



[Top Iowa Fishing Spots for the Week of April 8](#)

Iowa DNR asking anglers to share pics of mudpuppy catches

Mudpuppies are fascinating aquatic amphibians most Iowans don't get a chance to see. They are notoriously difficult to catch with standard aquatic techniques like traps, nets, or electrofishing methods, but anglers sometimes catch them while fishing for walleyes or catfish. If you've found a mudpuppy please take a few good photos, release it back into the water and contact the Iowa DNR at 515-298-3071 or paul.frese@dnr.iowa.gov.

Fisheries staff is currently collecting walleye at Rathbun Lake, Storm Lake and the Iowa Great Lakes, which is limiting the information for this week's fishing report. The netting will conclude once the egg quota is met and more reports will be added.

This weekly fishing report is compiled from information gathered from local bait shops, angler creel surveys and county and state parks staff. You can check the activity of your favorite lake or stretch of river within each district, including which species are being caught, a rating of the bite (slow, fair, good or excellent), as well as a hot bait or lure pattern.

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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NORTHWEST

[Black Hawk Lake](#)

Black Crappie - Fair: Use a small jig with a small minnow in Town Bay and along Ice House Point. **Bluegill** – Fair. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Use cut bait or shad fished on the

bottom near any rock structure. **Walleye** - Fair: Walleye bite along shore should start to pick up. Use a twister or a leach or minnow fished under a bobber.

Brushy Creek Lake

Water levels remain about 4 feet low. The west ramp is the best option to launch a boat with the low water. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Use crawlers or minnows on a jig. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Try tube jigs and a small minnow fished near structure. **Bluegill** – Fair.

North Twin Lake

Courtesy docks are in on the south and southeast boat ramps. **Black Crappie** - Fair: As water temperatures warm, target crappie along shore and along docks using a tube jig or a minnow fished on a small jig under a bobber.

Storm Lake (incl Little Storm Lake)

Water temperatures are in the mid to upper 50's. Anglers continue to pick up perch, crappie, and walleye in the marina. Expect shore fishing action to pick up. **Black Crappie** – Good: Try a tube jig with a small minnow. Most have had good luck in the marina. **Yellow Perch** – Fair: Catch 8- to 11-inch perch in the marina with minnows fished on a jig. Some sorting is needed. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Use cut bait or gizzard shad fished on the bottom along shore. **Walleye** - Fair: Throw a twister or fish a minnow or leach under a bobber along shore. Best bite is evenings or low light conditions.

Water temperatures are in the mid to upper 50's in most district lakes. Expect shore fishing action to pick up as these water temperatures continue to increase. DNR crews are currently netting walleye on the walleye broodstock lakes. More reports will be available as we receive them. For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

Clear Lake

The water temperature is in the mid-50's. The courtesy docks are in at all the boat ramps and the fish cleaning station is open. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Fish open pockets in the rushes. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Try a piece of cut bait fished off the bottom. **Walleye** - Good: Walleye are biting. Try a jig and minnow or crankbaits fished near the outlet and around the island after sunset. Shore anglers are having some success fishing from the jetties. **Yellow Bass** - Fair: Shore anglers are having some success fishing from the jetties.

Crystal Lake

The courtesy docks are in and the fish cleaning station is open. **Black Crappie** – Slow.

Silver Lake (Worth)

The courtesy dock is in at the boat ramp. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Try dark colored plastics fished around vegetation.

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

NORTHEAST

Cedar River (above Nashua)

Water levels are stabilizing with low, clear water. **Channel Catfish** - Excellent: Shore anglers using dead chubs or worms on the bottom have been successful. **Walleye** - Fair: Walleyes are starting to move. Fish the shallow pools for best luck.

Decorah District Streams

Trout streams are in good to excellent condition. [Catchable trout stream stocking is in full swing](#). All catchable trout stockings will be unannounced due to COVID-19 precautions. A stocking calendar will not be available this year. Hatchery grounds are open. Please observe social distancing and mask rules when visiting hatchery grounds. **Rainbow Trout** - Excellent: Get tackle in front of fish and imitate prey movements. Minnow worm midge and caddis flies work well this time of year. **Brown Trout** - Excellent: Off-color water from rainfall will spur a brownie bite. Use tackle imitating forage fish or midges; fish the edge of a weed bed or large rock. **Brook Trout** - Good: Eleven streams have naturally reproducing populations with public access; learn more on our [Trout Fishing webpage](#). Try flies imitating prey drifting down in pool edges and heads. Fish the hatch on sunny afternoons.

Lake Hendricks

Fish deeper water with cooler water. The bite will improve as the water warms. This week's winds stirred up water. Fish the mud or bubble lines. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Try a dead chub or worm fished in wind rowed areas. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Run a minnow or lure over brush piles or along depth gradients.

Lake Meyer

Few anglers have been out this week. Windy conditions stirred up shoreline materials; fish these edges. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Use a worm or piece of dead chub fished near bottom in areas with wind pushed brush. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Try fishing in shallow vegetated areas. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Toss a hook tipped with a minnow or small jig over brush piles.

Turkey River (above Clermont)

Water levels are stabilizing with low, clear water. Water temperatures are in the mid to upper 40's. **White Sucker** - Excellent: Sucker activity is increasing. Use a worm fished on the stream bottom. **Walleye** - Fair: Walleye are starting to spawn. Try a minnow imitating jig. **Largemouth Bass** - Good: Use a spinner or crankbait along rocky shorelines. **Smallmouth Bass** - Good: Try a spinner or crankbait along rocky shorelines or ledges.

Upper Iowa River (above Decorah)

Water levels are stabilizing and clear. Water temperatures are in the mid to upper 40's. **Shorthead redhorse** - Excellent: Suckers start to spawn when water temperatures reach 50 degrees. Use a worm fished along the stream bottom. **Walleye** - Fair: Walleye are moving out of their overwintering areas into shallower pools with slower water. Try a jig tipped with a twister tail or minnow.

Volga Lake

The docks are in. Windy conditions stirred up sediments; fish these shorelines for best

luck. The bite will improve as the water warms. **Channel Catfish** - Good: Try chunks of chubs or worms fished on the bottom along wind rowed shores. **Bluegill** - Fair: Try a small hook tipped with a small piece of worm fished along the rocky shorelines.

Area river water levels are low and stabilizing with good to excellent clarity. Chance of showers through the weekend with temperatures in the low 50's to 40's. For current fishing information, please call the Chuck Gipp Decorah Fish Hatchery at 563-382-8324.

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

Anglers are getting after walleyes with little success, but doing good to excellent on smallmouth bass on the Cedar River. **Walleye** - Slow: Cast and retrieve jig and plastics tipped with or without a minnow. Concentrate on pools and current breaks. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Cast and retrieve large spinnerbaits or float a live chub or shiner underneath a bobber in off-channel pools. **Smallmouth Bass** - Good: Try a jig and minnow or retrieve spinner baits.

Manchester District Streams

All area Manchester trout streams are in excellent condition and providing insect hatches with the recent warmer weather. **Brown Trout** - Fair: [Spring Branch Creek](#) is a favorite amongst anglers for quality and trophy-sized brown trout.

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

The Maquoketa River in Delaware County has stabilized and should provide good angling opportunities this weekend **Walleye** - Fair: Cast and retrieve jig and plastics tipped with or without a minnow; concentrate on pools and current breaks.

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

Reports of anglers catching walleye on the Shell Rock River. **Walleye** - Good: Cast and retrieve jig and plastics tipped with or without a minnow; concentrate on pools and current breaks.

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

The river continues to drop and should provide good angling opportunities this weekend. Reports of anglers catching walleye and northern pike on the Wapsipinicon River. **Northern Pike** - Good: Cast and retrieve large spinnerbaits or fish a live shiner or chub under a bobber near off-channel areas. **Walleye** - Good: Cast and retrieve jig and plastics tipped with or without a minnow; concentrate on pools and current breaks.

Interior rivers are providing fair to good angling opportunities for walleye, pike and smallmouth bass. Rivers should be in good condition for this weekend. Trout streams are in excellent condition and providing some insect hatches with the warmer weather. For further information contact your area bait and tackle shops. All field stations and fish hatcheries remain closed. Call the Manchester Hatchery at 563-927-3276 for more information.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER

Mississippi River Pool 9

Water level is 8.6 feet at Lansing and is expected to remain steady this week. Water temperature is 57 degrees. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Perch bite slowed this week. Look for perch hanging above vegetation from 4-12 feet of water with a jig and minnow or piece of worm. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Pike fishing will pick up again post-spawn. Try flashy spoons along openings of backwater lakes as fish move into the vegetation. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Fish submerged trees in backwaters and side channels. **Walleye** – Fair: Drift a three-way rig with a jig or crankbait off current breaks below the Lock & Dams. **Sauger** – Fair: Drift a three-way rig with a jig or crankbait off current breaks below the Lock & Dams. **Bluegill** - Good: Try a small piece of worm fished under a bobber in areas with little to no current. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Use cut bait or a nightcrawler fished off the bottom in areas of moderate current inside channels.

Mississippi River Pool 10

Lynxville water level dropped several feet and expected to remain fairly steady this week. Water temperature is 48 degrees at Lynxville dam. **Sauger** - Fair: Try vertical jigging in tailwaters of the Lock and Dam. **Walleye** - Fair: Drift a three-way rig with a jig or crankbait off current breaks below the Lock & Dams. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Perch bite slowed this week. Look for perch hanging above vegetation from 4-12 feet of water with a jig and minnow. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Pike fishing will pick up again post-spawn. Try flashy spoons along openings of backwater lakes as fish move into the vegetation. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Fish submerged trees in backwaters and side channels. **Bluegill** - Good: Try a small piece of worm fished under a bobber in areas with little to no current. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Use cut bait or a nightcrawler fished off the bottom in areas of moderate current inside channels.

Mississippi River Pool 11

Water level at Guttenberg has fallen to 9.1 feet with more stable levels for a few days. Water temperature is 50 degrees at the Guttenberg dam. **Sauger** - Fair: Try vertical jigging in tailwaters of the Lock and Dam. **Walleye** - Fair: Drift a three-way rig with a jig or crankbait off current breaks below the Lock and Dams. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Perch bite slowed this week. Look for perch hanging above vegetation from 4-12 feet of water with a jig and minnow. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Pike fishing will pick up again post-spawn. Try flashy spoons along openings of backwater lakes as fish move into the vegetation. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Fish submerged trees in backwaters and side channels. **Bluegill** - Good: Try a small piece of worm fished under a bobber in areas with little to no current. **Channel Catfish** - Good: Use cut bait or a nightcrawler fished off the bottom in areas of moderate current inside channels.

Upper Mississippi River levels are fluctuating, but are expected to level off before another bump next week. Water temperature has jumped into the 50's this week; fish are biting. Walleye slot length limits now apply on the entire Mississippi River. All walleyes less than 15 inches long and between 20-27 inches long must be released immediately. Only one walleye greater than 27 inches can be kept. Combined walleye/sauger daily harvest limit of 6 and possession of 12.

Mississippi River Pool 12

Water level is expected to recede this week. Water levels are 8.9 feet at the Lock and Dam and 11.1 feet at the RR bridge. The water temperature is around 54 degrees. Water clarity is good. **Walleye** - Slow: Walleye fishing in the tailwater is all over the place. A few anglers report excellent angling, but most are having poor luck. Anglers are using a jig and minnow or pulling crankbaits. Walleye spawn is underway. **Largemouth Bass** - Good: Bass bite has started. Fish the shallow sun and wind soaked backwater areas. **Northern Pike** -Excellent: Pike are at the end of spawning. Numerous reports of nice pike catches have started on gaudy spinnerbaits. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Reports of a few yellow perch. The yellow perch spawn is underway.

Mississippi River Pool 13

The water level is 10.3 feet at the Bellevue Lock and Dam and is receding. Water temperature is around 55 degrees. Water clarity is good. The Bellevue City and DNR ramps are open for use in the tailwater. **Paddlefish** - Fair: Paddlefish season is open; [check snagging rules before you go out](#). The open season on the Mississippi River is March 1 through April 15. **Walleye** - Slow: The walleye bite is all over the place. A few anglers report excellent fishing, but most are having poor luck this spring. Conditions are favorable for angling. Most anglers are using a jig and minnow or pulling crankbaits. **Northern Pike** - Good: Northers are spawning; the bite has started. Use gaudy white spinners in Crooked Slough, South Sabula Lake, Spring Lake and near Mickelson Landing. **Yellow Perch** - No Report: Yellow perch spawn is underway. Some fish are usually caught in early spring. **Largemouth Bass** - Good: Large open wind and sun soaked backwaters are the ticket for nice early spring Bass. Try in Spring Lake for best results.

Mississippi River Pool 14

Water level at the Fulton Lock and Dam is rising at 9.7 feet, 12.5 feet at Camanche and 7.4 feet at LeClaire. Water temperature is around 55 degrees. Water clarity is good. **Paddlefish** - Fair: Paddlefish season is open; [check snagging rules before you go out](#). As water has risen, the catch of paddlefish is reduced as the fish are scattered. The open season on the Mississippi River is March 1 through April 15. **Walleye** - Slow: The walleye bite is all over the place. A few anglers are report excellent fishing, but most are having poor luck this spring. Conditions are favorable for angling. Most anglers are using a jig and minnow or pulling cranks. **Northern Pike** - No Report: The pike spawn is mostly complete. Expect pike to go on a feeding frenzy soon after spawning is done. **Yellow Perch** - No Report: Yellow perch are spawning in the Mississippi River.

Mississippi River Pool 15

Water level is 10.1 feet at Rock Island and is receding. The water temperature is near 55 degrees. Water clarity is good. **Channel Catfish** - No Report: Try cut shad bait for early season catfish.

Water temperature is steadily rising to around 55 degrees. The water level is slightly receding throughout the district. If you have any fishing questions, please contact the Bellevue Fisheries Station 563-880-8781.

SOUTHEAST

Hawthorn Lake

Target channel catfish with nightcrawlers.

Lake Miami

Target channel catfish with cut bait. Bluegills and crappies will start to move shallow as the water warms.

Lake Sugema

Target channel catfish with nightcrawlers or cut bait.

Lake Wapello

Target channel catfish with nightcrawlers. Target largemouth bass with spinnerbaits or crankbaits fished around the submerged structure.

Ottumwa Park Pond South (Trout Pond)

Trout have been stocked. Use live minnows fished under a bobber, small tube and twister jigs, in-line spinners and casting spoons. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

Rathbun Reservoir

The current lake level is 905.85 msl. Recreation pool is 904 msl. Prairie Ridge, Island View North and Middle boat ramps are closed. Lake Rathbun has zebra mussels, so make sure to properly drain, clean, and dry equipment before transporting to another waterbody. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Target windblown shorelines with shad sides or nightcrawlers.

Red Haw Lake

The boat docks are in. Target channel catfish with nightcrawlers.

The district includes Appanoose, Davis, Lucas, Mahaska, Monroe, Wapello, Wayne 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 March 18. Cast small in-line spinners, spoons, jigs with plastics or live bait under a float. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

Big Creek Lake

Walleye - Good: Jig or troll minnows in areas from the marina around to the beach, the east boat ramp bay and the west boat ramp bay.

Boone District Farm Ponds

Farm ponds and [community ponds](#) will warm up faster than larger lakes. Catch bluegills and crappies on live bait under bobbers or slowly retrieved jigs with small

twister tails or swimbaits. **Largemouth Bass** - Good: Cast slowly retrieved spinnerbaits crankbaits and soft plastics.

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

Walleye - Fair: Catch walleyes below the dams from Saylorville to below Red Rock. Cast jigs tipped with twister tails, swimbaits or live minnows. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Catch pike below the dams and near the mouths of creeks entering the river. Cast jigs tipped with twister tails or swimbaits.

[Terra Lake](#)

Rainbow Trout - Excellent: Trout were stocked on March 17. Cast small in-line spinners, spoons, jigs with plastics 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.

[Big Lake \(Including Gilbert's Pond\)](#)

Rainbow trout were stocked. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Cast small spinners, spoons, jigs with plastics or live bait under a bobber. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

[Greenfield Lake](#)

Channel Catfish - No Report: Greenfield has a good population of channel catfish of all sizes. After the ice goes out is a good time to target catfish.

[Lake Anita](#)

Historically, Lake Anita provides good early spring fishing in the upper end of the north arm. Fish move in behind the pontoon area as the water temperatures warm. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Crappies will move up in the north arm of the lake with the forecast warm temperatures. Cast small jigs two foot under a bobber. Sorting is needed; there is a large year class of 6-inch crappies. **Bluegill** - Slow: Crappie anglers have caught a few nice bluegills behind the pontoon area.

[Lake Manawa](#)

Manawa is a good destination for ice-out catfish. Crappies will move into the canals as the water temperatures warm. **Channel Catfish** - Good: Channel catfish are actively feeding on winter-killed fish. Target catfish on wind-blown shorelines with shad sides. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Target black crappies in the canals this week. **White Crappie** - Fair: Cast minnows under a bobber in the canals.

[Littlefield Lake](#)

A [winterkill](#) was reported to the DNR at Littlefield. Fishery staff will survey the lake this spring and restock if needed.

[Meadow Lake](#)

Meadow Lake has a good fish population. Bluegills will average 8-inches and black crappies 10- to 12-inches. Largemouth bass and channel catfish are also doing well.

For more information on lakes in the Southwest District call the Cold Springs office at 712-769-2587.

Little River Watershed Lake

Courtesy docks are in at the main ramp and bait shop ramp. **Walleye** - Slow: Catch walleye of all sizes with jigs or crankbaits fished along the dam or rocky areas.

Three Mile Lake

Courtesy docks are installed at the main boat ramp. **Walleye** - Fair: Catch walleye of all sizes with jigs or crankbaits fished along the dam or rocky areas.

Twelve Mile Creek Lake

The dock is in at the main ramp. **Walleye** - Fair: Catch walleye of all sizes with jigs or crankbaits fished along the dam or rocky areas.

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