



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

# Iowa Fishing Report

## Conservation and Recreation



10 FALL FAVORITE  
TROUT FISHING STREAMS



### [Top Iowa Fishing Spots for the Week of November 21](#)

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](#)

The lake and marsh have opened back up. **Yellow perch** - fair. Anglers are having luck fishing near the inlet bridge and along Ice House Point.

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

Anglers continue to have success fishing the rivers. Target pools and deeper areas below riffles - most of these areas in the rivers are still ice free. **Walleye** - Fair: Use live bait or twisters in deeper areas below riffles. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Try cut bait and crawlers fished in pools.

Most lakes in West Central Iowa are ice free again. Fishing reports for the district are limited. Any remaining ice is unsafe for fishing. For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

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### [Blue Pit](#)

1,500 Rainbow trout will be stocked at Blue Pit on Wednesday, Nov. 27th at about 11:00

a.m. You need a valid fishing license (age 16 and older) and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

### Clear Lake

The warm weather, wind and rain has opened up most of the lake. Anglers looking for a few more open water trips should take advantage. **Walleye** - Slow: Try fishing off the jetties after sunset .

For information on the lakes and rivers in the north central area, contact the Clear Lake Fish and Wildlife office at 641-357-3517.

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### East Okoboji Lake

East Okoboji is iced over in places, but has partially opened back up. Ice conditions are dangerous.

### Spirit Lake

Spirit Lake is mostly ice free, but water temperature remains at 32 degrees.

### West Okoboji Lake

Water is still open. Lake temperature has risen to 40 degrees. **Walleye** - No Report: Take advantage of late season open water and fish from shore or waders in the evening.

Fishing reports from the district are very limited. Smaller lakes had an inch or two of ice on them last week, but that ice has deteriorated with some lakes opening back up. Get your ice fishing gear ready; review your plan for winter conditions and being on the ice. Ice fishing safety equipment should be worn and easily deployed. For current conditions, call the Spirit Lake District Office at 712-336-1840.

## **NORTHEAST**

### Cedar River (above Nashua)

Anglers fishing back eddies and open water areas below dams are catching fish. Backwaters are starting to freeze; ice fishing is not recommended. Ice conditions change fast this time of year. **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. Visit our [website](#) to find out when and where trout may be coming to a community near you. Hunting seasons are open in Iowa; wear bright orange and be visible to hunters. **Brown Trout** - Good: Use care around freshly cleared gravel in the stream bottom. 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: Redds or trout nests are cleared areas in the stream bottom; avoid walking here. With fewer insect hatches, try using flies imitating minnows such as a wholly bugger.

### Lake Hendricks

Ice conditions have deteriorated with warmer weather last week. Not safe for fishing. Area around the aerator is open. Motorized vehicles are not allowed on the ice.

### Lake Meyer

Lake Meyer has opened up with warmer weather and windy conditions. Ice fishing is not recommended.

### Turkey River (above Clermont)

Mill pond at Vernon Springs by Cresco is open in areas, but will lose ice quickly with moving water. Ice fishing is not recommended. Motorized vehicles are not allowed on this area.

### Volga Lake

Volga Lake has lost a lot of ice with warmer windy conditions. Ice fishing is not recommended.

Mostly sunny through the weekend with temperatures in the lower 40's for highs to below freezing for lows. Water clarity is excellent on area rivers and streams. Water levels are slightly rising after rain. Flows remain high on all area rivers. Trout streams are 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 are catching a few walleye and northern pike on the Cedar River. **Northern Pike**- Fair: Cast and retrieve larger spinner baits near instream habitat or deeper overwintering areas. **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 next week looks promising for good trout fishing. Most streams were recently stocked with rainbow trout and many have great populations of wild brown trout.

### Maquoketa River (above Monticello)

Recent fish sampling efforts 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)

There are no reports on the Shell Rock River.

### Wapsipinicon River (Tripoli to Troy Mills)

Good reports of walleye being caught on the Wapsipinicon River in Buchanan County. **Walleye** - Good: Cast and retrieve or troll crankbaits or use jig and minnow near instream habitat or deeper overwintering areas.

Interior rivers are in excellent condition, but may have bumped up in levels with the recent rainfall. Next week's forecast looks more seasonable; target river walleyes. Most Black Hawk County lakes have reopened of ice; angling reports have been quiet. Many

trout streams were recently stocked and are 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 predicted to rise to 9.5 feet next week. Water temperature is 36 degrees. **Largemouth Bass** - No Report: Find bass in areas of no or slight current in backwaters with clearer water. **Smallmouth Bass** - No Report: Use crankbaits fished on rocky areas along main channel shoreline. **Bluegill** - Fair: Look for bluegill to move into deeper backwater areas out of the current. **Channel Catfish** - No Report: Use crawlers fished in side-channel current. **Freshwater Drum** - No Report: Drum are biting. Use worms on the bottom or crayfish to target larger fish. **Walleye** - Slow: Vertical jigging with twister tails or jig tipped with minnows has had the most success in Lock and Dams tailwaters. **Yellow Perch** - No Report: Use crawlers fished just off the bottom in about 6-8 feet of water. **Black Crappie** - No Report: The fall crappie bite has slowed. Try small jigs fished in the flooded trees and side-channels. **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 617.8 feet at Lynxville and is predicted to come back up a foot this week. Water temperature is 37 degrees at Lock & Dam 9. Sny Magill ramp is not accessible due to high water. **Largemouth Bass** - No Report: Find bass in areas of no or slight current in backwaters with clearer water. **Bluegill** - Fair: Look for bluegill to move into deeper backwater areas out of the current. **Channel Catfish** - No Report: Use crawlers fished in side-channel current. **Freshwater Drum** - No Report: Drum are biting. Use worms on the bottom or crayfish to target larger fish. **Walleye** - Fair: Anglers are jigging with minnows below the Lock and Dams with some success. **Yellow Perch** - No Report: Use crawlers fished just off the bottom in about 6-8 feet of water. **Black Crappie** - No Report: The fall crappie bite has slowed. Use small jigs in the flooded trees and side-channels. **Sauger** - Fair: Try jigs tipped with a minnow in the tailwaters of the Lock & Dams. **Smallmouth Bass** - No Report: Use crankbaits fished on rocky areas along main channel shoreline.

### Mississippi River Pool 11

River level is 9.3 feet at Guttenberg and is expected to rise to near 11 feet by late next week. The Turkey River boat ramp is closed. Water temperature is 34 degrees at Lock & Dam 10. **Largemouth Bass** - No Report: Find bass in areas of no or slight current in backwaters with clearer water. **Bluegill** - Fair: Look for bluegill to move into deeper backwater areas out of the current. **Channel Catfish** - No Report: Use crawlers fished in side-channel current. **Freshwater Drum** - No Report: Drum are biting. Use worms on the bottom or crayfish to target larger fish. **Walleye** - Fair: Anglers are jigging with minnows below the Lock and Dams with some success. **Yellow Perch** - No Report: Try crawlers fished just off the bottom in about 6-8 feet of water. **Black Crappie** - No Report: The fall crappie bite has slowed. Use small jigs fished in the flooded trees and side-channels. **Sauger** - Fair: Try jigs tipped with a minnow in the tailwaters of the Lock &

Dams. **Smallmouth Bass** - No Report: Use crankbaits fished on rocky areas along main channel shoreline.

Upper Mississippi River levels have fallen this week but are expected to rise slightly with recent precipitation. Backwater lakes are not safe for ice fishing. Water temperature has dropped into the mid-30's.

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### [Mississippi River Pool 12](#)

The water level is 9.9 feet at the Dubuque Lock and Dam and 12 feet at the RR bridge. River levels at Dubuque are expected to recede over the next week. The water temperature is 35 degrees. Water clarity is good. Some ice is in the backwaters, but no ice fishing was reported. **Sauger** - Fair: Tailwater sauger fishing has started; most anglers are using a jig and minnow.

### [Mississippi River Pool 13](#)

Water level is 10.9 feet at the Bellevue Lock and Dam and is receding. The water temperature is 35 degrees. Water clarity is good. The DNR ramp is open again as flood waters have receded off of it. **Sauger** - Good: A few sauger are starting to show up in the creel by anglers using a jig and minnow rigs. **Walleye** - Fair: Not a lot of walleye are being reported, but a few nice sized fish can be found.

### [Mississippi River Pool 14](#)

The water level is 10.2 feet at the Fulton Lock and Dam, 13 feet at Camanche and 7.3 feet at LeClaire. Water temperature is around 35 degrees. River levels are expected to fall over the next week. **Walleye** - Fair: A few nice fish over 30 inches have been reported in the past couple weeks, even in the high water. **Sauger** - Good: Fall sauger fishing has officially started. Use jigs tipped with minnows in the tailwater areas.

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

Water levels are 10.8 feet at Rock Island and will recede this week. The water temperature is around 35 degrees. The water clarity is good. **Sauger** - No Report: Expect sauger fishing to pick up once the river recedes to near normal winter levels. Most sauger anglers use a jig and minnow rig.

Water remains high for this time of year, but is dropping fast. No flooding is reported, but some debris and mud may be on the ramps. 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 10.60 feet at Lock and Dam 15 in the Quad Cities and is forecast to reach 11.5 feet by Monday. Flood stage is 15 feet at Lock and Dam 15. River level is 11.39 feet at Fairport; flood stage is 14 feet. Fishing has been slow with high water conditions. The ramps at Clark's Ferry and Shady Creek are 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.

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

Tailwater stage is 9.77 feet at Lock and Dam 16 in Muscatine and is forecast to reach 11.1 feet by Monday. Flood stage is 15 feet at Lock and Dam 16. River stage is 11.47 feet at Muscatine; flood stage is 16 feet. River level is forecast to reach 12.6 feet by Wednesday at Muscatine. The ramps at Big Timber and Kilpeck are closed due to high water. Tailwater fishing for walleye and saugers has been slow.

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

Tailwater stage 11 feet at Lock and Dam 17 at New Boston and is forecast to reach 12.3 feet by Wednesday. Flood stage is 15 feet at Lock and Dam 17. River stage is 11.32 feet at Keithsburg; flood stage is 14 feet. The Toolsboro landing is closed due to water over the road. Fishing has been slow with high water conditions.

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

Tailwater stage is 7.7 feet at Lock and Dam 18; flood stage is 10 feet. River stage is 12.91 feet at Burlington; flood stage is 15 feet. River stage is 527.05 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. With recent rains, the river is forecast to start rising over the weekend. Main channel water temperature is around 37 degrees. Some boat ramps are still closed due to high water conditions. Fishing has been slow with the high water conditions. We have not received any tailwater fishing reports this week. If you have questions on fishing Pools 16-19 contact the Fairport Fish Hatchery at 563-263-5062.

## **SOUTHEAST**

### [Lake Belva Deer](#)

Water temperatures is in the upper 30's low 40's. Water clarity remains at better than 9 feet. **Bluegill** - Slow: Find the bluegills out over the deeper water habitat; vertical jigging or slow drift trolling works best.

### [Lake Darling](#)

Water temperature is back up to the upper 30's. Water clarity is good. Docks were pulled a couple of weeks ago. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Crappies are back out deep over the habitat waiting for winter.

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

The thin skim of ice that was on many ponds last week has melted back off. Ponds are now ice free again.

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.

### [Coralville Reservoir](#)

The lake level is back to normal fall pool of 686.3 feet. **White Crappie** - Slow: Try minnows or bright jigs over brush piles.

### [Diamond Lake](#)

The fish cleaning station and restrooms are closed for the season. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Trolling the main lake has been best. A few fish are being caught from the jetties. Early and late in the day is best.

### [Lake Macbride](#)

Water temperatures are 40 degrees. 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)** - Slow: 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 and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** – Fair.

### [Pleasant Creek Lake](#)

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

### [Prairie Park Fishery](#)

You need a valid fishing license 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 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](#)

Very few anglers have been out with the cool down. Try small jigs tipped with live bait for bluegills along the rocks and shorelines.

### [Lake Wapello](#)

Not many anglers out. 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 and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

### Rathbun Reservoir

The current lake level is 905.63 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. Very few anglers have been out. Try jig and minnows around underwater structure for crappie.

### Red Haw Lake

Few anglers have been out. Try small jigs fished around the shorelines for bluegills.

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** - Good: Cast small in-line spinners, small plastic swim baits, or live bait under a float. Most of the trout will be in the North part of the lake. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

### Des Moines River (Saylorville to Red Rock)

**Walleye** - Fair: Catch walleye below the dams and at creek mouths from Saylorville through downtown Des Moines in the evenings just before and after dark. Cast jigs tipped with chartreuse twister or paddle tails or live minnows.

### Lake Petocka

**Rainbow Trout** - Good: Cast small in-line spinners, small plastic swim baits, or nightcrawler pieces under a float. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

### Terra Lake

**Rainbow Trout** - Good: Cast small in-line spinners, small plastic swim baits, or live bait under a float. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for 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.

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### Big Lake (Including Gilbert's Pond)

The DNR stocked 1,500 rainbow trout into the lake on Oct. 31. Most of those fish are still available. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** - Fair: Fish the nice Fall days with a spinner or spoon.



### Lake Anita

The sea wall construction project is complete; the gate has been shut to end the draw-down. Water level is 3 feet low, restricting boating access. **Black Crappie** - No Report: Anita has quality size 10-11 inch crappie. **Bluegill** - No Report: Find quality size bluegills in Lake Anita. **Largemouth Bass** - No Report: Lake Anita has a good largemouth bass population that supports good angling.

### Lake Manawa

We have received no information about fishing on this water body this week. **Wiper (Hybrid Striped Bass)** - No Report: Search for Wipers on the wind-blown shoreline of the lake when Fall temperatures allow.

### Orient Lake

We have received no information about fishing on this water body this week. **Black Crappie** - No Report: Average size is 10 inches. **Bluegill** - No Report: 8 inch plus bluegills are available.

### Prairie Rose Lake

We have received no information about fishing on this water body this week.

### Viking Lake

We have received no information about fishing on this water body this week. **Black Crappie** - No Report: The draw-down project has benefited the crappie population. Size and condition of the fish are excellent going into winter.

District lakes saw very little activity with colder Fall temperatures last week. For more information, contact the S.W. District Office at 712-769-2587.



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