



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa Fishing Report

Conservation and Recreation

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[Top Iowa Fishing Spots for the Week of March 1.](#)

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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Trout Stream Stocking Calendar

The schedule is set - it's time to plan your northeast Iowa trout fishing trips. Get the most out of your trip with information about each stream's location, qualities, and other fun facts on the [trout streams webpage](#).

NORTHWEST

Arrowhead Lake

Ice was 12 inches thick off the boat ramp on Thursday. Conditions will deteriorate over the next week. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Use minnows or waxworms on a jig in areas with structure anywhere from 10-15 feet deep. **Bluegill** - Fair: Catch keeper size bluegills with a teardrop jig tipped with a waxworm fished near structure.

Bacon Creek Lake

Rainbow trout were stocked on Jan. 27th.

Black Hawk Lake

The winter aeration system is on in Town Bay. Expect areas of thin ice and open water in Town Bay. On Thursday, ice thickness was 14 inches off of Ice House boat ramp with thinner ice right along shoreline. **Bluegill** - Fair: Use a teardrop jig and waxworm fished off the bottom near Gunshot Hill, the rock pile off of Gunshot Hill, and the rock pile off Cottonwood Point. **Walleye** - Fair: Use a spoon and minnow fished on the rock piles off Cottonwood Point and in the east basin. Low light hours and after sunset are best.

Brushy Creek Lake

Ice conditions are variable and will deteriorate quickly over the next week. Use caution; areas of weak ice and open water near shore and around trees. **Bluegill** - Fair: Decent numbers of bluegill catches reported with waxworms on a teardrop jig. Some sorting is needed. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Use a minnow on a jig fished near structure in 10-15 feet of water.

Moorland Pond

Rainbow trout were stocked on Jan. 20th. Use small tube jigs tipped with bait or live minnows under a bobber.

Storm Lake (including Little Storm Lake)

Most ice is around 15 inches, but there are variable conditions near shore - with some areas of thinner ice and open water so use caution. Conditions will deteriorate over the next week. **Walleye** - Fair: Use rattle spoons and jigging spoons with a minnow head in 8 feet of water on the edges of the old dredged area in the west end. Most of the action is at the west end of the lake off Casino Beach, Frank Starr, and College Island. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Some perch have been picked up while targeting walleye. **Black Crappie** - Fair: A few crappies are being picked up while fishing for walleye.

As of Thursday, ice anglers are out and most lakes in western Iowa have 10-15 inches of ice with some thinner and weaker areas along shoreline. Ice conditions will deteriorate over the next week, especially along shore and near inflows; use caution. For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

Clear Lake

Ice thickness is 16-20 inches. Avoid areas near the aerators. **Yellow Bass** - Good: The

bite has picked up. Use light tackle and be mobile to stay on fish. The best bite is still at early morning and the last hour of light. **Walleye** – Fair: Try jigging spoons and minnow heads. The best bite is still at early morning and the last hour of light. **Yellow Perch** - Fair.

Crystal Lake

Ice thickness is 17-20 inches. Avoid areas near the aerators. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Use a small jig tipped with spikes or a minnow head near the edge of the dredge cut. **Bluegill** - Fair: Try a small jig tipped with spikes near the edge of the dredge cut.

Rice Lake

Ice thickness is 17-21 inches. Avoid areas near the aerators. **Walleye** - Slow.

Silver Lake (Worth)

Ice thickness is 17-19 inches. Avoid areas near the aerators.

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: Yellow bass action continues; best early morning with jigs tipped with wigglers. Fish traditional sites and move often to find active fish.

Five Island Lake

Walleye - Fair: Ice anglers have had good pole bending activity with numbers of fish harvested. **Yellow Bass** - Good: Action has picked up, good numbers of fish have been harvested; fish the dredge cuts for the best action. **Black Crappie** - Good: Incidental catches by yellow bass anglers reflect bonus numbers in the creel.

Ingham Lake

Use caution; thin ice conditions around the aeration system. **Walleye** - Fair: Walleye action has slowed; persistence will be rewarded with a good catch.

Lost Island Lake

Yellow Bass - Good: Good numbers of fish are being caught; fish the Stoney Point area for the best action. **Walleye** - Fair: Numbers of fish are reported from Lost Island Lake; change tactics with the changing weather conditions. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Some yellow perch and black crappie are being caught by anglers fishing for yellow bass.

Minnewashta Lake

Bluegill - Good: Report of bluegill being caught; sorting is needed. Anglers are also catching crappie and yellow bass mixed in the bite.

Silver Lake (Dickinson)

Use caution; thin ice conditions around the aeration system.

Silver Lake (Palo Alto)

Walleye - Fair: Ice anglers report catching walleye; best bite is during late day. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Fishing action has been very variable; ice anglers are catching nice size perch.

Spirit Lake

Limited access to the lake. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Reports of yellow perch harvest; success has been spotty.

Trumbull Lake

Yellow Perch - Good: Persistent and patient anglers will be rewarded with good numbers of yellow perch 12 inches and larger in the creel. **Northern Pike** - Good: Action has picked up; anglers are harvesting northern pike from the lake.

West Okoboji Lake

Bluegill - Good: Bluegills continue to be fussy; persistence and patience will be rewarded with good numbers of fish caught. Reports of improving water clarity. **Northern Pike** - Good: Good numbers of fish up to 36 inches are being caught. Tip-up action will improve in the next few weeks.

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

NORTHEAST

Cedar River (above Nashua)

Unsafe ice conditions. Water levels are up from snow melt and clarity is marginal. **Bluegill** - Fair: Find fish in slack water out of current. Stumps, brush piles, and deep holes hold fish. Use small jigs tipped with spikes or waxworms. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Find fish in 8-10 feet of water. Use minnows, waxworms, and multi-colored spikes on a teardrop shaped bladed lure. **Walleye** - Slow: Use jig tipped with plastic twister tail or minnow.

Decorah District Streams

Current water clarity is marginal, but should improve by the weekend. Streams with better watersheds will clear quicker. Slack water in deeper holes may freeze, but should melt in the afternoon. With a slower bite, use bigger flashier flies and lures. Parking lots on wildlife management areas are not plowed. Use care when parking along the road. **Brook Trout** - Fair: Midges hatch all season. Try wholly buggers or a flashy fly for a hungry brookie. **Brown Trout** - Good: Afternoon melt water should turn on a brownie. Insects will hatch on sunny afternoons. Use small midge patterns. With off color water, try a flashy spinner or fly. **Rainbow Trout** - Fair: Drift a feathered spinner, crankbait or a hook tipped with worm along an undercut bank.

Lake Hendricks

Ice thickness is at least 20 inches. Water is stained yellow. Few anglers are out. Anglers finding habitat will find fish. Open water around the aerator. The bite is improving as daylight hours lengthen. No motorized vehicles are allowed on the ice. **Black Crappie**- Fair: Move around to find fish. Use a small jig tipped with a minnow head. **Bluegill**- Fair: Use small jigs tipped with waxworms or spikes around structure.

Lake Meyer

Ice thickness is about 20 inches; edges are starting to get soft. Water is turbid. Afternoon bite is best. When the bite slows, move to a different spot. Few anglers have been out. **Bluegill** - Fair: Use small jigs tipped with spikes or waxworms. **Black Crappie**- Fair: Key in to brush and dangle a small jig about a foot or two above the stems.

Volga Lake

Ice thickness is 20+ inches; water is sitting on the ice from melting and edges are getting soft. Water is stained. Afternoon bite is best. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Drop your lure about 3 feet above structure and watch them swim up to the bait. Use small teardrop shaped jigs tipped with spikes or waxworms. **Bluegill** - Fair: Fish around structure in 14-16 feet water about a foot off the bottom.

Temperatures warm to low 50s through the weekend. Most stream clarity is marginal at best with current runoff activity. For current fishing information, please call the Decorah Fish Hatchery at 563-382-8324.

Cedar River (Nashua to La Porte City)

The Cedar River is beginning to open. Anglers are fishing from the shore using jigs and live baits. **Walleye** – Fair.

Manchester District Streams

Trout Streams are in good condition. Continue to use winter tactics including streamers, jigs, and crankbaits. **Brown Trout** - Good: Browns can be easier to catch on days where the water color is stained. **Rainbow Trout** – Slow. **Brook Trout** – Slow.

Martens Lake

Use caution. **Bluegill** – Slow.

Shell Rock River (Greene to Shell Rock)

The Shell Rock is beginning to open and some shoreline fishing is available. **Walleye** – Fair.

Ice fishing is still happening on northeast Iowa lakes and ponds, but areas of ice are starting to degrade around shorelines, vegetation, or water flow. River ice is unsafe. Use caution and stay safe. Eastern Iowa rivers are beginning to open; open water fishing

opportunities are available on the Cedar, Shell Rock, and Maquoketa. Flows are above seasonal averages on rivers, but are not excessively high for spring. Area trout streams are in good 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 is fairly stable at 7.9 feet. Ice is breaking on the shorelines of backwaters and sloughs. Main channel areas are opening and most boat ramps will be accessible by the weekend. **Walleye** - Slow: Some fish are in the tail-waters. Expect the bite to pick up with warmer water temperatures this week. **Black Crappie**- Slow: Occasional crappie being caught in just 2-4 feet of water just under the ice. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Late ice can be a good time for perch fishing with some of the larger fish being caught this time of year. **Sauger** - No Report: Use jig and minnows fished off the bottom in the tailwater areas and deeper side channels. **Bluegill** - Fair: Some last ice bluegills still being caught in backwaters with no current.

Mississippi River Pool 10

River level at Lynxville is stable around 15.5 feet. The tail-waters are open. Backwater ice is opening along shorelines and sloughs and main channel have opened up. The slough at Sny Magill has opened up. Expect most ramps to be free of ice by the weekend. **Walleye** - Slow: Some fish are in the tail-waters. Expect the bite to pick up with warmer water temperatures this week. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Late ice can be a good time for perch fishing with some of the larger fish being caught this time of year. **Sauger** - Slow: Some fish are in the tail-waters. Expect the bite to pick up with warmer water temperatures this week. **Bluegill** - Fair: Some last ice bluegills still being caught in backwaters with no current. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Occasional crappie being caught in just 2-4 feet of water just under the ice.

Mississippi River Pool 11

River level at Guttenberg is 8.9 feet and is stable this week. The tail-waters are open. Backwater ice is opening along shorelines and sloughs and main channel have opened up. Expect most ramps to be free of ice by the weekend. **Walleye** - Slow: Some fish are in the tail-waters. Expect the bite to pick up with warmer water temperatures this week. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Occasional crappie being caught in just 2-4 feet of water just under the ice. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Late ice can be a good time for perch fishing with some of the larger fish being caught this time of year. **Sauger** - Slow: Some fish are in the tail-waters. Expect the bite to pick up with warmer water temperatures this week. **Bluegill** - Fair: Some last ice bluegills still being caught in backwaters with no current.

Upper Mississippi River levels are fairly stable with main channel areas free of ice. Most ramps are ice free and some open water fishing is occurring. Ice fishing is not recommended due to unsafe ice.

[Mississippi River Pool 12](#)

Water levels are stabilizing at 7.7 feet at the Dubuque Lock and the RR bridge is 9.8 feet. This is down a few feet from last week. Hawthorne boat ramp was not open as of yet, but maybe by this weekend. Some ice flows still reported.

[Mississippi River Pool 13](#)

Water levels are stabilizing at 8 feet at Bellevue. This is down four feet from last week. Bellevue City ramp is open, but some ice flows reported. Paddlefish season is now underway. Please review the [Paddlefishing regulations](#). **Paddlefish** - No Report: Seasons just opened. **Sauger** - Good. **Walleye** - Good.

[Mississippi River Pool 14](#)

Water levels are falling and are 8.5 feet at Fulton, 11.5 feet at Camanche and 6.3 feet at LeClaire. This is down a few feet from last week. Paddlefish season has just began. Please review the [Paddlefishing regulations](#). Clinton 30th street was open, but ice flows are common and the water is dirty. **Paddlefish** - No Report: Season just opened.

[Mississippi River Pool 15](#)

Water levels are still rising and are 10.2 feet at Rock Island. This is down two feet from last week.

The River levels have dropped throughout the district. Tailwaters are opening up for boat launching, but ice flows are common. Ice fishing has nearly all disappeared. If you have any angling questions, please contact the Bellevue Fisheries Station 563-872-4976.

[Mississippi River Pool 16](#)

Tailwater stage is 10.14 feet at Lock and Dam 15 in the Quad Cities. Marquette St boat ramp is open. Tailwater fishing for walleyes and saugers has been slow with the higher and muddy water conditions. Unsafe ice conditions with the recent rain and warm weather.

[Mississippi River Pool 17](#)

Tailwater stage is 9.53 feet at Lock and Dam 16 in Muscatine. We have not received any reports on tailwater fishing for walleyes and saugers. There are unsafe ice conditions due to recent rains and warm weather.