



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa Fishing Report

Conservation and Recreation

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[Top Iowa Fishing Spots for the Week of April 11](#)

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](#)
- [NORTHEAST](#)
- [MISSISSIPPI RIVER](#)
- [SOUTHEAST](#)
- [SOUTHWEST](#)

NORTHWEST

[Beeds Lake](#)

The courtesy docks are in.

[Bluebill Lake](#)

The access gate to the boat ramp is open, but the courtesy dock has not been installed yet.

[Clear Lake](#)

The courtesy docks at McIntosh, Lynne Lorenzen and Bayside boat ramps are in. **Walleye** - Good: Fish the east shore after dark.

[Crystal Lake](#)

The docks are not in yet. No fishing activity reported.

[Lake Cornelia](#)

Lake Cornelia docks are not in yet. A few people have been fishing in the harbor and catching small yellows.

[Winnebago River](#)

Now is the time to target pike and walleye. Fish areas with current breaks near dams and where a stream enters the river.

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: Prime time is here; ice-out provides an excellent bite using traditional channel catfish baits. Fish twilight and after dark; fish will be on a feeding frenzy and provide lots of "pole bending" action.

[Spirit Lake](#)

Black Crappie - Good: Expect action to start in the Templar Park lagoon as the water warms.

[West Okoboji Lake](#)

Bluegill - Good: Traditionally, Triboji Lagoon provides the first action for bluegills. Expect action to start once the water temperature warms.

All Lakes are ice free, expect open water fishing to improve as the water warms. For more information throughout the week, contact the Spirit Lake Fish Hatchery at 712-336-1840.

NORTHEAST

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

Levels are stabilizing with excellent clarity. Anglers are seeing a nice variety of fish in the creel. **Channel Catfish** - Good: Use dead chubs fished in the impoundments or slack water areas. Keep your bait on the river bottom. **Walleye** - Fair: A few keeper size walleyes are taking bait. Try a jig tipped with a nightcrawler. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Pike are hitting spoons, crankbaits and hooks tipped with dead chubs below dams and slack water areas. **Smallmouth Bass** - Fair: Smallies are starting to show up. Use crankbaits for best luck.

Decorah District Streams

Trout streams are in good condition. Many gravel roads remain in rough shape; watch for soft spots, especially in parking lots. Catchable trout stocking season is in full swing; trucks will stock as many spots as possible. Check the [2019 trout stream stocking calendar](#) or call the stocking number at 563-927- 5736 to find out when your favorite trout stream will be stocked. **Brown Trout** - Good: Nice blue wing olive and a few minor caddis flies are hatching mid-afternoon. Fish are hitting just below the surface; nymph fishing might work best. **Rainbow Trout** - Excellent: Use a minnow or worm under a

bobber. Try also a leach pattern. **Brook Trout** - Good: Midges are hatching on sunny afternoons. If trout are chasing minnows at tails of riffles, try using a streamer or minnow imitating lure.

Lake Hendricks

Fish shallow bays and along rocky shorelines later in the day. **Black Crappie** - Good: Use a hook tipped with a minnow under a bobber near brush piles or sunny shoreline. **Bluegill** - Fair: Try a small hook tipped with a small piece of worm or left over waxies under a bobber. **Largemouth Bass** - Good: Jigs tipped with plastic twister tail or jerkbait will catch a hungry bass.

Lake Meyer

Anglers are catching a variety of fish. Catches rate vary with the changing weather patterns. Clarity is about 5 feet. Water temperature is mid-50s. **Bluegill** - Fair: Use small jigs tipped with a small piece of worm around brush or logs in the water. **Black Crappie** - Good: Try small plastic lures fished in shallow rocky shoreline. **Largemouth Bass** - Good: Crankbaits or jerkbaits work well. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Pike are in the shallows spawning now. Try swimbaits, spoons or a hook baited with a minnow.

Turkey River (above Clermont)

Water levels and flows are slowly falling. Clarity is excellent. **Walleye** - Good: Use a jig tipped with a minnow or shallow water crankbait in the slack water areas below dams. **White Sucker** - Good: Try a worm fished off the bottom. Suckers become more active when the water warms in the 50s.

Upper Iowa River (above Decorah)

Flows remain high, but levels are stabilizing. Clarity is excellent. Find water level information at <https://waterdata.usgs.gov/ia/nwis/rt>. **White Sucker** - Fair: Suckers are starting to bite. Use a worm fished on bottom. You might have to use a bit more weight to keep the line down with the high flows. **Walleye** - Good: A variety of lures will catch a pre-spawn walleye. Fish slack water below dams or off-channel areas.

Upper Iowa River (below Decorah)

Flows are high; river levels are stabilizing. Clarity is excellent. Water temperature is in the low 50's. **Walleye** - Good: Walleye are biting. Try jigs tipped with a minnow or crankbaits. **White Sucker** - Good: Use a hook tipped with a nightcrawler fished on the bottom. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Try cut bait or nightcrawlers. **Northern Pike** - Good: Pike are hitting dead chubs or suckers.

Volga Lake

Concentrate efforts along the shore and shallow warmer water. **Bluegill** - Slow: Use small jigs tipped with waxworms or spikes under a bobber in shallow areas. **Black Crappie** - Good: Try a hook tipped with a minnow under a bobber in shallow bays. **Largemouth Bass** - Good: Crankbaits and jigs tipped with a variety of plastics will hook a bass.

Good reports of fish biting throughout the district. Mixed precipitation through Friday with temperatures in the low 40's and breezy. Area streams and rivers levels are relatively stable with excellent clarity. Warming trend next week. For current fishing information, please call the Decorah Fish Hatchery at 563-382-8324.

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

Anglers are doing very well on walleye and channel catfish; smallmouth bass and northern pike have been only fair in Bremer and Black Hawk counties. **Walleye** - Good: Cast and retrieve jigs with plastics tipped with a minnow or nightcrawler. Walleye are in pre-spawn mode and on the move. **Smallmouth Bass** - Fair: Cast and retrieve jigs with plastics tipped with a minnow or nightcrawler. Try also artificial spinnerbaits. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Cast and retrieve large artificial baits or spoons. Try also floating a live shiner or sucker under a bobber. **Channel Catfish** - Good: Anglers are doing well on catfish using cut baits fished on the bottom.

[Heritage Pond](#)

Heritage Pond will be stocked with trout this Saturday, April 13 at 10 a.m. You must have a fishing license and a pay the trout fee to fish for and/or possess trout.

Manchester District Streams

Manchester trout streams remain in excellent condition, but access to some are in sloppy condition. Little Mill Creek in Jackson County will not be stocked for at least two weeks due to poor roads. Richmond Springs in Backbone State Park can be accessed through the north entrance only.

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

Good reports of walleye being caught on the Maquoketa River in Delaware County. **Walleye** - Good: Cast and retrieve jigs with plastics tipped with a minnow or nightcrawler. Walleye are in pre-spawn mode and on the move.

[Martens Lake](#)

Anglers are catching a few crappie in the canal at Sweet Marsh. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Cast and retrieve various colored tube jigs or float a crappie minnow under a slip bobber. **White Crappie** - Fair: Cast and retrieve various colored tube jigs or float a crappie minnow under a slip bobber.

[North Prairie Lake](#)

North Prairie Lake will be stocked with trout this Saturday, April 13 at 11 a.m. You must have a fishing license and a pay the trout fee to fish for and/or possess trout.

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

Anglers are catching walleye on the Shell Rock River. **Walleye** - Good: Cast and retrieve jigs with plastics tipped with a minnow or nightcrawler. Walleye are in pre-spawn mode and on the move.

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

Reports of anglers catching walleye on the Wapsipinicon River. **Walleye** - Good: Cast and retrieve jigs with plastics tipped with a minnow or nightcrawler. Walleye are in pre-spawn mode and on the move.

Good reports on the interior rivers of anglers catching walleye, smallmouth bass and northern pike. Rain is forecast for the next couple of days, so check river levels for the upcoming weekend. 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 16.9 feet at Lansing and is expected to stay near this level. Water temperature is 46 degrees. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Northern pike are spawning; the bite has slowed. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Try light tackle tipped with minnows fished near shore along marina areas. **Sauger** - Fair: Use small jigs tipped with minnows close to shore in flooded areas. **Walleye** - Good: Fish with three-way rigs tipped with a minnow below the dam.

Mississippi River Pool 10

River level is 26.8 feet at Lynxville and is expected to bump up slightly. Water temperature is 46 degrees. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Northern pike are spawning; the bite has slowed. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Try light tackle tipped with minnows fished near shore along marina areas. **Sauger** - Fair: Use small jigs tipped with minnows close to shore in flooded areas. **Walleye** - Fair: Fish with three-way rigs tipped with a minnow below the dam.

Mississippi River Pool 11

River level is 17.9 feet at Guttenberg and is expected to rise to 19.1 feet next week. Water temperature is 44 degrees. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Northern pike are spawning; the bite has slowed. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Try light tackle tipped with minnows fished near shore along marina areas. **Sauger** - Fair: Use small jigs tipped with minnows close to shore in flooded areas. **Walleye** - Fair: Fish with three-way rigs tipped with a minnow below the dam.

Upper Mississippi river levels have crested and are slowly starting to recede; rains will cause levels to rise again. Due to flooding, navigation is not recommended and any boaters should operate at no wake speed to reduce damage to shorelines and flooded structures. Most boat ramps are under water. Water clarity is reduced; water temperature is near 46 degrees.

Mississippi River Pool 12

Water levels are finally receding this week, but are still in moderate flood levels. Levels are 20.2 feet at the Dubuque Lock and Dam and 21.7 feet at the RR bridge. Water clarity is good. The water temperature is 42 degrees. Most boat ramps are flooded or have debris on them. **Sauger** - Good: Anglers are using a jig and minnows; fishing was good, even though water was flooding. **Northern Pike** - No Report: Expect northern pike to start to feed heavily now they are almost done spawning.

Mississippi River Pool 13

As of April 9th, the Bellevue City Boat ramp is temporarily closed due to flooding. Water level is 19.8 feet at Lock and Dam 12 and is receding. This level is still in moderate flood stage. Water clarity is good. The water temperature is 46 degrees. **Sauger** - Good: Use

a three way rig with minnows or a jig and minnow. They are generally very tight to the bank in high water levels. **Northern Pike** - No Report: Expect northern pike to start feeding heavily now they are almost done spawning.

[Mississippi River Pool 14](#)

Water levels have crested and are expected to recede. Water levels are near 20.7 feet at Fulton Lock and Dam, 21.8 feet at Camanche and 15.1 feet at LeClaire. These are all at major flood levels. Water clarity is fair. The water temperature is around 47 degrees. Most boat ramps are flooded. **Sauger** - Good: If you can find a launch spot, sauger and walleye are being caught on jig and minnows very close to the bank.

[Mississippi River Pool 15](#)

Water levels have crested and should start to recede. The water level is near 20.5 feet, which is at a major flood threat. Water clarity is good. The water temperature is around 47 degrees. Most boat ramps are flooded.

Most boat ramps are closed due to the flooding. Water levels have crested and will start to recede, but we continue to be in moderate to major flood levels throughout the district. If you have any angling questions, please contact the Bellevue Fisheries Station 563-872-4976.

[Mississippi River Pool 16](#)

Tailwater stage is 20.57 feet at Lock and Dam 15 in the Quad Cities; flood stage is 15 feet. River stage at Fairport is 21.20 feet; flood stage is 14 feet. The Marquette St boat ramp, Credit Island boat ramp, Buffalo Shores boat ramp, Clark's Ferry boat ramp, Shady Creek boat ramp, and Fairport boat ramps are all closed due to high water.

[Mississippi River Pool 17](#)

Tailwater stage is 20.74 feet at Lock and Dam 16 in Muscatine; flood stage is 15 feet. River stage in Muscatine is 21.89 feet; flood stage is 16 feet. The Muscatine City boat ramps are closed due to high water. Kilpeck Landing and Big Timber are also closed due to flooding.

[Mississippi River Pool 18](#)

Tailwater stage is 21.01 feet at Lock and Dam 17 at New Boston; flood stage is 15 feet. River stage at Keithsburg is 19.16 feet; flood stage is 14 feet. The Toolsboro landing is closed due to high water. The Hawkeye Dolbee access will also be under water.

Pools 16-19 are above still above flood stage. Current forecasts have the river starting to fall, but then rise again due to rain in the forecast. Many of the boat ramps are closed due to flooding. We have not received any fishing report information this week due to the high water conditions. If you have questions on fishing Pools 16-19, contact the Fairport Fish Hatchery at 563-263-5062.

SOUTHEAST

[Big Hollow Lake](#)

Just a few anglers out with the warm weather.

[Lake Belva Deer](#)

Water continues to warm with temperatures in the 50's. **Largemouth Bass** – Slow: A few bass were caught during the warmer weather along the riprap in the sun.

[Lake Darling](#)

Largemouth Bass – Slow: The warm weather brought the bass into the shallows at the upper end of the lake; they most likely will head back out when the weather changes later this week.

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

[Lake Miami](#)

Start in the shallows using small jigs for bluegill.

[Lake Sugema](#)

Try jigs tipped with minnows around the flooded timber for crappie.

[Lake Wapello](#)

Channel Catfish - Fair: Try cut bait or dead chubs.

[Ottumwa Park Pond South](#)

Catch trout with a variety of methods including a live minnow fished under a bobber, small tube jigs and in-line spinners. You must have a fishing license and a pay the trout fee to fish for and/or possess trout.

[Rathbun Reservoir](#)

The current lake level is 907.36 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. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Anglers are catching channel catfish; use cut bait or shad sides.

[Red Haw Lake](#)

Try small jigs in the shallows for bluegills or cut bait 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

[Ada Hayden Heritage Park Lake](#)

Rainbow Trout - Fair: Cast in-line spinners, small twister tail and paddle tail jigs or live minnows. Start by fishing the east shoreline of the north and south parts of the lake.

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

Trout were stocked last Saturday. The lake water clarity is less than normal after flooding. Fish bright colored spinners and jigs or live bait. You must have a fishing license and a pay the trout fee to fish for and/or possess trout.

[Big Creek Lake](#)

Walleye - Fair: Walleye fishing will pick up after mid-April. Use jigs or troll spinner rigs in the evenings out from the marina to past the beach and around the East and West Ramp bay. If shore fishing, cast jigs or live bait under a slip bobber in these same areas.

Boone District Farm Ponds

Largemouth Bass - Good: Fish soft plastics or spinner baits slowly for a good early season bass bite.

[Des Moines River \(Saylorville to Red Rock\)](#)

Channel Catfish - Fair: Catch channel catfish in the backed up water in the tributaries out of the main river current. The best bait is cut gizzard shad.

[Terra Lake](#)

Trout were stocked last Saturday. Use small inline spinners and jigs with twister or paddle tails. Try also waxworms and live minnows. You must have a fishing license and a pay the trout fee to fish for and/or possess trout.

For more information on Central Iowa lakes and rivers, call Ben Dodd at 641-891-3795 or Andy Otting at 515-204-5885.

[Green Valley Lake](#)

Bluegill - Fair: Catch Bluegill up to 8 inches with nightcrawlers fished along the silt dams.

[Twelve Mile Creek Lake](#)

Black Crappie - Fair: Catch Crappie up to 9.5 inches using minnows fished near cedar tree brush piles. **Largemouth Bass** - Slow: Try using jigs fished near cedar tree brush piles for largemouth bass of all sizes.

Water temperature in most Mount Ayr district lakes is in the upper 40's to low 50's. For more information, please call the Mount Ayr Fisheries office at 641-464-3108.