



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa Fishing Report

Conservation and Recreation



FISHING

Ten categories of angling fun.

FRENZY!

[Top Iowa Fishing Spots for the Week of April 19.](#)

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.

- [NORTHWEST](#)
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Spring Family Trout Fishing Events - Last Weekend

Watch the fish being stocked and try to catch your own trout this Saturday at [Prairie Park](#) in Cedar Rapids (10:30 a.m) or [Sand Lake](#) in Marshalltown (11 a.m.).

If you didn't have a chance to attend one of our spring urban trout stockings, don't worry, there's still plenty of trout to catch.

[Find an urban trout lake](#)

NORTHWEST

[Black Hawk Lake](#)

Water temperatures are around 41 degrees. **Bluegill** - Fair: Use waxworms and crawlers in Town Bay. Most action has been in Town Bay and along Ice House Point, the

floating dock, and from the inlet bridge. **Yellow Perch** - Slow: A few perch have been picked up from the floating dock in Town Bay and from the inlet bridge. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Use crawlers and minnows fished from shore and from the floating dock. **Walleye** - Slow: Expect walleye shore fishing action to pick up as water temperatures gradually warm. Fish a minnow or leech under a bobber or throw a twister along the Ice House Point shoreline, North Shore, and East Shore near the outlet.

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

Water temperature is around 40 degrees. **Walleye** - Fair: Throw twisters or fish minnows under a bobber from the state marina. Expect good walleye action along the east and north shores as water temperatures continue to climb. **White Bass** - Fair: Anglers are having luck fishing from shore on the east side and from the marina. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Catch crappie from the marina using minnows and a twister.

Some western Iowa lakes are providing good shore fishing action. Water temperatures are in the low 40's. For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

[Beeds Lake](#)

Beeds Lake is ice free.

[Clear Lake](#)

Clear Lake is about 75 percent ice free. The boat ramp at city beach is accessible.

[Lake Cornelia](#)

Lake Cornelia is ice free. The docks at the boat ramp are in.

[Lower Pine Lake](#)

The docks at the boat ramp are in.

[Shell Rock River \(above Greene\)](#)

River levels are up. Try fishing the slack water areas below a dam with live bait.

[Upper Pine Lake](#)

The docks at the boat ramp are in.

[Winnebago River](#)

River levels are rising with the melting snow.

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](#)

Channel Catfish - Good: Ice out brings excellent channel catfish fishing as catfish go on a feeding frenzy. There is open water at the spillway and bridges; Lower Gar Lake has extensive open water. Fish these areas for some early "pole bending" action.

[Silver Lake \(Palo Alto\)](#)

Walleye - Fair: Numbers of fish are reported caught.

Lakes remain ice covered. Very limited fishing activity on the Iowa Great Lakes. Forecasted warmer temperatures will help melt the ice. For more information throughout the week, contact the Spirit Lake Fish Hatchery at 712-336-1840.

NORTHEAST

[Cedar River \(above Nashua\)](#)

Water clarity is poor. Water levels are stable, but will rise with snow melt. Visit the [USGS Current Water Data website](#) for current water level information.

Decorah District Streams

Catchable trout are stocked in all streams as weather and water conditions permit. Listen to the trout stocking hotline (563-927-5736) for daily plans. Plan a trip to your favorite trout stream. Check out [this year's trout stream stocking calendar](#). Trout country received 6-12 inches of snow. Most snow covered roads should melt quickly when the sun comes out. Fun in snow covered woods continues for hearty trout anglers. **Brook**

Trout- Good: Use a streamer to mimic minnows or subsurface flies like scuds or pheasant tail nymphs. **Brown Trout** - Good: Melt water and run-off inputs drive Brown Trout into a feeding frenzy. Use small midge, caddis, or flashy streamer patterns. **Rainbow Trout**- Good: Float a feathered spinner or crankbait past a freshly stocked fish. A piece of worm under a bobber also works in the deeper holes.

[Lake Hendricks](#)

Few anglers have been out.

[Lake Meyer](#)

Anglers have not been out. Water is off color with recent snow event and melt water.

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

Water clarity is poor. Water levels are up, but currently stable. Conditions could change fast depending on snow melt. Water temperatures were low 40.

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

Water levels are relatively stable, but clarity is poor. Visit the [USGS Current Water Data website](#) for more information.

[Volga Lake](#)

Few anglers have been out. Docks are in.

Temperatures reaching upper 50s for highs, dipping into 30's at night. Cooler nights will help slow the snow melt. Our area received 6-12 inches of snow on Wednesday. Turbid conditions on area rivers and streams. For current fishing information, please call the Decorah Fish Hatchery at 563-382-8324.

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

River levels remain high and muddy. Backwater areas may produce some catfish. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Use cut bait.

[Heritage Pond](#)

Heritage Pond was stocked last Saturday, April 14th with both rainbow and brook trout. Trout fishing should be good; the weather forecast looks to be more of average seasonal temperatures next week. **Brook Trout** - Good: Cast and retrieve flashy spinner baits like a panther martin jig or similar jigs and spinners. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Cast and retrieve flashy spinner baits like a panther martin jig or similar jigs and spinners.

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

Reports of anglers catching walleye, smallmouth bass, channel catfish and even an occasional trout on the Maquoketa River in Delaware County. The river remains up a bit, but clarity is not bad. **Walleye** - Fair: Cast and retrieve a jig with plastics tipped with a minnow. **Smallmouth Bass** - Fair: Cast and retrieve a jig with plastics tipped with a minnow. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Try cut bait fished on the bottom.

[North Prairie Lake](#)

North Prairie Lake was stocked last Saturday, April 14th with both rainbow and brook trout. Trout fishing should be good; the weather forecast looks to be more of average seasonal temperatures next week. **Brook Trout** - Good: Cast and retrieve flashy spinner baits like a panther martin jig or similar jigs and spinners. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Cast and retrieve flashy spinner baits like a panther martin jig or similar jigs and spinners.

[Shell Rock River \(Greene to Shell Rock\)](#)

The Shell Rock River has been high and muddy, but is starting to drop in water levels. No fishing reports for this week.

[Wapsipinicon River \(Tripoli to Troy Mills\)](#)

No reports on the Wapsipinicon River as the river continues to rise and remains muddy. It may be the perfect time to try for some catfish on the backwater areas of the river. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Use cut bait fished on the bottom.

Few fishing report this past week as winter will not let go of its grasp. Interior river levels have been on the rise and conditions are muddy with the snow melt. Trout stream stockings continue and streams remain 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 has risen nearly a foot with a steady rise predicted this week. Water temperature is 36 degrees. Look for backwaters and areas of lesser current away from the main channel that concentrate fish. **Walleye** - Slow: Walleye are in spawning mode, but the recent cool down in water temperatures will prolong the spawn. **Yellow Perch** - Slow: Perch are still in spawning areas along the rocky shorelines and near the tailwaters of the dam. Expect the bite to pick up again once temperatures rise. **Sauger** - Slow: Sauger are in spawning mode, but the recent cool down in water temperatures will prolong the spawn. **Northern Pike** - Slow: Pike spawn is ending; anglers report catching some nice pike with live bait.

Mississippi River Pool 10

River level at Lynxville has come up several feet to 18.8 feet with a slow steady rise expected.. Water temperature is 36 degrees. Look for backwaters and areas of lesser current away from the main channel that concentrate fish. **Walleye**- Slow: Walleye are in spawning mode, but the recent cool down in water temperatures will prolong the spawn. **Yellow Perch** - Slow: Perch are still in spawning areas along the rocky shorelines and near the tailwaters of the dam. Expect the bite to pick up again once temperatures rise. **Sauger** - Slow: Sauger are in spawning mode, but the recent cool down in water temperatures will prolong the spawn. **Northern Pike** - Slow: Pike spawn is ending; anglers report catching some nice pike with live bait.

Mississippi River Pool 11

River level at Guttenberg has risen two feet at 10.3 feet with a slow steady rise this week. The gates are all up at the Lock and Dam. Water temperature is 36 degrees. Look for backwaters and areas of lesser current away from the main channel that concentrate fish. **Walleye** - Slow: Walleye are in spawning mode, but the recent cool down in water temperatures will prolong the spawn. **Yellow Perch** - Slow: Perch are still in spawning areas along the rocky shorelines and near the tailwaters of the dam. Expect the bite to pick up again once temperatures rise. **Sauger** - Slow: Sauger are in spawning mode, but the recent cool down in water temperatures will prolong the spawn. **Northern Pike** - Slow: Pike spawn is ending; anglers report catching some nice pike with live bait.

The Upper Mississippi River is on the rise with heavy snowfalls and melting. Water clarity is diminishing as levels rise. The bite has slowed with water temperature staying unseasonably cold near 36 degrees. Expect a fast warm-up and increase in fish activity as temperatures rise.

[Mississippi River Pool 12](#)

Water levels are rising at 9.3 feet at the Dubuque Lock and the RR bridge is 11.5 feet. Levels are up from last week and will continue to rise all week. The channel water temperature is still only around 39 degrees. **Yellow Perch** - No Report: Some scattered reports of ring perch catches earlier, but not many people out fishing for them. **Northern Pike** - No Report: The pike spawn is late this year due to the weather; they might be still spawning some. Once done, pike can go on a good bite. Try flashy spinners. **Walleye** - Slow: Fishing has been good at times for walleye and sauger this spring, but poor weather is limiting activity and slowing the spawning season. Some walleyes may still be spawning.

[Mississippi River Pool 13](#)

Water levels at Bellevue are 10.3 feet and rising. Both Bellevue City ramp and the DNR ramp are open, but no courtesy dock is available yet at the DNR ramp. Paddlefish season is over for the year. The channel water temperature is around 40 degrees. **Paddlefish** - No Report: Paddlefish season is closed for the year. **Sauger**- Slow: Hit or miss. Some reports of sauger being caught. Most are being taken on minnow rigs. **Walleye** – Slow: Nice slot fish are still being reported, but fishing is slow. Minnow with a jig or pulling crank baits are the most popular strategies.

[Mississippi River Pool 14](#)

Water levels are rising and are 9.7 feet at Fulton, 12.6 feet at Camanche and 7.3 feet at LeClaire. The water temperature is around 41 degrees. Paddlefish season is now closed for the year. **Paddlefish** - No Report: Paddlefish season is closed for the year. **Sauger**- Slow: Just not many people out walleye or sauger fishing in the cold weather. Both species are still spawning due to the extended cold water season.

[Mississippi River Pool 15](#)

Water levels are 9.8 feet at Rock Island. Water levels are up from last week and will be on a steady rise this upcoming week. Conditions are still favorable for angling.

The River levels will be rising this upcoming week. Water conditions are conducive to angling, but the weather has not been. Paddlefish season is closed for the year. If you have any angling questions, please contact the Bellevue Fisheries Station 563-872-4976.

[Mississippi River Pool 16](#)

Tailwater stage is 9.85 feet at Lock and Dam 15 in the Quad Cities and has been rising the past few days. There has been some walleye and sauger fishing in Sylvan Slough. **Sauger** - Slow: Some saugers are being caught in Sylvan Slough. Try fishing with jigs and minnows or trolling three-way rigs with stick baits.

[Mississippi River Pool 17](#)

Tailwater stage is 8.29 feet at Lock and Dam 16 in Muscatine and has been rising the past few days. Tailwater fishing for walleyes and saugers has been slow. **Sauger**- Slow: Try fishing fishing in the tailwaters with jigs and minnows or pulling three-way rigs and stick baits. **Walleye** - Slow: Look for walleyes in the tailwaters or down by GPC. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with stick baits.

[Mississippi River Pool 18](#)

Tailwater stage is 9.98 feet at Lock and Dam 17 at New Boston and is rising. The gates are out of the water at the dam. River stage is forecasted to reach 11.9 feet over the weekend. We have not received any fishing reports for this pool this week.

[Mississippi River Pool 19](#)

Tailwater stage is 6.39 feet at Lock and Dam 19 above Burlington and is rising. River stage is forecasted to reach 8.2 feet over the weekend. Flood stage at Lock and Dam 18 is 10 feet. We have not received any fishing reports for this pool this week.

River stages have been on the rise the past few days. Main channel water temperature dropped to 41 degrees; water clarity has been fair. We have not received much for fishing reports this week. If you have questions on fishing Pools 16-19, contact the Fairport Fish Hatchery at 563-263-5062.

SOUTHEAST

[Big Hollow Lake](#)

Water temperature is holding around 44 degrees. Just need some warm days to get it going up to normal. Very little angler activity because of the weather.

[Lake Belva Deer](#)

Cold, windy weather with a little snow is keeping most anglers away. **Largemouth Bass**- Slow: A few are getting picked up in the deeper water. Try on the upper end of the lake around the mounds.

[Lake Darling](#)

Water temperature is holding in the low 40's. Water clarity is pretty good, except when the wind stirs the lake bottom up. **Black Crappie** - Slow: A few anglers have been catching some crappies out in deeper water over the habitat.

[Lost Grove Lake](#)

A few anglers have been out. Cold, windy weather doesn't make for the best fishing weather. **Largemouth Bass** - Slow: Most angler trips are pretty short, but they are picking up some bass out around the deeper habitat.

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

[Central Park Lake](#)

The lake is currently drained as a renovation project is finishing up this spring.

[Coralville Reservoir](#)

The lake is at normal spring pool of 679.4 feet. Boating above Lake Macbride Park is not recommended at this water level. **Channel Catfish** - Slow. **White Crappie** – Slow.

[Diamond Lake](#)

Black Crappie - Fair: Fishing had been slow, but it should pick up as the weather warms. Try small jigs fished around the rock jetties or brush piles. Most fish are 8-9 inches.

[Kent Park Lake](#)

The lake is currently drained for a lake renovation project. It is scheduled to be completed by the spring of 2019.

[Lake Macbride](#)

Water temperatures are in the mid 40's. All boat docks are in. All motor sizes may be used at no-wake speed (5 mph). **Black Crappie** - Slow: Try fishing jigs or minnows over deeper brush. There are lots of 10-12 inch crappies. **Walleye** - Slow: A few fish are being caught. A shallow water bite should improve as things warm up. Cast jigs or stick baits to windblown banks.

[Pleasant Creek Lake](#)

The lake is still 7-8 inches low from the restoration project. The main ramp is usable, but it is shallow; use caution. There is a boat dock in on the east lane. Be cautious when boating as new structures have started to be submerged.

[Prairie Park Fishery](#)

500 additional trout will be stocked here this Saturday, April 21 at 10:30. There will be a family fishing event held in conjunction with the stocking. 1500 trout had previously been stocked here on March 31. Iowa residents and nonresidents who are required to have a fishing license must pay the Trout Fee to fish for or possess trout. Exception: Anglers under 16 years old may possess or fish for trout without having paid the Trout Fee if they fish with a properly licensed adult who has paid the Trout Fee and together their

combined limit is 5. **Rainbow Trout** - Excellent: Try small jigs, spinners, live bait or artificial scented baits. **Brook Trout** – Fair.

Sand Lake

2000 trout will be stocked here this Saturday, April 21 at 11:00. There will be a family fishing event held in conjunction with the stocking. Iowa residents and nonresidents who are required to have a fishing license must pay the Trout Fee to fish for or possess trout. Exception: Anglers under 16 years old may possess or fish for trout without having paid the Trout Fee if they fish with a properly licensed adult who has paid the Trout Fee and together their combined limit is 5. **Rainbow Trout** - Excellent: Try small jigs, spinners, live bait or artificial scented baits. **Brook Trout** - Excellent: Try small jigs, spinners, live bait or artificial scented baits. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Some fish are being caught on warmer days.

Terry Trueblood Lake

You must have a fishing license and trout stamp to fish for and/or possess trout. **Brook Trout** – Fair. **Rainbow Trout** – Fair.

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

Lake Sugema

Try using cut bait for channel catfish. The water temperature is in the low 40's.

Lake Wapello

Use cut bait on the windblown shorelines to catch channel catfish this time of year. Catch largemouth bass around brush piles.

Ottumwa Park Pond South

Trout were stocked on March 30th. Try small tube and twister jigs, in-line spinners or casting spoons.

Rathbun Reservoir

The current lake level is 903.66 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. The water temperature is in the low 40's. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Use shad sides or cut bait on the windblown shorelines.

Red Haw Lake

Try cut bait near shorelines with the wind blowing in for channel catfish.

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

[Banner Lake \(south\)](#)

Rainbow Trout - Good: Trout were stocked on April 7th. Use inline spinners, small casting spoons, 1/8 ounce or smaller jigs with twister tails, and waxworms or minnows under a bobber.

[Big Creek Lake](#)

Walleye - Fair: Some anglers are starting to catch walleyes off points and rip rap shorelines in the mid and lower lake. They are being caught on jig and twister tails, jig and minnow, or slow trolling minnow rigs.

More Central Iowa reports will resume when warmer weather brings anglers back out. For more information on Central Iowa lakes and rivers, contact Andy Otting or Ben Dodd at 515-432-2823.

[Farm Creek Lake](#)

Farm Creek Lake will offer good early spring crappie fishing in the upper end as water temperatures warm.

[Lake Anita](#)

Crappies were caught this week at Lake Anita. As water temperatures warm, crappies will move into the pontoon area of the lake. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Cast a jig two feet under a bobber in the pontoon area of the lake. Limits of crappie are being taken on warm sunny days. **Bluegill** - Slow: A few quality size bluegills are being caught.

[Lake Manawa](#)

Warm sunny days offer good crappie fishing in the canals. Lake Manawa is also a good destination for early spring catfishing. **White Crappie** - Slow: A few crappies are being caught in the canals. Warm sunny days are best. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Fish the windy shoreline with shad sides or cut bait. Channel catfish in Manawa are all sizes.

[Meadow Lake](#)

Meadow has a good population of 10 inch black crappie.

[Prairie Rose Lake](#)

Prairie Rose will offer good panfishing this spring. The lake has quality sized bluegills and crappies are acceptable size. Target the brush piles.

[Viking Lake](#)

Find early spring crappies in the campground arm and behind the pontoon area. A few bass are being caught in the deeper brush piles. **Largemouth Bass** - Slow: Jig plastics in deeper brush piles.

Anglers can catch crappie on the right day. Reports of limits taken on warm sunny days. For more information, contact the Cold Springs office at 712-769-2587.

[Green Valley Lake](#)

Largemouth Bass - Slow: Catch largemouth bass up to 19 inches using crankbaits fished along the silt dams and rocky shoreline areas.

[Little River Watershed Lake](#)

Walleye - Slow: Catch walleyes up to 22 inches with jigs tipped with a minnow fished along the dam. **Largemouth Bass** - Slow: Catch largemouth bass up to 18 inches using jigs fished near cedar tree brush piles.

Lakes in the Mount Ayr district are 100% ice free. Water temperature in most district lakes is about 45 degrees. Limited fishing activity observed this week. For more information, please call the Mount Ayr Fisheries office at 641-464-3108.