



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa Forestry Today

Conservation and Recreation



Autumn brings a welcoming crispness to the air. Fun abounds statewide for those in search of color and good times outdoors.

From fall festivals to apple orchards, Iowa has many fall activities to celebrate local traditions and create memories with your family. Start planning your your autumn excursions today with these great resources:

- [Travel Iowa](#) - lists of apple orchards and pumpkin patches, must-visit fall attractions, fall festivals, scenic drives and more
- [MyCountyParks.com](#) - attend a fun fall program for the whole family at a local county park
- [Iowa State Park Passport](#) - discover your new favorite parks, check in to track your progress and earn prizes



[Sign up](#) to get fall color reports emailed to you weekly **starting Sept. 26** through the last week of October. Get details on where to see the best fall color in Iowa, along with fall travel ideas and other fun ways to get outside.

Tips for finding fall colors

Iowa offers some stunning views during the fall months along with various ways to experience them - whether you're on a [bike or hiking trail](#), on the [water](#) or in a car.

The northern third of Iowa peaks, depending on weather, the weekend closest to Oct. 10. The center third peaks the first to third weeks of October, and the southern third peaks the second through fourth weeks of October.

Leaf color characteristics of some common plants:

- **Walnut:** Turns yellow in fall. One of the first to turn and drop leaves. One of the last to leaf out in spring.
- **Red Oak:** Brilliant red leaves in fall. Color probably not as intense as some hard maples.
- **White Oak:** Subdued red color of leaves in fall. Then turning brown and often staying on the tree until new leaves begin to grow in the spring.
- **Bur Oak:** Buff to yellow. Turning brown before falling.
- **Hickory:** Leaves turn yellow, then brown before falling.
- **Ash:** Leaves turn yellow, but some have a purplish cast. Leaves fall after walnut, but earlier than oaks and maples.
- **Elms:** Leaves turn yellow, some turn brown before falling, others while still yellow.
- **Soft Maple:** Leaves turn yellow. They don't turn brown before falling.
- **Hard Maple:** Brilliant red hues. Red pigmentation of some leaves breaks down before falling.
- **Virginia Creeper:** Bright red. Very spectacular when it grows on dead snags.