

July 11 Iowa Outdoors

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Gone fishing for summer

Making plans for summer getaways with family and friends? Add fishing to your list. Plan a day trip or bring along fishing gear on your next weekend or camping trip.

The best fishing is early in the morning or later in the evening and after dark. Like anglers, fish adjust to the heat. “Fish will move to deep water to cool off during the brightest, hottest part of the day,” said Joe Larscheid, chief of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Fisheries Bureau.

Look for fish in the outside edge of weed beds or structure, near shade during the day. Find underwater structure such as brush piles or rock reefs within a lake with the interactive fishing atlas or fish structure maps on the DNR website at www.iowadnr.gov/Fishing/Fishing-Maps.

Fish often are suspended in deeper water, just above the thermocline - a midsummer phenomenon many lakes develop creating two layers. Below the thermocline, often 8 to 10 or 12 feet deep, oxygen is nearly nonexistent. Many fish suspend just above the thermocline, where the water is cooler.

“Bluegills may spawn several times in the summer,” advises Larscheid. Look for them in traditional spawning areas in shallow water. “If you are not successful in these areas, try drift fishing in deep water (15-20 feet).”

Largemouth bass and channel catfish will be close to shore. Look for bass near cover; stumps, wood structure. “Bass and bluegills will use vegetation for cover and shade. It also holds a variety of zooplankton and insects which attract baitfish.”

“The white bass and wiper bite gets hot when the water heats up,” said Larscheid. “Hot weather is also a good time to catch big channel catfish and largemouth bass.”

White bass are active in the summer in the flood control reservoirs (Coralville, Red Rock, Rathbun and Saylorville). Follow the seagulls to spot white bass. Calm days are best because the seagulls can see the shad easier and will be feeding on them. Splashes on the water surface are good signs, too, as the shad leap from the water trying to escape.

Find a great place to fish on the DNR website at fishing.iowadnr.gov, along with the weekly fishing hot spots and tips for catching specific fish species this summer.

Media Contact: Joe Larscheid, Chief of Fisheries, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-201-3376.

DNR completes Operation Dry Water campaign

DES MOINES, Iowa – The Iowa Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Bureau participated in the national Operation Dry Water campaign June 30 – July 2.

The goal of the campaign was to raise awareness about the dangers of boating while under the influence and promote safety while boating.

During the three-day enforcement operation, 153 officers participated, spending more than 1,800 hours making contact with 1,463 vessels and 5,808 boaters. Six Boating While Intoxicated (BWI) arrests were made and 478 citations/warnings were issued.

“We stress the dangers boating while under the influence of drugs or alcohol,” said Jeff Swearngin, DNR law enforcement bureau chief. “It is no different than driving a vehicle under the influence; in fact, at times it can be more dangerous. It is a serious problem.”

As always, the DNR reminds boaters to boat sober, always wear your life jacket and take a boating safety educational course.

Officers spent time at Okoboji, Clear Lake, Saylorville, Coralville Reservoir/Lake MacBride, Lake Delhi and both the Missouri and Mississippi rivers.

The DNR Conservation Officers were assisted by Arnolds Park Police Department, Louisa County Sheriff’s Office, Clayton County Sheriff’s Office, Johnson County Sheriff’s Office, DNR Park Rangers, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Polk County Conservation Board, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, Illinois DNR and Wisconsin DNR.