



[Top Iowa Fishing Spots for the Week of March 9](#)

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

NORTHWEST

[Arrowhead Lake](#)

Ice fishing is not recommended.

[Black Hawk Lake](#)

Ice fishing is not recommended. Town Bay is opening up. Open water anglers are fishing from the stone piers. The boat ramp in Town Bay is open. **Walleye** - Fair: Open water anglers have are using jigs and crankbaits in Town Bay fishing from shore.

[Black Hawk Pits](#)

Ice fishing is not recommended.

[Brushy Creek Lake](#)

Ice fishing is not recommended. There are pockets of open water; any remaining ice is unsafe.

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

The lake is ice covered, but the ice quality is deteriorating; its condition is unknown and can change fast this time of year.

Ice fishing is unsafe on most area lakes. Any remaining ice is degraded and areas along shore are opening up. The winter aeration system in Town Bay (westernmost bay) of Black Hawk Lake is in operation. For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

[Clear Lake](#)

Ice thickness is 0 to 16 inches. Ice at access points has deteriorated; foot traffic only 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. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Use a small minnow near vegetation in 6 to 8 feet of water. **Bluegill** - Fair: Try a small jig tipped with spikes in 2 to 4 feet of water. Best bite is early morning and near sunset. **Walleye** - Slow: Use a jigging spoon tipped with a minnow head in 6 to 8 feet of water near vegetation. Best bite is low

light periods and after sunset. **Yellow Bass** - Fair: Stay mobile to find fish. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Try live bait and jigs near vegetation. Use a bigger bait to avoid the small fish.

Crystal Lake

Ice thickness is 0 to 16 inches. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Try a small jig tipped with bait near the dredge cut. **Bluegill** - Fair: Use a small jig tipped with spikes in 3 to 4 feet of water. Best bite is late afternoon.

Rice Lake

Ice thickness is 0 to 16 inches. **Bluegill** - Slow. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Try a small jig tipped with bait near vegetation.

Silver Lake (Worth)

Ice thickness is 0 to 16 inches. **Bluegill** - Good: Use a small jig tipped with waxworms near vegetation. Best bite is early morning and sunset. **Yellow Perch** - Fair.

Most area lakes still have 16+ inches of ice. Access conditions can change daily this time of year. Winter aeration systems are running at Clear Lake, Crystal Lake, Rice Lake and Silver Lake. 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

Ice thickness is around 19+ inches in most areas. **The walleye season is closed. Black Crappie** - Good: Try small jigs tipped with a minnow or tube jig and bobber. **Bluegill** - Good: Use tube jigs, plastics, or other small jigs. **Northern Pike** - Good: Tip-ups are working well. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Minnows are working well; some sorting may be needed.

Five Island Lake

Use caution; the lake aerator has been started up in Town Bay. **Yellow Bass** – Good.

Ingham Lake

Ice thickness is 19+ inches. Use caution; there is an open hole in the lake with the aerator in use. **Walleye** - Fair:

Lost Island Lake

Ice thickness is around 20+ inches in most places. **Black Crappie** - Good. **Walleye** – Good.

Minnewashta Lake

Ice thickness is 20+ inches. **Black Crappie** - Good. **Bluegill** - Good.

Silver Lake (Dickinson)

Ice thickness is around 19+ inches. Use caution; the lake aerator is in use. This creates an open hole on the east side of the lake. **Walleye** - Good: Best bite is at dusk.

Spirit Lake

The lake is entirely iced over with 18+ inches in most places. The best ice is on the south end and Anglers Bay. Most accesses are clear of heaves and snow. **The walleye season is closed. Black Crappie** -Good. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Use small jigs tipped with a minnow. Sorting may be needed.

West Okoboji Lake

West Okoboji is relatively free of any major heaves or hazards. The bluegill bite in Little Emerson Bay and out from Triboji has been slower; fish have been finicky. **The walleye season is closed. Black Crappie** - Fair: Try small jigs tipped with a minnow. **Bluegill** - Fair:

Use tube jigs, plastics, or other small jigs. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Try small jigs tipped with a minnow. Sorting may be needed.

Most lakes have 18 inches of ice or more, but shorelines and accesses have thinner ice due to snow melt runoff. Getting around the lakes has been easier after recent rain cut down on the majority of the snow cover. **The walleye season on the Iowa Great Lakes is closed until May 6th. Permanent and non-permanent ice shacks must be removed from the ice when not occupied.** For current conditions, call the Spirit Lake District Office at 712-336-1840.

NORTHEAST

Cedar River (above Nashua)

Impoundments above dams remain ice covered. Use extreme caution in areas with current. Ice conditions can change fast. **Channel Catfish** - Good. **Walleye** - Fair.

Decorah District Streams

Most area streams are up, but clear. Weekend clarity will depend on snow amount and how fast it melts. Spring community trout stockings start March 23. Check the [DNR trout fishing webpage](#) for stockings locations and dates. **Brook Trout** - Fair: Insect hatches are taking place on sunny afternoons. Use midge, minnow or scud patterns for fish looking to get more bang for their effort. **Brown Trout** - Good: Meltwater flowing into streams is bringing a fresh supply of foods for curious brownies. Try fishing near or around structure. Spinner or crankbaits work well. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Rainbows are teasing anglers with soft strikes and nudges. Use small spinnerbaits, hair jigs or hooks tipped with imitation eggs floating past structure.

Lake Hendricks

Lake edges are getting soft; use extreme caution near the aerator **Black Crappie** - Fair: Use small minnows or waxworms on a jig fished around rock piles. **Bluegill** - Fair: Try small jig tipped with waxworms fished around brush piles, crappie condos, and other structure.

Lake Meyer

Lake edges are getting soft, but still capped with 6-7 inches of hard ice. Water clarity is fair due to silt laden rainwater entering the lake earlier in week. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Crappies are about 9- to 10-inches. **Bluegill** - Fair: Use small jigs tipped with a waxworm or spike.

Volga Lake

Shoreline are open the first couple feet along rocky edges. Other edges are getting soft, but the main lake remains capped with ice. Few anglers have been out. **Black Crappie** - Good: Use a small minnow or waxworm fished over cedar trees or pallet structure. **Bluegill** - Fair: Try small jigs tipped with waxworm fished near structure.

A front passes through Thursday into late Friday, potentially bringing 4-8 inches of snow. Another front to hit over the weekend potentially bringing more snow. Temperatures range from the mid-30s to mid-20s. Parking lots on wildlife management areas aren't plowed; use care when parking on roadsides. For current fishing information, please call the Chuck Gipp Decorah Fish Hatchery at 563-382-8324.

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

Reports of anglers catching walleye. **Walleye** - Good: Try a jig and plastic twister.

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

Reports of anglers catching walleye. **Walleye** - Fair: Try a jig and plastic twister.

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

Walleye - No Report: Try a jig and plastic twister.

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

Walleye - No Report: Try a jig and plastic twister.

Reports of anglers catching walleye on the interior rivers. Ice fishing season is officially over as lakes are opening up. Trout streams are in excellent condition. Contact your local bait shop for the most recent angling opportunities. For more information, contact the Manchester Hatchery at 563-927-3276.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER

[Mississippi River Pool 9](#)

Water level is 8.0 feet at Lansing. Some ice is still flowing in the channel. Backwater ice is nearly gone. Open water fishing below the dam is picking up. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Northern pike are going on the feed before the spawn. Try fishing shoreline grasses in the backwaters. **Sauger** - Good: Try vertical jigging with a minnow in the Lock and Dam tailwaters. **Walleye** - Good: Walleye are moving up to the dams before the spawn. Bottom bounce a jig with twister tails in the Lock and Dam tailwaters.

[Mississippi River Pool 10](#)

Water level has risen to 615.2 feet at Lynxville. The Lynxville boat ramp has been open. Water clarity has improved with some ice still floating down. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Northern pike are going on the feed before the spawn. Try fishing shoreline grasses in the backwaters. **Sauger** - Fair: Bottom bounce a jig with twister tails in the Lock and Dam tailwaters. **Walleye** - Good: Walleye are moving up to the dams before the spawn. Bottom bounce a jig with twister tails in the Lock and Dam tailwaters.

[Mississippi River Pool 11](#)

Water level at Guttenberg is expected to remain stable near 7.4 feet. The south public boat ramp is free of ice and open. Water clarity has improved with a few ice chunks still floating downstream. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Northern pike are going on the feed before the spawn. Try fishing shoreline grasses in the backwaters. **Sauger** - Fair: Bottom bounce a jig with twister tails in the Lock and Dam tailwaters. **Walleye** - Good: Walleye are moving up to the dams before the spawn. Bottom bounce a jig with twister tails in the Lock and Dam tailwaters.

Upper Mississippi River levels are expected to remain stable this week. Ice has gone out. Expect the bite to pick up as water temperatures rise. 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 steady at 6.9 feet at Lock and Dam 11 and 9.2 feet at the RR bridge. Water temperature is around 36 degrees; the water is clear. Ice is out in most backwater locations including O'Leary's Lake. **Bluegill** - No Report: As usual, this year's ice fishing catch is all over the board, but in general the catch of bluegills this winter was good. **Northern Pike** - No Report: Early spring northern pike action usually kicks off in places like OLearys Lake. Try floating large shiners on bobber rigs. **Sauger** - Good: Hawthorne ramp is open and mostly ice free. Tailwater anglers are using jigs and minnows. Some good reports were received before the recent major rains. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Lots of smaller yellow perch are in the system; this is a good indicator for yellow perch fishing this upcoming year. Tailwater anglers are catching a few perch.

[Mississippi River Pool 13](#)

The water level is 7.6 feet at Lock and Dam 12 at Bellevue. Water clarity is decent. Water temperature is around 36 degrees. The City of Bellevue Ramp and the Iowa DNR ramp are open, but occasional floating ice chunks may occur. **Bluegill** - No Report: We received many good reports on bluegills this ice fishing season, but many small fish were reported. **Paddlefish** - Good: Paddlefish season opened March 1st and runs through April 15th. Check the paddlefish regulations (page 11 of the [Iowa Fishing Regulations](#)) before you go out snagging. **Rainbow Trout** - Excellent: The Bellevue kids trout pond is open and vegetation free. It is a nice safe place to fish with kids on warmer winter days. If you plan on keeping fish please only keep two fish per child. This pond will be covered in vegetation in a month or so; now is the time to fish it. **Sauger** - Good: Conditions have been good this spring. Most anglers are using jigs and minnow rigs or three-way-weights with a crankbait. **Walleye** - Good: Small walleye and an occasional keeper are being reported. Better fish are taken on a three-way crankbait rig. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Smaller yellow perch are in the system; this is a good indicator for yellow perch fishing this upcoming year.

[Mississippi River Pool 14](#)

The water level at Fulton is 7.2 feet, 10.7 feet at Camanche, and 5.9 feet at LeClaire. The river is steady. Water clarity is slightly stained from last weeks rains. Water temperature is near 36 degrees. **Bluegill** - No Report: Many good reports in general on all panfish species in Pool 14. Hope this translates into a good open water season. **Paddlefish** - Good: Paddlefish season opened March 1st and runs through April 15th. Check the paddlefish regulations (page 11 of the [Iowa Fishing Regulations](#)) before you go out snagging. **Sauger** - Good: Small walleye and small sauger are being reported with an occasional keeper reported. Most anglers are using a jig and minnow rig.

[Mississippi River Pool 15](#)

The water level is steady at 8.5 feet at Rock Island. Water clarity is stained. Water temperature is 36 degrees.

Get your fishing in now; the river is expected to rise significantly in the next month. The River is stable and most district ramps are ice free, but ice chunks are still floating around. If you have angling questions, please call the Bellevue Fisheries Management Station at 563-880-8781.

[Mississippi River Pool 16](#)

Tailwater stage is 8.44 feet at Lock and Dam 15 in the Quad Cities and has been falling this past week. Tailwater stage is forecast to stay fairly steady over the weekend. Flood stage is 15 feet. **Sauger** - Slow: Tailwater fishing for saugers is slow due to muddy water

conditions. **Walleye** - Slow: Tailwater fishing for walleyes is slow due to muddy water conditions.

[Mississippi River Pool 17](#)

Tailwater stage is 7.50 feet at Lock and Dam 16 in Muscatine and has been falling this past week. River stage is forecast to stay steady over the weekend. Flood stage is 15 feet. The boat ramps at Muscatine are open. Tailwater fishing for walleyes and saugers has been slow with muddy water conditions. **Sauger** - Slow: Tailwater fishing for saugers below the dam is slow due to muddy water conditions. **Walleye** - Slow: Tailwater fishing for walleyes is slow due to muddy water conditions.

[Mississippi River Pool 18](#)

Tailwater stage is 9.79 feet at Lock and Dam 17 at New Boston and has been falling this past week. Flood stage is 15 feet. The gates are out of the water at the Lock and Dam. Tailwater fishing for walleyes and saugers is slow with muddy water conditions. **Sauger** - Slow: Tailwater fishing for saugers is slow with muddy water conditions. **Walleye** - Slow: Tailwater fishing for walleyes is slow with muddy water conditions.

[Mississippi River Pool 19](#)

Tailwater stage is 6.56 feet at Lock and Dam 18 above Burlington and is falling. Tailwater stage is forecast to fall over the weekend. Flood stage is 10 feet. We have not received any tailwater fishing reports or ramp condition reports for this pool this week.

Tailwater stages have been falling this week. River stage is forecast to stay fairly steady over the weekend. Tailwater fishing for walleyes and saugers has been slow. Tailwater fishing for walleyes and saugers has been slow. Main channel water clarity is poor. Water temperature is 40 degrees. If you have questions on fishing Pools 16-19, contact the Fairport Fish Hatchery at 563-263-5062.

SOUTHEAST

[Big Hollow Lake](#)

Big Hollow is ice-free. The return of rainy/cold weather is keeping the angler numbers down.

[Lake Belva Deer](#)

The ice is all gone. Very little angler activity, mostly because of the return of colder weather.

[Lake Darling](#)

The lake remains ice-free and is back to a more normal level. Water is chalky colored from the run-off. The boat ramp docks won't be in for a while yet. **Channel Catfish** - No Report: Pick a warm afternoon and find where the wind is blowing into the rocks and you should be able to find the catfish. Use cut bait as bait.

[Lost Grove Lake](#)

The last of the ice melted away last weekend. Very little angler activity; mostly a few boats just getting out on the water.

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

[Central Park Lake](#)

The bad ice is still holding on here.

[Coralville Reservoir](#)

The lake is ice-free, but the water is very dirty. Anglers have been catfishing the upper end, but no reports are available.

[Diamond Lake](#)

The lake is ice-free. The boat dock and kayak launch are available. **Black Crappie** - Slow: A few fish are being caught on jigs tipped with waxies in 4-6 feet of water off the jetties.

[Green Castle Lake](#)

The lake is ice-free.

[Hannen Lake](#)

The lake is ice-free. The boat dock and the restroom are open.

[Iowa Lake \(Iowa Co.\)](#)

The lake is ice-free.

[Lake Macbride](#)

The lake is ice-free. There is a dock in at the main ramp and permanent slips available at the main ramp and Opie Ave ramp.

[Otter Creek Lake](#)

The lake is currently drained for the ongoing renovation project.

[Pleasant Creek Lake](#)

The lake is about 80 percent ice-free.

[Sand Lake](#)

There is still some ice on the lake.

[Union Grove Lake](#)

The lower 1/3 of the lake is open, but the remainder of the lake is covered with poor ice.

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

Dam removal has started at Central City. Public access below the dam is not permitted during the project.

Unsafe ice conditions in most of the Macbride District. For more information, contact the Lake Macbride Fisheries Station at 319-624-3615.

[Hawthorn Lake](#)

The lake has open water.

[Lake Miami](#)

The lake has open water.

[Lake Sugema](#)

The lake is open water.

[Lake Wapello](#)

The lake is open water.

[Rathbun Reservoir](#)

The current lake level is 904.6 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. **Channel Catfish** - No Report: Ice-out catfish are usually caught on the windblown shorelines using dead shad or chubs. **Walleye** - No Report: There is a 15-inch minimum length limit on walleye at Lake Rathbun. This was effective January 1st. All walleyes measuring less than 15-inches must be immediately released unharmed.

[Red Haw Lake](#)

The lake is open water. Visitors are asked to avoid the campground area due to the continued storm damage cleanup.

Most area lakes have open water. Contact the Rathbun Fish Hatchery at 641-647-2406 with questions about fishing in south central Iowa.

SOUTHWEST

[Big Creek Lake](#)

As of March 8, Big Creek Lake was open on the north half of the lake. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Catch channel catfish as the ice recedes in the next few weeks using dead gizzard shad. Dead shad are also flowing over the spillway which could trigger a fair catfish bite in the pool below.

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

Channel Catfish - Good: Catch channel catfish out of the main current or in the mouths of feeder creeks using dead shad. **Walleye** - Fair: Catch walleye through March and early April below Saylorville Dam, the dams in Des Moines, and deeper pools on jigs tipped with twister tails, swimbaits or live minnows.

As of March 8, ice in Central Iowa is mostly out except in larger lakes. For information on Central Iowa lakes and rivers contact Ben Dodd at 641-891-3795 or Andy Otting at 515-204-5885.

[Lake Anita](#)

No Report

[Littlefield Lake](#)

No Report

[Meadow Lake](#)

No Report

[Prairie Rose Lake](#)

No Report

Lakes in the southwest district are ice free. For information on lakes in the Southwest District call the Cold Springs office at 712-769-2587.

[Green Valley Lake](#)

Docks are in at the beach and dam boat ramps.

[Three Mile Lake](#)

Docks are in at main ramp.

[Twelve Mile Creek Lake](#)

The dock is in at main boat ramp. **Largemouth Bass** - Slow: Catch largemouth Bass of all sizes with finesse plastics fished along rocky shoreline areas.

[West Lake \(Osceola\)](#)

Docks are in at main boat ramp.

Mt. Ayr district lakes are ice-free. Water temperature in most lakes is in the upper 30s to low 40s. For more information, call the Mount Ayr Fisheries office at 641-464-3108.

