



[Top Iowa Fishing Spots for the Week of March 23](#)

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NORTHWEST

[Arrowhead Lake](#)

The lake is still partially ice covered.

[Black Hawk Lake](#)

The lake is ice free. Shore fishing has been productive in Town Bay and around the fish house near Ice House Point. **Walleye** - Fair: Anglers are picking up walleye in Town Bay using crankbaits minnows and twisters. The bite has been good at times.

[Black Hawk Pits](#)

The lake is ice free.

[Brushy Creek Lake](#)

The lake is ice free.

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

As of March 23, the lake is partially ice covered with large open areas.

Most lakes in Western Iowa are ice free. A few of the larger lakes are partially ice covered. For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

[Clear Lake](#)

Ice conditions are not safe. 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. **Walleye** - Slow: Anglers are having some success fishing from the jetties after sunset. **Yellow Perch** - No Report.

Silver Lake (Worth)

Ice conditions are not safe. **Bluegills** - No Report.

Winnebago River

Water levels remain high. **Northern Pike** - Slow:

Ice conditions are not safe on area lakes. 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 17+ 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.

Ingham Lake

There is a large hole open on the lake but there is still 15+ inches of ice. **Walleye** - Fair:

Lost Island Lake

Ice thickness is around 16 inches in most places. **Black Crappie** - Good. **Walleye** - Good.

Minnewashta Lake

Ice thickness is around 17 inches. Bluegill and crappie fishing has been good. **Black Crappie** - Good. **Bluegill** - Good.

Silver Lake (Dickinson)

Ice thickness is around 17+ inches, but conditions around the shorelines are thinner. 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 16+ 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 16 inches of ice, but shorelines and accesses have thinner ice due to runoff. Vehicle use is more limited in certain areas. **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 \(above Nashua\)](#)

A little ice remains in a few backwaters; impoundments are open. River conditions are relatively steady with good clarity. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Use a minnow fished in a backwater or near current breaks. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Try a dead chub or worm fished near bottom near current breaks. **Walleye** - Fair: Use a minnow or worm below the dams or eddies. Try using a 3-way with just enough weight to keep the weight on the bottom or use a worm harness for nightcrawlers.

Decorah District Streams

Area streams are looking good. Very little snow left in the woods. Spring community trout stockings are now occurring. Check the [DNR trout fishing webpage](#) for stockings locations and dates. [Catchable trout stocking season](#) is just around the corner. Make sure you have a fishing license and trout fee, map, calendar, and favorite gear ready. **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](#)

Ice conditions are very poor. Ice fishing is not recommended.

[Lake Meyer](#)

Lake remains nearly entirely ice covered, but is not safe.

[Upper Iowa River \(below Decorah\)](#)

Fish activity is picking up below the dams. Relatively steady conditions with good clarity. **Walleye** - Slow: Use a hook tipped with a minnow fished in an eddy or off a current break.

[Volga Lake](#)

Very little ice remains on the lake. Fish activity is slow.

A front passes through Friday into Saturday bringing a possibility of mixed precipitation overnight. Temperatures range from mid-40s to upper 20s. Majority of ice is gone from the area waterbodies. Parking lots and gravel roads are sloppy; 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 8.13 feet at Lansing and is expected to rise to 8.3 feet this week. Water clarity has been good with open water fishing picking up. Water temperature is near 38 degrees. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Northern pike are moving in to spawn, but some are still actively feeding. **Sauger** - Good: Try vertical jigging with a minnow in the Lock and Dam tailwaters. **Walleye** - Good: Bottom bounce a jig with twister tails in the Lock and Dam tailwaters. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Try a jig tipped with with a minnow or a bit of crawler fished in the tailwaters and side channels.

Mississippi River Pool 10

Water level is to 616 feet at Lynxville and is expected to reach 616.7 feet this week. Boat ramps are open. Water clarity is good; multiple species are starting to bite. Water temperature is near 38 degrees. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Northern pike are moving in to spawn but some are still actively feeding. **Sauger** - Fair: Bottom bounce a jig with twister tails in the Lock and Dam tailwaters. **Walleye** - Good: Bottom bounce a jig with twister tails in the Lock and Dam tailwaters. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Try a jig tipped with with a minnow or a bit of crawler fished in the tailwaters and side channels.

Mississippi River Pool 11

Water level at Guttenberg is 7.65 feet and is predicted to reach 8.7 feet this week. Boat ramps are open. Water clarity is good. Water temperature is near 38 degrees. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Northern pike are moving in to spawn, but some are still actively feeding. **Sauger** - Good: Bottom bounce a jig with twister tails in the Lock and Dam tailwaters. **Walleye** - Good: Bottom bounce a jig with twister tails in the Lock and Dam tailwaters. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Try a jig tipped with with a minnow or a bit of crawler fished in the tailwaters and side channels.

Upper Mississippi River levels are rising slowly for now and expected to less than one foot over the next week. Water temperatures are in the upper 30s. Expect multiple species to pick up with warmer temps. Walleye slot length limits now apply on the entire Iowa border of the Mississippi River. All walleyes less than 15 inches 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 rising to 6.4 feet at Lock and Dam 11 and 8.8 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. The marinas around Dubuque still have a lot of ice within them. **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 O'Leary's Lake. Try floating large shiners on bobber rigs. Pike spawn in early spring and the spawning season is approaching. **Sauger** - Good: Hawthorne and Schmitt ramps are both open. Tailwater anglers

are mostly using jigs and minnows. We received many good reports in the past few weeks. **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 rising to 7.2 feet at Lock and Dam 12 at Bellevue. Water clarity is decent. Water temperature is around 36 degrees. The City of Bellevue boat ramp and the Iowa DNR ramp are open. **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. Fishing has been temperamental this week as some poor days were sprinkled in with good catches. **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 is 6.6 feet at Fulton, 10.5 feet at Camanche, and 5.6 feet at LeClaire. The river is rising. Water clarity is slightly stained. 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 7.9 feet and rising at Rock Island. Water clarity is stained. Water temperature is 36 degrees.

Get your River fishing done as the Mississippi is expected to rise significantly in the next month. These cold days is probably delaying the inevitable rise. If you have angling questions, please call Bellevue Fisheries Management at 563-880-8781.

[Mississippi River Pool 16](#)

Tailwater stage is 8.00 feet at Lock and Dam 15 in the Quad Cities and has been falling this past week. Tailwater stage is forecast to rise over the weekend with rain in the forecast. Flood stage is 15 feet. **Sauger** - No Report: Look for saugers below the Lock and Dam or in Sylvan Slough. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows or stick baits. **Walleye** - No Report: Look for walleyes below the Lock and Dam or in Sylvan Slough. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows or stick baits.

[Mississippi River Pool 17](#)

Tailwater stage is 7.09 feet at Lock and Dam 16 in Muscatine and has been fairly steady this

past week. River stage is forecast to rise over the weekend. Flood stage is 15 feet. The boat ramps at Muscatine are open. **Sauger** - No Report: Look for saugers below the Lock and Dam. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows or stick baits. **Walleye** - No Report: Look for walleyes below the Lock and Dam. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows or stick baits.

Mississippi River Pool 18

Tailwater stage is 8.65 feet at Lock and Dam 17 at New Boston and has been falling this past week. Flood stage is 15 feet. The gates are starting to be put back in at the Lock and Dam. The gates may come back out with rain in the forecast and rising river levels predicted over the weekend. **Sauger** - Slow: Look for walleyes below the Lock and Dam. Try vertical jigging with minnows or pulling three-way rigs with minnows or stick baits. **Walleye** - No Report: Look for saugers below the Lock and Dam. Try vertical jigging with minnows or pulling three-way rigs with minnows or stick baits.

Mississippi River Pool 19

Tailwater stage is 5.53 feet at Lock and Dam 18 above Burlington and has been falling this past week. Tailwater stage is forecast to rise 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. **Sauger** - No Report: Look for saugers below the Lock and Dam. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows or stick baits. **Walleye** - No Report: Look for walleyes below the Lock and Dam. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows or stick baits.

Tailwater stages have been steady to falling this past week. River stage is forecast to rise over the weekend with rain in the forecast. Tailwater fishing for walleyes and saugers has been slow. Main channel water clarity is fair. Water temperature is 38 degrees. Water conditions may change with rain in the forecast. If you have questions on fishing Pools 16-19, contact the Fairport Fish Hatchery at 563-263-5062.

SOUTHEAST

Big Hollow Lake

Very little angler activity, mostly due to the weather. **Channel Catfish** - No Report: Fish a chunk of cut bait along the rock towards the dam on warm days.

Discovery Park Pond

The spring trout stocking will be at about 9:30 a.m. on March 23. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: 1,000 rainbow trout will be released into the North Pond. Start fishing with something flashy to get their attention; switch to bait and bobber as the trout calm down and slow down.

Jefferson Co. Park New Pond

The spring trout stocking will be at around 10 a.m. on March 23. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: 1,000 rainbow trout will be stocked. Trout will circle the pond fairly quickly when they are first stocked as they get use to their new home. Use something flashy or bright that will catch their attention; switch to slower lures and baits as they calm down.

Lake Belva Deer

Water temperature is hovering just above freezing. Use caution around the docks early in the

morning as the wave splash has been freezing on the docks at night. **Channel Catfish** - No Report: Try fishing cut bait just below the inlet where the marsh dumps into the lake for some catfish looking for winterkilled frogs and fish coming out of the marsh.

Lake Darling

The water is cold enough to form ice in shallow areas. **Channel Catfish** - No Report: With the continued rainy and colder weather, angler activity has been minimal.

Lost Grove Lake

The weather has kept most anglers off the water. **Channel Catfish** - No Report: Try a piece of cut bait floated under a bobber near the wind blown shoreline on a warm day.

Wilson Lake

The spring trout stocking was around noon today (March 23). You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: 1,000 rainbow trout will be released. Try fishing areas like the corners of the lake and the cedar trees in the lake; these places slow the trout down a little bit as they circle the lake looking for a place to settle down.

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

Liberty Centre Pond

The DNR will stock 2,000 rainbow trout here on March 24. Remember, you must have a trout stamp to fish for and/or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Try small jigs spinners scented baits or live bait.

Central Park Lake

The lake is ice-free.

Coralville Reservoir

Channel Catfish - Fair: try cutbait on the upper end towards 380/965.

Diamond Lake

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.

Hannen Lake

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

Lake Macbride

The docks are in. Water temperature has been around 40 degrees. Any sized motor may be used at 5 mph. **Black Crappie** - Slow: **Largemouth Bass** - Slow: **Walleye** - Slow: **Wiper (Hybrid Striped Bass)** - Slow:

Otter Creek Lake

The lake is drained for the ongoing renovation project.

Pleasant Creek Lake

The docks are in. Water temperatures have been in the upper 30s. **Walleye** - Slow.

Prairie Park Fishery

The DNR will stock 2,000 rainbow trout here on March 24. Remember, you must have a trout

stamp to fish for and/or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Try small jigs spinners scented baits or live bait.

[Union Grove Lake](#)

The lake is ice free.

[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.

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