



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

# Iowa Fishing Report

Conservation and Recreation



## [Top Iowa Fishing Spots for the Week of April 14](#)

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

## NORTHWEST

### [Black Hawk Lake](#)

Water levels are about 15 inches below the crest of the spillway. Water temperatures are in the upper 40s. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Most fish are 8- to 12-inches. Use small live minnows and marabou jigs fished from shore in Town Bay. Areas along the stone Pier floating T dock, the fish house and along Ice House Point are the most popular spots. Expect fishing action to slow as water temperatures cool with the recent colder temperatures. **Walleye** - Slow: Walleye action has been slow with cooler water temperatures. The walleye bite usually turns on mid-April through early May. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Anglers are picking up some perch while targeting crappie with small live minnows and jigs. Some fish are 8- to 10inches.

### [Brushy Creek Lake](#)

Courtesy docks are in. The fishing action has been slow with the cool water temperatures. Expect more panfish action as water temperatures warm the next couple of weeks.

### [Des Moines River \(Humboldt to Stratford\)](#)

**Channel Catfish** – Fair. **Smallmouth Bass** – Fair. **Walleye** – Fair.

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

**Walleye** – Fair.

### [North Twin Lake](#)

Courtesy dock is in on the south ramp. With low water levels, boaters should use caution when launching boats to avoid the trailer tires travelling beyond the ends of the concrete ramps. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Anglers are picking up crappie from shore with minnows and jigs. The recent cool temperatures have slowed the bite; expect the bite to return with warming temperatures the next couple of weeks.

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

Water temperatures are in the mid to upper 40s. Anglers are fishing along shore and in the marina; the bite has slowed with the recent colder temperatures. **All walleye between 19 and 25-inches must be immediately released unharmed at Storm Lake; no more than one walleye longer than 25-inches can be taken per day.** **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Use cut bait along shore. **Walleye** - Fair: A few walleye are starting to be picked up in the marina. **Yellow Bass** - Fair: Anglers are catching keeper-sized yellow bass; bite is hit-or-miss. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Use small minnows in the marina.

Water temperatures are in the upper 40's in most areas lakes. For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

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### [Clear Lake](#)

The lake is at crest. Water temperatures are in the mid-40s. **Clear Lake has a protected slot on walleye. All walleye between 17 and 22 inches must be immediately released unharmed. No more than one walleye longer than 22 inches may be taken per day.** **Channel Catfish** - Slow: Fish the wind swept shore with cut bait. **Walleye** - Fair: Try minnows and jigs. Wader angler are catching fish on the east shore and around the island. **White Bass** - Fair.

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

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## **NORTHEAST**

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

Water levels are up about 4 feet. Water clarity is poor. Fish eddies and current breaks. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Catfish are starting to look for food floating their way. Try a hook loaded with a crawler or chub. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Pike spawning is nearing an end as water temperatures rise. **Smallmouth Bass** - Slow: Find smallies below the dams; use a nightcrawler. **Walleye** - Slow: Try worms or minnows under a slip bobber with enough weight to get your bait near the bottom.

## **Decorah District Streams**

Catchable rainbow trout stocking season is in full swing. The 2022 Trout Stream Stocking calendar is available on our [Trout Fishing webpage](#). Clarity is good on most streams. Flows are up with recent rain. Gravel roads are messy. Use care when walking from site to site; ground conditions are highly variable from mushy to greasy. **Brook Trout** - Good: Insect hatches are starting to take place on sunny afternoons. Use midge, minnow or scud patterns for fish looking to get more bang for their effort. **Brown Trout** - Excellent: Rain water flowing into streams is bringing a fresh supply of food for curious brownies. Try spinner or crankbaits near or around structure. Midge hatches have been good lately **Rainbow Trout** - Excellent: Rainbow trout are teasing anglers with soft strikes and nudges. Use small spinner baits, hair jigs or hooks tipped with imitation eggs floating past structure.

### [Lake Hendricks](#)

Water clarity is good. No one is out fishing with the wind and whitecaps.

### [Lake Meyer](#)

Water clarity is improving, but stirred up a bit with the wind. No one is out fishing.

### [North Bear Creek](#)

Bridge replacement work is starting on the Sacquitne Bridge on 360th St. Stream access and parking lot remain open; be courteous to workers. **Rainbow Trout** - Fair.

### [Volga Lake](#)

No one is fishing with the windy conditions. Docks are in.

Temperatures in the low 40's for highs and low 20's at night through the weekend. Wind will settle some by Friday. Good chance of snow on Sunday. 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 walleye and smallmouth bass on the Cedar River. **Smallmouth Bass** - Fair: Cast a jig tipped and plastic or spinnerbaits near rocky areas. **Walleye** - Fair: Cast a jig tipped with plastic and a minnow. Keep your presentation slow and just off of the river bottom near current breaks or slack water areas.

## **Manchester District Streams**

Trout streams are in excellent condition. Very clear water conditions; use subtle presentations and approach fish from downstream. Sunday could provide some runoff on our streams which can often be beneficial in catching brown trout. **Brown Trout** - Fair: **Rainbow Trout** - Fair:

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

Anglers are starting to catch a few walleye on the Shell Rock River. **Walleye** - Fair: Cast a jig tipped with plastic and a minnow. Keep your presentation slow and just off of the river bottom near current breaks or slack water areas.

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

Anglers are beginning to catch a few walleye on the Wapsipinicon River. **Walleye** - Fair: Cast a jig tipped with plastic and a minnow. Keep your presentation slow and just off of the river bottom near current breaks or slack water areas.

Reports of anglers catching walleye and smallmouth bass on the interior rivers. No reports on area Black Hawk County lakes; anglers are targeting small water bodies. Call area/local bait shops for the most up to date reports. Contact the Manchester Hatchery at 563-927-3276 for more information.

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## MISSISSIPPI RIVER

### [Mississippi River Pool 9](#)

Water level at Lansing rose to 10 feet and is expected to gradually rise over the next week. Water temperature is 46 degrees. **Bluegill** - Good: Use light tackle tipped with piece of worm in areas away from current along the weed edges in backwaters. **Northern Pike** - Fair: The bite should pick up post-spawn. Cast crankbaits off vegetation lines. **Sauger** - Good: Some smaller sauger are being caught on twister tail jigs in tailwater areas. **Walleye** - Good: Walleye are moving to tailwaters and side channel structure pre-spawn. Try vertical jigging and drifting a live minnow. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Perch bite picked up this week. Try jigging minnows or use a piece of crawler.

### [Mississippi River Pool 10](#)

Water level is 620 at Lynxville and is predicted to rise a foot this week. Rollers are out at the dam. Water temperature is 48 degrees. **Bluegill** - Good: Use light tackle tipped with piece of worm in areas away from current along the weed edges in backwaters. **Northern Pike** - Fair: The bite should pick up post-spawn. Cast crankbaits off vegetation lines. **Sauger** - Good: Some smaller sauger are being caught on twister tail jigs in tailwater areas. **Walleye** - Fair: Walleye are moving to tailwaters and side channel structure to spawn. Try vertical jigging and drifting a live minnow. **Yellow Perch** - Slow: Perch bite picked up this week. Try jigging minnows or use a piece of crawler.

### [Mississippi River Pool 11](#)

Water level rose to 11.2 feet and is predicted to gradually rise a foot this week. Rollers are all open at the dam. Water temperature is 45 degrees. **Bluegill** - Good: Use light tackle tipped with piece of worm in areas away from current along the weed edges in backwaters. **Northern Pike** - Slow: The bite should pick up post-spawn. Cast crankbaits off vegetation lines. **Sauger** - Good: Some smaller sauger are being caught on twister tail jigs in tailwater areas. **Walleye** - Good: Walleye are moving to tailwaters and side channel structure pre-spawn. Try vertical jigging and drifting with a live minnow. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Perch bite has slowed this week. Try jigging minnows or use a piece of crawler.

Upper Mississippi River levels rose several feet last week with several more feet predicted this week. Water temperature is in the upper 40s; fish are active. Walleye slot

length limits now apply on the entire Iowa border of the Mississippi River. All walleyes less than 15 inches long and between 20-27 inches must be immediately released. One walleye over 27 inches may be kept. Walleye/sauger combined daily limit 6/possession 12.

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

Water levels are 9.1 feet at the Lock and Dam and 11.4 feet at the RR bridge. Water clarity is fair. Water levels are rising again. **Northern Pike** - Good: Some pike are being taken on large chub rigs floated on bobbers. Pike are spawning. **Sauger** - Slow: Walleye and sauger angling has started out slow in Pool 12; most anglers are using jig and minnow rigs. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Spring can be a good season to hit some tailwater yellow perch. Minnow heads and worms are the preferred bait.

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

The water level at the Bellevue Lock is receding at near 10.0 feet. The water temperature is around 45 degrees. Boat ramps are open; some debris is floating due to higher water. The gates are closed, but may open soon if the river rises. **Northern Pike** - No Report: Pike are spawning in the backwaters. **Paddlefish** - Slow: Paddlefish season is underway; review all [paddlefish rules](#) before angling in Iowa and Illinois waters. **The season closes April 15**. Contact the Bellevue Fisheries Management office or the local game wardens if you are uncertain of paddlefish snagging rules. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: The kids trout pond just north of the DNR station has been stocked again with rainbow trout for the winter. You can only keep two trout per child. **Sauger** - Slow: Fishing pressure has been heavy with the warm weather. The bite has been slow, but some nice fish were reported. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Ice out catches of yellow perch can often be found in the tailwaters. The bite has been good at times; most anglers are using worms for bait.

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

The water level at the Fulton Lock and Dam is rising at 9.2 feet, 12.2 feet at Camanche, and 7.0 feet at Le Claire. Water temperature is around 45 degrees in the main channel. Water clarity is fair. **Northern Pike** - No Report: Pike are spawning. **Paddlefish** - Slow: Paddlefish season is underway; review all [paddlefish rules](#) before angling in Iowa and Illinois waters. **The season closes April 15**. Contact the Bellevue Fisheries Management office or the local game wardens if you are uncertain of paddlefish snagging rules. The season ends next week. **Sauger** - Slow: Boat ramps are open; angling has been slow. **Yellow Perch** - No Report: Lots of small perch are in the system; the future for yellow perch fishing looks bright in Pool 14. The tailwaters can be a great early spot for perch when the ice recedes.

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

The water level is 10.0 feet at Rock Island and is receding. The water temperature is near 45 degrees. Water clarity is fair. **Bluegill** - No Report: Not a lot of backwater bluegill habitat exists on Pool 15 outside of marina areas.

Cold windy conditions persist on the Mississippi River; some fishing is progressing. Fishing pressure has been heavy when the weather is nice. Water levels are receding, but may start rising again soon. If you have angling questions, please call the Bellevue Fisheries Management Station at 563-880-8781.

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#### [Mississippi River Pool 16](#)

Tailwater stage is 10.96 feet at Lock and Dam 15 in the Quad Cities and is rising. Tailwater stage is forecast to reach 12 feet by the middle of next week. Flood stage is 15 feet. Fishing has been slow. **Walleye** - Slow: Look for walleyes below the Lock and Dam and in Sylvan Slough. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows. **White Bass** - No Report: Look for white bass in Sylvan Slough. Use jigs and twister tails. **White Crappie** - No Report: Look for crappies in the backwaters. Try jigs and minnows or minnows under a bobber. Look for fish around brush piles in Sunset Marina or the Andalusia Island complex.

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

Tailwater stage is 9.76 feet at Lock and Dam 16 in Muscatine and is rising. Tailwater stage is forecast to reach 11 feet by the middle of next week. Flood stage is 15 feet. Fishing has been slow with the recent weather conditions and higher water conditions. **Walleye** - Slow: Look for walleyes below the Lock and Dam. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows. Some walleye can also be caught fishing along GPC. **White Crappie** - No Report: Look for crappies in the backwaters. Use jigs and minnows or minnows under a bobber around brush piles in Big Timber and Cleveland Slough.

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

Tailwater stage is 10.76 feet at Lock and Dam 17 at New Boston and is rising. Tailwater stage is forecast to reach 12 feet by the middle of next week. The gates are out of the water at the Lock and Dam. Fishing has been slow. **Walleye** - Slow: Walleye fishing below the dam has been slow. Try vertical jigging with minnows or pulling three-way rigs with minnows. **White Crappie** - No Report: Look for crappies in the backwaters. Try jigs and minnows or minnows under a bobber around brush piles at Huron Island and Belle Pocket.

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

Tailwater stage is 7.09 feet at Lock and Dam 18 and is rising. Flood stage is 10 feet. We have not received any fishing reports for this pool this week. **Walleye** - No Report: Look for walleyes below the dam. Try fishing with jigs and minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows. **White Crappie** - No Report: Look for crappies in the backwaters around brush piles. Use jigs and minnows or minnows under a bobber.

River stages are on the rise with recent rains. Main channel water clarity is poor. Water temperature is 48 degrees. Fishing has been slow with the recent weather and muddy water conditions. If you have questions on fishing Pools 16-19 contact the Fairport Fish Hatchery at 563-263-5062.

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# SOUTHEAST

## Big Hollow Lake

The redesigned boat ramp is open. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Find a nice sunny stretch of shoreline out of the wind; work jigs or soft plastic along the edges of the drop-offs to find the bass.

## Lake Belva Deer

Water temperature is in the low 40s. Weather is keeping most boats away.

## Lake Darling

Water temperature is 41-42 degrees; warms up fast if we get a sunny warm day. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Picking up some catfish with minnows along the shoreline where the wind is blowing in. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: If the sun is shining, work the north shore along the riprap with a soft plastic worked slowly.

## Lost Grove Lake

Docks are in; gates are open at the ramp by the dam. Windy weather this week has kept angler numbers low. **Largemouth Bass** - Slow: Picking up a few early season bass working soft plastics very slowly along the rocks on the north shore.

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

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## Coralville Reservoir

Water levels are at spring pool of 683 feet. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Fish the upper end of the lake with cut bait; bite is hit-and-miss with the weather.

## Diamond Lake

The boat dock is always in; park facilities will not open until next week. No fishing report is available. Very little fishing activity.

## Iowa Lake (Iowa Co.)

Water temperatures are in the mid-40s. **Black Crappie** – Fair. **Largemouth Bass** – Slow.

## Lake Macbride

Docks are in. Water temperatures are in the upper 40s. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Look for crappies around brush or stumps in 10-15 feet of water. **Bluegill** - Fair: Try fishing over rock piles or stumps in 10-20 feet of water. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Try fishing shallow rock or wood on warm days and deeper water and structure on cooler days. **Walleye** - Fair: Some fish are on shallow rocky areas spawning, while others are pre/post spawn on nearby structure and drop-offs. **Wiper (Hybrid Striped Bass)** - Fair: Find fish deep some days and shallower others; follow the wind and shad.

## Union Grove Lake

The east boat dock is in; the west dock will be in after Easter. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Use cut bait, livers shrimp on shallow windblown flats. **Walleye** - Fair: Try fishing windblown rocky shorelines.

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

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### Hawthorn Lake

**Bluegill** - No Report: Try small jigs along the shoreline as the water warms.

### Lake Miami

**Channel Catfish** - Slow: Try dead chubs around the shoreline.

### Lake Sugema

**Black Crappie** - No Report: Use small jigs and minnows around the flooded trees as the water warms.

### Lake Wapello

**Largemouth Bass** - No Report: Try rubber worms or other plastics fished around the cedar tree piles.

### Ottumwa Park South Pond (Trout Pond)

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

### Rathbun Reservoir

The current lake level is 905.86 msl; recreation pool is 904 msl. Lake Rathbun has zebra mussels so make sure to properly drain, clean and dry equipment before transporting to another waterbody. Docks have been installed at Island View, South Fork, and Bridgeview. Army Corps campgrounds are closed. **Channel Catfish** - Slow: Try dead chubs or shad sides for early ice-out catfish.

### Red Haw Lake

Red Haw State Park is closed due to the damage from the tornado on March 5th.

Contact the Rathbun Fish Hatchery at 641-647-2406 with questions about fishing in south central Iowa.

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## **SOUTHWEST**

### Big Creek Lake

**Walleye** - Slow: Catch walleye in early April shallow in the evenings just before and after sunset; cast jigs with twister tails or swimbaits.

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

**Walleye** - Fair: Use twister tails, swimbaits or live minnows on jigs.

### Des Moines River (Stratford to Saylorville Lake)

**Walleye** - Fair: Try twister tails, swimbaits or live minnows on jigs. Best bite is early morning and evening.



### Lake Petocka

Trout were stocked on April 8. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Cast inline spinners, spoons, small plastics or live bait under floats.

### Terra Lake

Trout were stocked on April 8. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Cast inline spinners, spoons, small plastics or live bait under floats.

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

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### Lake Icaria

Docks are in at all boat ramps. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Try cut bait along windblown shorelines to catch channel catfish of all sizes.

### Little River Watershed Lake

The dock is in at main ramp. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Use a jig tipped with live bait fished near deep cedar tree brush piles to catch crappie up to 11-inches.

### Three Mile Lake

Courtesy docks are in place at the main ramp. **Walleye** - Fair: Use jigs or crankbaits along the dam or rockpiles to catch walleye of all sizes.

### Twelve Mile Creek Lake

The dock is in at the main ramp. **Largemouth Bass** - Slow: Catch largemouth bass up to 20-inches with finesse plastics fished near deep cedar tree brush piles.

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

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