of the lake near the big island, and any other off-colored ice. Use caution and check ice thickness often. **Walleye** - Fair: Use minnows and jigging spoons in the dredge cuts on the east side of the lake in about 10-14 feet of water. Low light conditions are best. **Yellow Perch** - Slow: Use a small spoon and waxworm in the east end of the lake. **White Bass** - Fair: Anglers are picking up some white bass in the east end of the lake and deeper dredged areas while fishing for walleye.

Most ice in the Black Hawk district is 10 to 18 inches. Be aware of any thin ice or open water; geese are still keeping areas open on some lakes. Use caution and check ice thickness often. For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

[Clear Lake](#)

The ice has several inches of snow on it. **Yellow Bass** - Fair: Start shallow with a small jig or jigging spoon tipped with several spikes or a waxworm near the Baptist camp and in the Little Lake. You have to keep moving to stay on fish. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Lots of small fish are being caught. If you're not going to use the fish you catch, please release them. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Use jigging spoons tipped with a minnow head in the early morning. **Walleye** - Slow: Best bite is early morning and evening.

[Lower Pine Lake](#)

Bluegill – Slow.

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: Anglers are catching large yellow bass from the basin. Move often to stay on the school of active fish. **Bluegill** - Good: Numbers of fish are being caught from the south end of the lake; sorting is needed.

Five Island Lake

Yellow Bass - Good: Some activity reported on the lake; you need to search to find active fish. **Walleye** - Fair: Report of fish being caught during the evening hours with traditional baits.

Lake Pahoja

Bluegill - Good: Recent surveys show good numbers of angler acceptable size bluegill in the lake with large fish over 8 inches not uncommon.

Lost Island Lake

Yellow Bass - Fair: Yellow bass activity has slowed, but persistent anglers can catch good numbers of fish.

Spirit Lake

Yellow Perch - Good: Good numbers of angler acceptable size fish continue to be caught from the basin in 18 - 20 feet of water; the bite improves through the day. Sorting is needed with numbers of small fish also in the catch. **Bluegill** - Fair: Report of bluegill action fishing traditional sites.

Trumbull Lake

Yellow Perch - Good: Yellow perch continue to be harvested from the lake; anglers are very pleased with the quality of the fish caught.

Virgin Lake

Walleye - Good: Good opportunities to catch fish averaging 16 inches; best action is half hour before sunset to half hour after sunset. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Fish averaging 8 inches are common.

West Okoboji Lake

Bluegill - Good: Action has improved; persistent anglers will catch good numbers of large bluegills from the lake.

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

NORTHEAST

Decorah District Streams

Gravel roads are rough after thawing. Ice and packed snow on roads make travel slow. Think spring. The [2019 trout stream stocking calendar](#) is now available on-line. **Brown Trout** - Fair: Melt water cooled and muddied streams. Find springs and fish this area; water will be warmer. **Rainbow Trout** - Fair: Fish areas trout are seeking food and protection. Move a fly along a current break. **Brook Trout** - Fair: If you match the right insect hatch switch pattern.

Lake Hendricks

Open water around the aerator; use caution in this area. No motorized vehicles allowed here. **Bluegill** - Slow.

Lake Meyer

Visibility is improving after last week's melt. Melt water slowed fish activity. Ice depth is 10 inches under an inch of snow. Few anglers have been out. **Bluegill** - Slow. **Largemouth Bass** - Slow.

Volga Lake

Freeze and thaw cycles are causing variable ice conditions around edges. Use caution getting on the ice. Water clarity is improving. Few anglers have been out. **Yellow Perch** - Slow: Use a small jig tipped with a spike or waxworm. **Bluegill** - Slow.

Continued cold and active weather patterns are slowing angling activities. Melt water from Feb. 2 caused low visibility on area lakes and streams. Visibility is improving as things refreeze. For current fishing information, please call the Decorah Fish Hatchery at 563-382-8324.

Alice Wyth Lake

Reports of anglers catching bluegill and crappie. Some sorting may be needed. **Bluegill**-Fair: Try fishing a jig tipped with a waxworm just off of the bottom. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Use a jig tipped with a waxworm or crappie minnow. Look for suspended fish or near the bottom.

Wintry weather and snow accumulation has set in across Iowa. There have been few to no reports this week with the heavy snowfall. Trout streams are 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 fallen to 8.2 feet this week. Avoid shoreline edges and areas of current. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Some northern pikes are being caught on tip-ups using shiners in backwater lakes and marina areas. **Bluegill** - Slow: Mid-winter bluegill fishing can be variable, but providing good action with decent sized fish being caught. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: A few perch are being caught through the ice in deeper cuts in backwater lakes. **Largemouth Bass** - Slow: Several reports of bass being caught on pole or tip-ups in backwater lake areas. **Black Crappie** - Fair: The crappie bite picked up this week. Try glow jigs tipped with minnows from mid-morning to early afternoon.

Mississippi River Pool 10

River level at Lynxville has risen to 16 feet. The ramp is frozen over at the dam. Anglers have been crossing at Sny Magill with about 6 inches ice on Johnson Slough. Stay on the path as ice is weaker closer to the ramp. Access Bussey Lake from the upper end to avoid marginal ice. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Some northern pikes are being caught on tip-ups using shiners in backwater lakes and marina areas. **Bluegill** - Slow: Mid-winter bluegill

fishing can be variable, but providing good action with decent sized fish being caught. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: A few perch are being caught through the ice in deeper cuts in backwater lakes. **Black Crappie** - Fair: The crappie bite picked up this week. Try glow jigs tipped with minnows from mid-morning to early afternoon.

[Mississippi River Pool 11](#)

River level at Guttenberg has fallen to 7.9 feet. Ramps are frozen over at the dam. Avoid heavily snow covered ice, shorelines and areas of current. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Some northerns are being caught on tip-ups using shiners in backwater lakes and marina areas. **Bluegill** - Slow: Mid-winter bluegill fishing can be variable, but providing good action with decent sized fish being caught. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: A few perch are being caught through the ice in deeper cuts in backwater lakes. **Black Crappie** - Fair: The crappie bite has picked up this week. Try glow jigs tipped with minnows from mid-morning to early afternoon.

Upper Mississippi River areas received heavy snowfalls which can insulate the ice below. Use caution and watch for areas of thin ice under snow. Water levels have fallen and are expected to stabilize. Use caution around the shoreline edges and any areas with current. Ice depth is averaging around ten inches. The panfish bite has been steady, but you need to move around to find active fish.

[Mississippi River Pool 12](#)

Water levels are variable this week and are 8 feet at the Dubuque Lock and Dam and 10.3 feet at the RR bridge. This is down from last week. Water clarity is good. The water temperature is around 33 degrees. **Bluegill** - Good: Some ice fishing is occurring in Pool 12; stay alert about ice conditions. Bluegill fishing has been good at times. **Black Crappie** - Fair: A few reports of nice crappies mixed in with bluegills. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: A few yellow perch are mixed in with bluegills and crappies.

[Mississippi River Pool 13](#)

Water levels have bounced around this week and are 9.3 feet at the Bellevue Lock and Dam. Water clarity is good. The water temperature is around 33 degrees. The tailwater boat ramp has ice on it again. The north ramp and parking area at Sabula is open after bridge construction. **Sauger** - No Report: Three way rigs with minnows or a jig and minnow is the most popular ways to catch walleye and sauger this winter. No one was fishing this week due to poor weather conditions. **White Bass** - Fair: Small white bass are reported at Sabula and Browns lakes, but ice conditions are marginal in places. **Yellow Perch** - Fair.

[Mississippi River Pool 14](#)

Water levels are dropping and are 7.9 feet at Fulton Lock and Dam, 11.3 feet at Camanche and 5.9 feet at LeClaire. This is down from last week. Water clarity is good. The water temperature is around 33 degrees. **Sauger** - No Report: Jig and minnow or three way rigs with minnows are the most popular ways to catch walleye and sauger. Poor weather conditions have limited fishing activity. **Bluegill** - No Report: Finally some decent ice reported in places; use caution.

[Mississippi River Pool 15](#)

The water level is dropping at Rock Island to 11.1 feet. Water clarity is good. The water temperature is around 33 degrees. No fishing has been reported to us in Pool 15.

The tailwaters are iced in at the ramps. Ice fishing conditions are variable, but decent ice can be found in places. Even with the extreme cold temperatures, some thin ice is still reported in some backwaters. Water levels are dropping 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 10.9 feet and is falling. We have not received any ice fishing or ice condition reports for this pool. The high and fluctuating river levels could create unsafe ice conditions. The Marquette St. ramp in Davenport is iced in and snow covered.

[Mississippi River Pool 17](#)

Tailwater stage is 10.5 feet at Lock and Dam 16 in Muscatine and has been falling the past couple days. We have not received any ice fishing or ice condition reports for this pool this week. The high and fluctuating river levels could create unsafe ice conditions. The Big Timber ramp is closed due to water over the parking lot.

[Mississippi River Pool 18](#)

Tailwater stage is 12.9 feet at Lock and Dam 17 at New Boston and is falling. Flood stage is 15 feet. We have not received any ice fishing or ice condition reports for this pool. The Toolsboro ramp is closed due to water over the ramp and parking area. The high and fluctuating river levels could create unsafe ice conditions.

[Mississippi River Pool 19](#)

Tailwater stage is 9 feet at Lock and Dam 18 and is falling. Flood stage is 10 feet. We have not received any ice fishing or ice condition reports for this pool. The high and fluctuating river levels could create unsafe ice conditions.

River stages have been falling the past few days. We have not received any ice fishing reports or ice condition reports this week. With the high and fluctuating river levels, there could be unsafe ice conditions. If you have questions on fishing Pools 16-19, contact the Fairport Fish Hatchery at 563-263-5062.

SOUTHEAST

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

Anglers in Benton/Linn County are having luck in the backwaters. **Bluegill** – Good. **Black Crappie** – Good.

[Coralville Reservoir](#)

The lake level has risen and fallen a foot; the flow has been high. Ice conditions are

extremely variable and the water is dirty.

Diamond Lake

Black Crappie - Fair: Fish the basin or around deeper brush for 8- to 9-inch crappies. **Bluegill** - Fair: Try a jig/waxie around brush.

Hannen Lake

Most of the lake has 8-10 inches of ice. There is an ice fishing derby here this Saturday, Feb. 16th from 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. **Bluegill** – Fair. **Black Crappie** – Fair.

Kent Park Lake

The lake is currently drained for a lake restoration project.

Lake Macbride

With recent thaws and freezes, the ice is variable. Most ice is 6-8 inches. **Bluegill** - Fair: Try jigs/waxies fished over rock or brush. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Fish around stumps or trees in 10-20 feet of water. **Wiper (Hybrid Striped Bass)** - Slow: Use minnows, spoons or jigs/waxies around stumps or off rock breaks in 15-20 feet of water.

Otter Creek Lake

Most of the lake has 10-12 inches of ice. **Bluegill** – Slow. **Yellow Bass** – Slow.

Pleasant Creek Lake

The lake has 6-10 inches of ice depending on location. The west end has more ice than the east end. Fishing has been poor. **Bluegill** – Slow. **White Bass** – Slow.

Union Grove Lake

The lake has 10-12 inches of ice. The aeration system has been turned on, so there is open water at the southwest end of the lake. **Bluegill** – Fair. **Black Crappie** - Slow:

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

Lake Miami

There are very few reports this week as ice anglers are just starting to get out with better ice conditions. Anglers are catching some bluegills and crappies. Check ice thickness often and use caution getting on and off the ice.

Lake Sugema

The lake recently froze over; use caution. There are not many angler reports as ice conditions just started to improve with the cold weather. Use caution around the shoreline as the warm weather over the weekend has made this ice thin.

Lake Wapello

Very few reports this week as anglers are just starting to get out with the better ice conditions. Use caution and check ice thickness often.

Rathbun Reservoir

The current lake level is 905.83 msl. Normal operating elevation is 904.0 msl. The lake recently froze over; variable ice thickness. Use caution and check ice thickness often.

Lake Rathbun has zebra mussels, so make sure to properly drain, clean, and dry equipment before transporting to another water body.

Red Haw Lake

The warm weather over the weekend made the ice messy and thawed around the shoreline. Use caution if venturing out on the ice. **Bluegill** - Fair: Try small jigs tipped with a waxworm.

Ice conditions in the Rathbun district are variable across the district; use caution if venturing out. 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

Rainbow Trout - Good: Trout were stocked Feb. 2nd. The bite has been good. Use jigging spoons tipped with waxworms. Trout tend to stay close to the perimeter of the lake; don't setup over water deeper than 15 feet.

Big Creek Lake

Black Crappie - Fair: Use live minnows or waxies on glow jigs in the afternoons and evenings. Fish brush piles deeper than 15 feet and the edges of the roadbeds and creek channel mid-lake. **Walleye** - Fair: Some walleyes are being caught on live minnows still fished and minnows or minnow heads on jigging spoons. Fish creek channel edges, humps and roadbeds throughout the lake from the Marina to just south of the west boat ramp.

Don Williams Lake

Black Crappie - Good: Crappie fishing has been good especially late afternoon and evenings. Fish mid-lake near creek channel edges, stumps and sunken habitat in 10 to 20 feet of water.

Hickory Grove Lake

The lake is drawn down around 9 feet, but ice fishing is still possible. **Bluegill** - Good: Good catches of bluegills with crappies mixed in are coming off the lake.

Lake Petocka

Rainbow Trout - Good: Trout were stocked on Feb. 1. Use small jigging spoons tipped with waxworms.

Good ice conditions continue in Central Iowa. There is 8 to 14 inches of ice. 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)

Big Lake was stocked with 1000 rainbow trout on Feb. 9th. Ice was 7 inches. **Rainbow**

Trout - Good: Use small jigs minnows or wax worms.

Cold Springs District Farm Ponds

Ice conditions on ponds have improved; use caution, especially in the southern part of the district. Never fish alone and drill holes often when venturing out. **Bluegill** – Good. **Black Crappie** – Fair.

Lake Anita

Anglers report good success fishing tree piles. **Bluegill** - Fair: Anglers report catching bluegill around brush piles. Fish average 8.5 inches. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Crappies are being caught in tree piles close to the creek channel. Early morning and late afternoon bite is best.

Littlefield Lake

Ice thickness is 8 to 10 inches. Find fish around cedar tree piles placed in the lake. **Bluegill** - Good: Fishing is good for bluegill if you can get to a cedar tree pile. Sorting is needed for larger fish. **Black Crappie** - Slow: A few large black crappie are being caught in the afternoon around cedar tree piles.

Nodaway Lake

Ice thickness is 6 to 8 inches. Find fish in the brush piles. **Bluegill** - Fair: Look for bluegills in the tree piles. Fish will average 8 inches. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Late afternoon bite is best. Fish will average 10 inches.

Orient Lake

Anglers report good panfishing at Orient this week. **Black Crappie** - Good: Find 10- to 12-inch crappies in the tree piles out from the dam. **Bluegill** - Good: Use waxworms in the tree piles. Fish will average 7.5 inches.

Prairie Rose Lake

Anglers report good ice conditions at Prairie Rose. **Bluegill** - Good: Bluegills up to 10 inches are being reported. Anglers were able to move around to look for fish with better ice conditions. Find a brush pile to fish around. **Black Crappie** - Slow: A few 10 inch crappie are being caught around the tree piles.

Viking Lake

Ice conditions have improved at Viking Lake. **Black Crappie** – Slow: Target brush piles. Early morning and late afternoon bite is best.

Southwest district ice conditions are similar to last week. Most reports are 6 to 10 inches of ice. Geese are still keeping areas open on some lakes. For more information, contact the Cold Springs office at 712-769-2587.

Green Valley Lake

About 12 inches of ice. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Catch crappie up to 8.5 inches with minnows or jigs tipped with waxworms fished near cedar tree brush piles. **Bluegill** - Fair: Catch bluegill up to 8 inches using jigs tipped with waxworms fished near cedar tree brush piles.

Summit Lake

About 12 inches of ice; areas of thin ice especially near the HWY 25 bridge. **Bluegill** - Slow: Catch bluegill up to 8 inches with jigs tipped with a waxworm fished near cedar tree brush piles or main lake points. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Catch crappie up to 12 using minnows fished near main lake points.

Three Mile Lake

About 12 inches of ice. **Walleye** - Slow: Catch walleye up to 16 inches with minnows fished near the roadbed early and late in the day. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Catch crappie up to 9 inches using minnows or jigs tipped with waxworms fished near cedar tree brush piles.

Twelve Mile Creek Lake

About 12 inches of ice. **Black Crappie** - Good: Catch crappie up to 9.5 inches using jigs tipped with a minnow or waxworm fished near cedar tree brush piles or flooded timber near creek channels. **Bluegill** - Good: Catch bluegill up to 8 inches with jigs tipped with a waxworm fished near cedar tree brush piles or flooded timber near creek channels.

Most Mount Ayr district lakes have variable ice conditions from 6-12 inches. Use caution and drill test holes. For more information, please call the Mount Ayr Fisheries office at 641-464-3108.