



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

# Iowa Fishing Report

Conservation and Recreation



[Top Iowa Fishing Spots for the Week of December 5](#)

[December 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

### [Black Hawk Lake](#)

Main lake has been partially ice covered most of the week. Inlet bridge, Town Bay, and around the fish house are open as of Thursday. **Any ice is unsafe. Yellow Perch** - Fair: Anglers are catching perch from the inlet bridge and the fish house on Ice House Point. Fish up to 10-12 inches are being caught with some sorting. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Use crawlers, power bait bites or small minnows on a jig fished under a bobber from the inlet bridge.

### [Brushy Creek Lake](#)

Most of the lake has been ice free this last week. Limited fishing activity. There has been some musky angling activity; a few anglers have picked up some panfish.

### [North Raccoon River \(above State Highway 175 bridge near Auburn\)](#)

**Walleye** - Fair: Use chubs or twisters in deeper areas below riffles. **Channel Catfish** -

Fair: Try cut bait and crawlers fished in deeper areas below riffles and on outside of bends.

### Storm Lake (including Little Storm Lake)

Storm Lake has been partially to fully covered with skim ice most of the week. **Any ice is unsafe.** Open areas around inlet and some shorelines.

Most lakes in West Central Iowa have been partially covered with skim ice this last week with limited fishing activity. Open bays and inlets have provided for some opportunities. **Any ice is unsafe.** Walleye fishing on rivers remains productive. For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

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### Blue Pit

1,500 Rainbow trout were stocked at Blue Pit in Mason City on Nov 26. You need a valid fishing license (age 16 and older) and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Use an inline spinner or a small jig.

### Clear Lake

Clear Lake froze over this week. Ice thickness varies from .5 to 1.5 inches. **Walleye** - 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.

## **NORTHEAST**

### Cedar River (above Nashua)

Anglers fishing back eddies and open water areas below dams are catching fish. With high river levels, backwaters are ice free or water sitting on top of a thin layer of ice; going to these areas is not recommended. **Walleye** - Fair: Fish below dams or find deeper pools in the eddies. Use a hook tipped with a crawler or a jig with a twister tail or ring worm.

### **Decorah District Streams**

Stocked fish remain in streams through the winter creating excellent angling opportunities. Trout streams with good flows remain open even during winter. Shotgun deer season opens Saturday; wear bright orange and be visible to hunters. **Brown Trout**- Good: Try a fly imitating small silvery fish. Feathered spinner baits work well when fished through pools. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Use an ultra-light pole and reel for fun action. A worm fished under a bobber in slow water works well. Try a spinner in eddies and around structure. **Brook Trout** - Good: With fewer insect hatches, try using flies imitating minnows such as a wholly bugger.

### Lake Hendricks

Most of the lake is covered with a thin layer of ice. **Not safe for fishing.** Motorized vehicles are not allowed on the ice. Park will be closed through the weekend.

### Lake Meyer

As of Dec. 5, Lake Meyer is capped over. **Ice not safe for fishing.** No anglers have been out.

### Turkey River (above Clermont)

Most backwaters have lost ice with high water levels and warmer temperatures. Motorized vehicles are not allowed on Vernon Springs impoundment when covered with ice.

### Volga Lake

Volga Lake is starting to skim over. Few anglers have been out.

Temperatures through the weekend in the upper 30's for highs to below freezing for lows. Flows remain high on all area rivers. Trout streams good to excellent. For current fishing information, please call the Chuck Gipp Decorah Fish Hatchery at 563-382-8324.

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### Cedar River (Nashua to La Porte City)

Anglers have been doing fair to good on walleye on the Cedar River in Black Hawk County. **Walleye** - Fair: Cast and retrieve crankbaits or use jig and minnow near instream habitat or deeper overwintering areas.

### **Manchester District Streams**

The extended forecast for this coming weekend looks very nice for trout fishing. Most streams have great populations of wild brown trout. There has been some midge hatches with warmer weather.

### Maquoketa River (above Monticello)

Recent fish sampling efforts in October showed a good population of walleye on the Maquoketa River in Delaware County. **Walleye** - Fair: Cast and retrieve crankbaits or use jig and minnow near instream habitat or deeper overwintering areas.

### Shell Rock River (Greene to Shell Rock)

Reports of walleye being caught on the Shell Rock River in Bremer and Butler counties this past week. **Walleye** - Fair: Cast and retrieve crankbaits or use jig and minnow near instream habitat or deeper overwintering areas.

### Wapsipinicon River (Tripoli to Troy Mills)

There have been no reports of walleye being caught on the Wapsipinicon River in Buchanan County this past week; reports were good a couple weeks ago. **Walleye** - Fair: Cast and retrieve or troll crankbaits or use jig and minnow near instream habitat or deeper overwintering areas.

Interior rivers are in good condition. There have been fair to good reports on walleye fishing. Opening shotgun deer season this weekend; wear orange if on the rivers. All 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 is 9 feet at Lansing and is stable this week. Water temperature is 35 degrees. **Bluegill** - Fair: Look for bluegill to move into deeper backwater areas out of the current. **Walleye** - Fair: A lot of smaller fish are being caught. Vertical jigging with twister tails or trolling crankbaits has been successful in Lock and Dams tailwaters. **Sauger** - Fair: Vertical jigging with twister tails or jig tipped with minnows has had the most success in Lock and Dams tailwaters.

### Mississippi River Pool 10

River level is 618.4 feet at Lynxville and is predicted to fall to 617 feet this week. Water temperature is 36 degrees at Lock & Dam 9. **Bluegill** - Fair: Look for bluegill to move into deeper backwater areas out of the current. **Walleye** - Fair: A lot of smaller fish are being caught. Vertical jigging with twister tails or trolling crankbaits has been successful in Lock and Dams tailwaters. **Sauger** - Fair: Try jigs tipped with a minnow in the tailwaters of the Lock & Dams.

### Mississippi River Pool 11

River level is 10 feet at Guttenberg and is expected to fall to 9 feet by late next week. The Turkey River boat ramp is closed. Water temperature is 35 degrees at Lock & Dam 10. **Bluegill** - Fair: Look for bluegill to move into deeper backwater areas out of the current. **Walleye** - Fair: A lot of smaller fish are being caught. Vertical jigging with twister tails or trolling crankbaits has been successful in Lock and Dams tailwaters. **Sauger** - Fair: Try jigs tipped with a minnow in the tailwaters of the Lock & Dams.

Upper Mississippi River levels are dropping and expected to remain stable. Water temperature is in the mid-30's.

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### Mississippi River Pool 12

The water levels is 9.6 feet at the Dubuque Lock and Dam and 11.7 feet at the RR bridge. River levels at Dubuque are expected to recede over the next week. The water temperature is 36 degrees. Water clarity is good. **Sauger** - Good: Tailwater sauger fishing has started; most anglers are using a jig and minnow. Lots of small sauger and small walleye are being reported. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Some crappies are being reported off Marina docks and backwater trees. **Walleye** - Fair: Most anglers are pulling crank baits in the tailwaters.

### Mississippi River Pool 13

Water level is 10.9 feet at the Bellevue Lock and Dam and is falling. The water temperature is 37 degrees. Water clarity is good. Most ramps are back open on Pool 13. **Sauger** - Good: Most anglers are using a jig and minnow. **Walleye** - Fair: Some walleyes are being reported by anglers pulling double Rapalas. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Some nice crappie are being caught out of backwaters on small minnows.

### Mississippi River Pool 14

The water level is 10.4 feet at the Fulton Lock and Dam, 13.2 feet at Camanche and 7.5 feet at LeClaire. Water temperature is around 37 degrees. River levels are expected to

recede over the next week. **Walleye** - Fair: Some walleyes are being taken on double Rapala rigs. **Sauger** - Good: Use a jig tipped with a minnow. Lots of small fish reported.

### [Mississippi River Pool 15](#)

Water levels are 11.2 feet at Rock Island and will fall this week. The water temperature is around 38 degrees. The water clarity is good.

Water remains high for this time of year, but levels are dropping. Tailwaters are receiving high fishing pressure. If you have any fishing questions, please contact the Bellevue Fisheries Station 563-872-4976.

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### [Mississippi River Pool 16](#)

Tailwater stage is 11.23 feet at Lock and Dam 15 in the Quad Cities and is forecast to start falling. Flood stage is 15 feet at Lock and Dam 15. Some boats have been out fishing in Sylvan Slough for walleye and sauger, but we have not received any reports on how the bite has been. The boat ramp at Clark's Ferry is still closed. **Walleye** - No Report: Look for walleyes by the Lock and Dam or in Sylvan Slough. Use jigs and minnows or troll three-way rigs with minnows or stick baits. **Sauger** - No Report: Look for saugers by the Lock and Dam or in Sylvan Slough. Try jigs and minnows or troll three-way rigs with minnows or stick baits. **White Crappie** - Slow: Some crappies were being caught in Sunset Marina. Try vertical jigging with minnows or plastics around the docks. Some crappies can also be caught in the Andalusia Island complex fishing around brush piles.

### [Mississippi River Pool 17](#)

Tailwater stage is 10.34 feet at Lock and Dam 16 in Muscatine and is forecast to start falling over the weekend. Flood stage is 15 feet at Lock and Dam 16. River stage is 12.05 feet at Muscatine; flood stage is 16 feet. The Kilpeck Landing is open. We have not received any reports on tailwater fishing for walleye and saugers. The gates are out of the water at the Lock and Dam. **Walleye** - No Report: Look for walleyes by the dam. Try vertical jigging with minnows or pulling three-way rigs with minnows or stick baits. **Sauger** - No Report: Use jigs and minnows or pull three-way rigs with minnows or stick baits in the tailwaters. **White Crappie** - No Report: Look for crappies in the backwaters. Try fishing around brush piles with jigs and minnows or jigs and plastics.

### [Mississippi River Pool 18](#)

Tailwater stage is 11.77 feet at Lock and Dam 17 at New Boston and is forecast to start falling by the weekend. Flood stage is 15 feet at Lock and Dam 17. River stage is 11.24 feet at Keithsburg; flood stage is 14 feet. The Toolsboro landing is open. A couple of areas have shallow water over the Toolsboro Road. The gates are out of the water at the dam. We have not received any tailwater fishing reports for walleye and sauger. **White Crappie** - No Report: Look for crappies in the backwaters; use jigs and minnows or jigs and plastics around brush piles.

### [Mississippi River Pool 19](#)

Tailwater stage is 8.28 feet at Lock and Dam 18 and is forecast to start falling over the weekend. Flood stage is 10 feet at Lock and Dam 18. River stage is 13.47 feet at

Burlington; flood stage is 15 feet. River stage is 527.5 feet at Fort Madison; flood stage is 528 feet. We have not received any fishing report information for this pool.

River stages are below flood stage. River stage has been fairly steady the past few days, but is forecast to start falling. Main channel water temperature is around 37 degrees. We have not received much tailwater fishing reports for walleye and sauger. If you have questions on fishing Pools 16-19 contact the Fairport Fish Hatchery at 563-263-5062.

## SOUTHEAST

### Lake Belva Deer

Water temperature is hanging around the upper 30's. The upper end of the lake is in the hunting area (non-refuge) part of Belva Deer. **Bluegill** - Slow: Find bluegills out over the deeper water habitat; vertical jigging or slow drift trolling works best.

### Lake Darling

The park will be closed this weekend, December 7 and 8, for the park deer hunt. Boat docks are pulled for the winter.

### **Lake Darling District Farm Ponds**

Air temperatures are staying in the 40's; enough to prevent ice from forming.

### Lost Grove Lake

The docks have been pulled for the winter and the gate is closed at the parking lot by the dam. Lost Grove is open to hunting.

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

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### Cedar River (La Porte City to Cedar Rapids)

**Walleye** – Fair.

### Lake Macbride

Water temperature was 39-40 degrees this week. Any sized motor may be used at no wake speed (5 mph). The fish cleaning stations and docks are out for the winter. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Try jigging over brush piles, stumps, or rock piles in 10-15 feet of water. **Walleye** - Slow: Target rock reefs during the day and windblown rock shores at night. **Wiper (Hybrid Striped Bass)** - Fair: Fish are next to breaks setting up for winter.

### Liberty Centre Pond

This pond is found on Cherry Street in North Liberty. You need a valid fishing license (age 16 and older) and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** – Fair.

### Pleasant Creek Lake

The main ramp is open after parking lot repaving. The boat docks have been taken out for the winter. **Walleye** – Slow: Fish rock bars points or the dam. **Muskellunge** – Slow: Use large chubs or suckers.



### [Prairie Park Fishery](#)

You need a valid fishing license (age 16 and older) and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** – Fair.

### [Sand Lake](#)

This is the quarry on the Northeast end of Marshalltown. **Rainbow Trout** - Fair: You need a valid fishing license (age 16 and older) and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. **Wiper (Hybrid Striped Bass)** – Slow: Most fish have been around 2 pounds.

### [Wapsipinicon River \(Troy Mills to Oxford Junction\)](#)

**Black Crappie** - Slow: Reports are from fishing slack water areas of Linn County; minnows work best. **Walleye** - Fair: Cast jigs and swimbaits.

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

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### [Lake Miami](#)

Try small jigs tipped with live bait for bluegills along the rocks and shorelines.

### [Lake Wapello](#)

Try small jigs for bluegills and crappies.

### [Ottumwa Park Pond South](#)

Trout were stocked on Oct. 25th. Use in-line spinners, casting spoons, and small tube and twister jigs. You need a valid fishing license (age 16 and older) and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

### [Rathbun Reservoir](#)

The current lake level is 905.85 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. Most docks have been pulled out for the season and most campgrounds are closed. Try jig and minnows around underwater structure for crappie.

### [Red Haw Lake](#)

Try small jigs fished around the shorelines for bluegills.

There has been very little angler activity in the last week. 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.

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