



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa Fishing Report

Conservation and Recreation

HOW ARE YOU SPENDING BLACK FRIDAY?

[Top Iowa Fishing Spots for the Week of Nov. 22](#)

- [NORTHWEST](#)
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NORTHWEST

[Black Hawk Lake](#)

The lake has been covered in skim ice all week. The only fishing activity has been at the fish house in Town Bay - where the area under the structure is kept ice-free with a small water agitator. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Fish are 8- to 11-inches. Try from the fish house in Town Bay.

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

Most of the lake has been frozen over for the past week. **All ice is unsafe.** The lake may open back up with the warm weather predicted for next week.

Most lakes have been iced over this last week. **All ice is unsafe for ice fishing.** With warm weather this week, many lakes may open up again. For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

[Blue Pit](#)

Blue Pit was stocked with rainbow trout on Nov. 22. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** - Excellent: Use spinnerbaits and small jigs.

[Clear Lake](#)

The lake is frozen over. Ice thickness is 0 to 4 inches. **Ice fishing is not recommended.** Clear

Lake has a protected slot on walleye. All walleye between 17 and 22 inches must be immediately released unharmed. The daily limit is 3 with no more than one walleye longer than 22 inches may be taken per day. **Yellow Perch** - No Report: Try live bait and small jigs near vegetation beds.

Rice Lake

Any water west of the North boat ramp is a waterfowl refuge and is closed to all activity from Sept. 1st through the final day of the duck season.

Winnebago River

Walleye - Fair: Use live bait in deeper holes. Best bite is after sunset.

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

East Okoboji Lake

Lake temperature is in the low 30s. Many areas are thinly iced over. The water level is 10 inches below crest. Walleye fishing is picking up from shore early morning and later at night using live bait, jigs with live bait, or crankbaits. Try fishing under structure or over the top of vegetation. **Black Crappie** - Good: Try small jigs tipped with a minnow or tube jig and bobber. **Bluegill** - Fair: Use tube jigs, plastics, or other small jigs. **Walleye** - Fair: Try crawler harnesses, crankbaits, and minnows. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Minnows work well; some sorting may be needed.

Lost Island Lake

Walleye – Good: Try spinners, crankbaits, and shallow shad raps. Evening bite is improving as the water cools.

Minnewashta Lake

Bluegill and crappie fishing has been good; some sorting may be needed.

Silver Lake (Dickinson)

The walleye bite has picked up as water temperatures cool. **Walleye** - Good: Use spinners, crankbaits, and long and shallow shad raps.

Spirit Lake

The lake is 14 inches below crest. Much of the shoreline has a thin layer of ice. **The walleye season is open.** The water temperature is in the upper 40s. Try walleye fishing from shore early morning and later at night using live bait, jigs with live bait, or crankbaits. **Muskellunge** - Good: Try crankbaits, buck tails, and rubber baits. **Walleye** - Good: The bite is hit-or-miss at dusk, but the day bite is improving. Many anglers have started to fish in shallower with slip bobbers along weed edges. Try spinners, crankbaits, and long and shallow shad raps; look for weed lines to troll or jig off of. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Use small jigs tipped with a minnow. Sorting may be needed.

West Okoboji Lake

Water temperature is in the upper 30s and a ways away from forming ice. The water level is 10 inches below crest. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Try small jigs tipped with a minnow. **Bluegill** - Good: Use tube jigs, plastics, or other small jigs. **Walleye** - Fair: Crawler harnesses, crankbaits, and minnows work well. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Use small jigs tipped with a minnow. Sorting may be needed.

Most small to medium area lakes are completely frozen over. Most large lakes are still relatively ice-free. No lakes currently offer safe ice for ice fishing. All docks and hoists are out for the season. Area lake levels are currently low. The extended forecast calls for somewhat warmer temperatures, which should slow ice formation. For current conditions, call the Spirit Lake District Office at 712-336-1840.

NORTHEAST

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

Few anglers are out fishing. Ice is starting to form on the backwaters. **Smallmouth Bass** - Slow: Smallie bite is variable. Try artificial lures or a lure tipped with a minnow around rocky outcroppings or ledges. **Walleye** - Fair: Walleye bite is steady; try artificial lures or a lure tipped with a minnow. Find fish in deeper water.

Decorah District Streams

Staff would like to thank all our trout anglers and supporters for making the 2022 catchable stream stocking season one of the best. Streams are in good condition. Hunting seasons are in full swing. Be visible to hunters. **Brook Trout** - Fair: Brookies are colored up for spawning. Look for small areas of freshly cleaned gravel; these are trout nests or redds. Please avoid walking on these. **Brown Trout** - Fair: Fall is brown trout spawning season. Walk carefully around freshly cleaned off gravel; these are trout nests or redds. Good hatches of midges on sunny days. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Try fishing along grassed edges, undercut banks, pools, and around boulders.

[Lake Hendricks](#)

Few anglers are out as the lake starts to freeze. Water clarity is improving.

[Lake Meyer](#)

Few anglers are out as they transition from open to hard water fishing.

[Volga Lake](#)

Few anglers are out. Water clarity is improving.

Temperatures are becoming more seasonal for the holiday weekend. Look for smaller bodies of water to start to freeze, but ice not thick enough on larger waterbodies. For current fishing information, please call the Chuck Gipp Decorah Fish Hatchery at 563-382-8324.

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

Northern Pike - Good: Cast bucktail jigs in pools or near current breaks. **Smallmouth Bass** - Fair: Smallmouth bite has slowed this past week. Cast crankbaits or jig and crawler rigs near rocky or rip-rap shorelines. **Walleye** - Good: Try a jig and crawler or cast crankbaits.

[Dalton Pond](#)

The outlet structure boards were pulled last week. The pond is drained until spring of 2023.

[Heritage Pond](#)

Heritage Pond was stocked with rainbow trout recently. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** - Fair: Cast and retrieve flashy spinnerbaits.

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

Anglers report catching a few smallmouth bass below the Lake Delhi Dam. **Smallmouth Bass** – Slow: Smallmouth bite has slowed this past week. Cast crankbaits or jig and crawler rigs near rocky or rip-rap shorelines.

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

Northern Pike – Good: Cast bucktail jigs in pools or near current breaks. **Smallmouth Bass** - Fair: Smallmouth bite has picked up. Cast crankbaits or jig and crawler rigs near rocky or rip-rap shorelines. **Walleye** - Good: Try a jig and crawler or cast crankbaits.

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

Northern Pike– Good: Cast bucktail jigs in pools or near current breaks. **Smallmouth Bass** - Fair: Smallmouth bite has slowed this past week. Cast crankbaits or jig and crawler rigs near rocky or rip-rap shorelines. **Walleye** - Good: Try a jig and crawler or cast crankbaits.

Interior rivers remain low and are in excellent condition for angling opportunities. Walleye and smallmouth bass are biting well on plastics. The lakes in and around Black Hawk County have been slow; some have skim ice. Trout streams are in excellent condition. Contact your local area bait shops for the most recent hot spots. For more information, contact the Manchester Hatchery at 563-927-3276.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER

[Mississippi River Pool 9](#)

Water level is 8.2 feet at Lansing and is expected to remain steady this week. Water temperature is in the 30s. **Ice is not safe for ice fishing yet.** Live minnows work well on a variety of species. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Catch bigger crappie on crappie minnows and hair jigs. **Bluegill** - No Report: Bluegills have moved into backwater overwintering holes. **Sauger** - Fair: Try vertical jigging with a minnow in the Lock and Dam tailwaters. **Walleye** - Fair: Bounce a jig and minnow off the bottom or try a crankbait rig in the tailwaters of the Lock and Dam. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Use a jig and minnow.

[Mississippi River Pool 10](#)

Water level is 613.5 feet at Lynxville and is expected to recede next week. Water temperature is in the 30s at the Lynxville dam. Water clarity is good. Panfish have settled into backwaters with no current. Live minnows work well on a variety of species in the Lock and Dam tailwaters. **Black Crappie** - Good: Catch bigger crappie on crappie minnows and hair jigs. **Bluegill** - No Report: Bluegills have moved into backwater overwintering holes. **Sauger** - Fair: Try vertical jigging with a minnow in the Lock and Dam tailwaters. **Walleye** - Good: Bounce a jig and minnow off the bottom or try a crankbait rig in the Lock and Dam tailwaters. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Use a jig and minnow.

[Mississippi River Pool 11](#)

Water level is 5.3 feet at Guttenberg and is expected to recede next week. Water temperature is in the 30s with skim ice forming. **Ice is not safe for ice fishing yet.** Panfish have settled into the backwaters for winter. Live minnows work well on a variety of species in the Lock and Dam tailwaters. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Catch bigger crappie on crappie minnows and hair jigs. **Bluegill** - No Report: Bluegills have moved into backwater overwintering holes. **Sauger** - Good: Try vertical jigging with a minnow in the Lock and Dam tailwaters. **Walleye** - Fair: Bounce a jig and minnow off the bottom or try a crankbait rig in the Lock and Dam tailwaters. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Use a jig and minnow.

Upper Mississippi River levels are receding. Skim ice is forming on backwaters and is not safe for ice fishing. Ramps are starting to ice in. Boaters are advised to use caution on ramps. 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.

[Mississippi River Pool 12](#)

The water level is 5.6 feet at Lock and Dam 11 and 8.2 feet at the RR bridge. Water temperature is around 40 degrees; the water is clear. Use caution to avoid backing a boat off the ends of the boat ramps with the low river levels. **Black Crappie** - Good: Use a small jig tipped with a minnow in areas around fallen brush in low flow backwater areas. **Largemouth Bass** - Good: Bass will feed on shad right up to ice-up conditions. Look for wind-swept backwater areas with lots of sun. **Northern Pike** - Good: Pike are chasing shad. Use gaudy white spinnerbaits. Pike will bite right up to ice-up conditions. **Sauger** - Good: The walleye and sauger bite has been up and down all year. One-eye jigs also have been popular, but a simple jig and minnow is the lure of choice for many tailwater anglers. **White Bass** - Good: Look for feeding schools hitting the water surface. Use white jigs or small spinners. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Lots of yellow perch are in the Mississippi River system. Although the size of the perch is smaller than a few pools upriver, some larger perch will be caught this winter.

[Mississippi River Pool 13](#)

The water level is 5.6 feet at Lock and Dam 12 at Bellevue and is receding. Water clarity is excellent. Water temperature is in the low 40s. Use caution to avoid backing a boat off the ends of the boat ramps with the low river levels. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Crappie fishing this year was very good on the Mississippi River. Try to fish in deeper backwater brush piles with smaller minnows. **Largemouth Bass** - Good: Bass will feed right up to ice-up. Try finding backwater areas with lots of sun for late fall feeding bass. **Sauger** - Good: Most anglers are using a simple jig and minnow or a one-eye rig in the tailwaters. **White Bass** - Good: Look for the feeding gulls and you will often find white bass feeding on minnows. Some good catches even this late in the fall have been reported.

[Mississippi River Pool 14](#)

The water level is 5.6 feet at Fulton, 9.8 feet at Camanche and 4.8 feet at LeClaire. Water clarity is excellent. Water temperature is in the low 40s. Use caution to avoid backing a boat off the ends of the boat ramps with the low river levels. **Black Crappie** - Good: Find deeper areas in backwater lakes with very little current. Be patient and fish very slowly. **Largemouth Bass** - Good: Bass will feed in backwater areas right until ice-up. **Sauger** - Good: Most anglers are fishing in the tailwaters with a jig and minnow rig.

[Mississippi River Pool 15](#)

The water level is 5.4 feet at Rock Island. Water clarity is excellent. Water temperature is 42 degrees. Use caution to avoid backing a boat off the ends of the boat ramps with the low river levels. **Walleye** - No Report: Look for walleye and sauger in the tailwater areas. Anglers often use a simple jig and minnow rig.

Fishing conditions are excellent on the Mississippi River. Water levels are receding. Water clarity is good. Use caution when backing off boat ramps with the low river levels. Use the minimum amount of ramp to float your boat to avoid backing off the ends of short ramps. If you

have angling questions, please call the Bellevue Fisheries Management Station at 563-880-8781.

[Mississippi River Pool 16](#)

Tailwater stage is 5.66 feet at Lock and Dam 15 in the Quad Cities. Backwaters are frozen over with skim ice. **Unsafe ice conditions.** **Sauger** - No Report: Look for saugers below the Lock and Dam and in Sylvan Slough. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows. **Walleye** - No Report: Look for walleye below the Lock and Dam and in Sylvan Slough. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows. Some walleyes can also be caught trolling three-way rigs on the the wing-dams.

[Mississippi River Pool 17](#)

Tailwater stage is 4.20 feet at Lock and Dam 16 in Muscatine. Backwaters are frozen over. **Unsafe ice conditions.** Tailwater fishing for walleyes and saugers has been slow. **Sauger** - Slow: Look for saugers below the Lock and Dam. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows. **Walleye** - Slow: Look for walleyes below the Lock and Dam. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows. Some walleyes can also be caught trolling three-way rigs with minnows on the wing-dams.

[Mississippi River Pool 18](#)

Tailwater stage is 4.56 feet at Lock and Dam 17 at New Boston. Backwaters are frozen over. **Unsafe ice conditions.** Tailwater fishing for walleyes and saugers has been slow. **Sauger** - Slow: Look for saugers below the Lock and Dam. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows. **Walleye** - Slow: Look for walleyes below the Lock and Dam. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows. Some walleyes can also be caught trolling three-way rigs with minnows on the wing-dams.

[Mississippi River Pool 19](#)

Tailwater stage is 2.86 feet at Lock and Dam 18 above Burlington and is forecast to fall over the weekend. We have not received any fishing reports for this pool this week. **Unsafe ice conditions.** **Sauger** - No Report: Look for saugers below the Lock and Dam. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows. **Walleye** - No Report: Look for walleyes below the Lock and Dam. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows. Some walleyes can also be caught on the wing-dams.

Tailwater stages dropped close to a foot over the weekend. Main channel water temperature is around 35 degrees. Backwaters have frozen over with skim ice. **Unsafe ice conditions.** Tailwater fishing for walleye and sauger has been slow. If you have questions on fishing Pools 16-19, contact the Fairport Fish Hatchery at 563-263-5062.

SOUTHEAST

[Discovery Park Pond](#)

Forecast warmer weather should keep this lake ice-free most of the time. It's out in the open, so the wind and sun can do their thing keeping the ice away. **Rainbow Trout:** Good - Use worms or powerbait under a bobber or they are still hitting spinners; cold water doesn't bother trout as much as it does other fish. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

[Lake Belva Deer](#)

A little ice is forming in the bays where the sun and wind can't get to it. Warmer weather forecast for this week should take care of it. **Bluegill** - No Report: If you get the boat back out one last time, try out from the south ramp along the old creek channel; use the same lures and techniques as you would ice fishing.

[Lake Darling](#)

The water temperature is hovering just above freezing. Some ice on the lake up above the in-lake silt dams. Use caution when using the boat ramps, they may be icy early in the morning. **Black Crappie** - No Report: Cold weather has kept most anglers off the lake. Find crappies out at their winter homes in the middle of the lake in the cedars and culvert piles. Treat it like ice fishing from a boat.

[Wilson Lake](#)

It will be a good while before this lake freezes over. It's a good place to do a little fishing this weekend. **Rainbow trout**: Good - Trout are still pretty active after the fall trout release. You can see the cedar trees and brush piles where they are hiding. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

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

[Coralville Reservoir](#)

The lake is crusted over from Macbride and upstream.

[Green Castle Lake](#)

The lake is starting to crust over this week.

[Hannen Lake](#)

The lake is starting to crust over this week.

[Lake Macbride](#)

Water temperature is in the low 40s. The north arm and east of the causeway are crusted over. Any size motor may be operated at no wake (5 mph) speed. The boat docks have been removed. There are permanent slips at main ramp and Opie ramp; a plastic dock will remain at main ramp. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Try fishing over brush or rockpiles in 15-25 feet of water. **Bluegill** - Fair: Try fishing around deeper rocks or stumps. **Muskellunge** - Fair. **Walleye** - Slow.

[Liberty Centre Pond](#)

2000 rainbow trout were stocked recently. 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 docks will be pulled by the end of the month. There is still a permanent boat slip at main ramp. **Bluegill** - Fair: Try fishing the shallow structure. **Walleye** – Fair: A few walleye are being caught after dark.

[Prairie Park Fishery](#)

2000 rainbow trout were stocked recently. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** - Good.

[Sand Lake](#)

2000 rainbow trout were stocked recently. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** - Fair.

[Wapsipinicon River \(Troy Mills to Oxford Junction\)](#)

Some of the river has crusted over. The boat dock at Pinicon Ridge was removed, but the ramp will be open until snowfall. **Walleye** – Fair: Use plastics or live bait in deeper holes.

Some shallower bodies of water have skim ice, while other areas remain ice-free. For more information, contact the Lake Macbride Fisheries Station at 319-624-3615.

[Lake Miami](#)

Little fishing pressure lately. Water temperatures are in the 40s. Skim ice is forming on the colder mornings.

[Lake Sugema](#)

Fishing pressure has been light. Water temperatures are in the 40s. Skim ice is forming on the colder mornings, making fishing from shore difficult.

[Lake Wapello](#)

Water temperatures are in the 40s. Skim ice is forming on the colder mornings.

[Ottumwa Park Pond South \(Trout Pond\)](#)

Skim ice is forming; fishing from shore will be difficult. Trout were stocked recently. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** - Fair: Try small in-line spinners or small jigs.

[Rathbun Reservoir](#)

The current lake level is 903.62 msl; recreation pool is 904 msl. Water temperature is in the mid to upper 40s. Skim ice is forming in the coves, making fishing difficult. Lake Rathbun has zebra mussels, so make sure to properly drain, clean and dry equipment before transporting to another waterbody. **Walleye** - No Report: Effective January 1, 2023 there will be a 15-inch minimum length limit on walleye. All walleyes measuring less than 15 inches must be immediately released unharmed. This regulation does not apply to the Chariton River below Rathbun dam; the upper limit of the regulation will be the Wayne/Appanoose county line.

[Red Haw Lake](#)

Red Haw State Park has partially reopened. Visitors can access the beach and north boat ramp area, but are asked to avoid the campground.

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

SOUTHWEST

[Ada Hayden Heritage Park Lake](#)

Ada Hayden is usually one of the last lakes in Central Iowa to ice over. Open water fishing should be possible through November. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Use small inline spinners, spoons, 1/8 ounce or smaller twister tail jigs, or live bait under a float. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

[Des Moines River \(Stratford to Saylorville Lake\)](#)

The Des Moines River upstream of Saylorville Reservoir has thin ice cover. This ice will likely deteriorate through Thanksgiving. **Walleye** - Fair: Try slowly retrieving jigs tipped with twister tails, paddle tails, or live baits. Find areas of slow current with depths greater than 3 feet.

[Lake Petocka](#)

Rainbow Trout - Fair: Use small inline spinners, spoons, 1/8 ounce or smaller twister tail jigs, or live bait under a float. Once ice cover is safe for ice fishing, use jigging spoons tipped with waxworms or minnows. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

[Terra Lake](#)

Rainbow Trout - Fair: Use small inline spinners, spoons, 1/8 ounce or smaller twister tail jigs, or live bait under a float. Once ice cover is safe for ice fishing, use jigging spoons tipped with waxworms or minnows. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

[Triumph Park West](#)

Rainbow Trout - Fair: Use small inline spinners, spoons, 1/8 ounce or smaller twister tail jigs, or live bait under a float. Once ice cover is safe for ice fishing, use jigging spoons tipped with waxworms or minnows. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

Ponds and shallow water in Central Iowa have skim ice. For information on Central Iowa lakes and rivers contact Ben Dodd at 641-891-3795 or Andy Otting at 515-204-5885.

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

Trout were stocked recently. Look for another stocking in January when ice is safe. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** - No Report: Try similar size tackle used for bluegill and crappie; nightcrawlers and minnows are good live bait options.

[Lake Anita](#)

Black Crappie - No Report: Look for crappies drifting the roadbeds and around deep tree piles. Fish average 9-inches. **Bluegill** - No Report: Look for bluegills around deep structure and along creek channel edges.

[Meadow Lake](#)

Black Crappie - No Report: Vertical jig or cast minnows under a bobber to the cedar tree piles in the lake to catch 10-inch black crappie.

[Prairie Rose Lake](#)

Black Crappie - No Report: Prairie Rose has a good population of 10-inch black crappie that will provide good ice fishing this winter. **Bluegill** - No Report: Try fishing the deep cedar tree piles to catch 8.5-inch bluegill.

Lakes and ponds are starting to form ice. For information on lakes in the Southwest District call the Cold Springs office at 712-769-2587.

[Three Mile Lake](#)

Courtesy docks are in at the main ramp.

Most Mount Ayr district lakes are still ice-free. Some skim ice on small ponds and lakes in the area. Very limited fishing activity observed this week. For more information, call the Mount Ayr Fisheries office at 641-464-3108.



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