



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa Fishing Report

Conservation and Recreation



[Top Iowa Fishing Spots for the Week of March 7](#)

Early Spring Fishing Podcast

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

NORTHWEST

[Arrowhead Lake](#)

The lake is completely open. More report will be available as we receive them.

[Black Hawk Lake](#)

The lake is completely open. Courtesy docks are in at Ice House Point boat ramp and the state campground boat ramp. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Anglers are picking up crappie from the fish house in Town Bay and in the marina. **Bluegill** - Fair: Find bluegill in the marina and near the inlet bridge. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Use a small jig under a bobber along shore. Try along Ice House Point, the marina and near the inlet bridge. Sorting is needed.

[Brushy Creek Lake](#)

The lake is ice-free.

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

The lake is ice-free. A few anglers have been out; reports are few. Look for shore fishing to be more productive when water temperatures start to warm up.

All area lakes are completely open. Shore angling has been fair to slow. Boat anglers are making there way out on a few lakes. For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

[Blue Pit](#)

Rainbow Trout – Slow. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

Clear Lake

The lake is ice-free. Water temperature is in the upper 30s. Water level is 13.44 inches below crest. 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. **Black Crappie** - Slow. **Channel Catfish** - Slow: It's a good time to target catfish. Try a dead chub or cut bait from the wind-swept shore. **Walleye** - Slow: Anglers are having some success wader fishing and fishing off the jetties. Best bite is after sunset. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Try a small jig in the rushes.

Crystal Lake

Black Crappie – Slow. **Walleye** – Slow.

Rice Lake

Yellow Perch – Slow.

Silver Lake (Worth)

Yellow Perch – Slow.

Winnebago River

Water level is 4.54 feet. **Northern Pike** - Slow. **Walleye** - Fair: Try a jig head tipped with a minnow along current breaks.

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

The lake is ice-free. **The walleye season is closed until May 4.** **Black Crappie** - Fair: Use minnows and plastics. **Bluegill** - Fair. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Sorting will most likely be needed.

Ingham Lake

The lake is ice-free. **Walleye** - Fair: Anglers have been successful morning and evening.

Lost Island Lake

The lake is ice-free. **Black Crappie** - Fair. **Walleye** - Fair.

Minnewashta Lake

Black Crappie - Fair. **Bluegill** - Fair. **Pumpkinseed** - Good.

Scharnberg Pond

Trout were stocked recently. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

Silver Lake (Dickinson)

The lake is ice-free. **Walleye** - Fair.

Spirit Lake

The lake is ice-free. **The walleye season is closed until May 4th.** **Black Crappie** - Good: Minnows and plastics work well. Many nice-sized fish have been seen lately. **Bluegill** - Fair. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Find good numbers; may need to sort for size.

West Okoboji Lake

The lake is mostly ice-free. **The walleye season is closed until May 4th.** **Black**

Crappie - Fair: Try small jigs tipped with a minnow. **Bluegill** - Good. **Pumpkinseed** - Good. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Sorting may be needed.

Essentially all lakes are ice-free. Lake temperatures are still low. Most courtesy docks are not in place. **The walleye season is closed on the Iowa Great Lakes until May 4th.** For current conditions, call the Spirit Lake District Office at 712-336-1840.

NORTHEAST

Cedar River (above Nashua)

Rivers are sparking angling activity. **Walleye** - Good: Find walleye in deeper holes.

Decorah District Streams

Trout continue to provide anglers with nice catches. Catchable trout stockings start April 1. The stocking calendar will be posted [online](#) soon. **Brook Trout** - Fair: Midge and caddis fly hatches are plentiful on warm sunny afternoons. Use care not to scare this skittish fish or it will slow your efforts. **Brown Trout** - Good: With extreme clear water, try angling in the evening for a wily brownie. Try also when the water clouds up after a rainfall event. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Many holdover rainbows remain in the stream. Use a small chunk of worm under a bobber floated in deeper water.

Lake Hendricks

Water clarity is excellent. Best bite is in the afternoon under a cloudy sky. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Use a small lure imitating a fish with a slow presentation. **Bluegill** - Fair: Try a waxworm under a bobber. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Find bass near drop offs or rock mounds. Use a slow presentation; the water is still cold.

Lake Meyer

Water clarity is excellent. Water temperatures are in the 30s. Not many anglers out. **Black Crappie** – Slow. **Bluegill** – Slow. **Largemouth Bass** – Slow.

Upper Iowa River (below Decorah)

Anglers are finding a variety of fish in deeper holes and along current breaks. **Walleye** - Good: Use a jig tipped with a ringworm or other neutral colored plastic near bottom in deeper holes below dams or slack water.

Volga Lake

Water clarity is excellent. Water temperatures are in the 30s. Better fishing later in the day after the water warms. **Black Crappie** – Slow. **Bluegill** – Fair. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Find fish in shallower water near evening. Use a crankbait with a slow return.

Possibility of rain on Friday. Weekend temperatures in the upper 40s for highs with lows mid-20s. For additional information, please contact the Chuck Gipp Decorah Fish Hatchery at 563-382-8324.

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

Anglers are catching walleye, smallmouth bass, northern pike and crappie. Reports were better last week; not so much this week. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Try jigging colored tube jigs along rock shorelines mid to late afternoon. **Northern Pike** - Good: Cast and retrieve lead head jigs tipped with plastics and a minnow. **Smallmouth Bass** - Good: Cast and retrieve lead head jigs tipped with plastics and a minnow. **Walleye** - Fair: Cast and retrieve lead head jigs tipped with plastics and a minnow.

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

We have not received any fishing information this week. **Walleye** - No Report: Cast and retrieve lead head jigs tipped with plastics and a minnow.

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

We have not received any fishing information this week. **Walleye** - No Report: Cast and retrieve lead head jigs tipped with plastics and a minnow.

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

Few reports, but walleyes should be on the bite before the spring spawn. **Walleye** - No Report: Cast and retrieve lead head jigs tipped with plastics and a minnow.

Anglers are doing fair on the interior rivers fishing from boats; navigation has been difficult with low water conditions. No reports on the surrounding area lakes. Trout streams remain in excellent condition. For further information contact your local bait shops for the most recent information. Contact the Manchester Hatchery at 563-927-3276 for more information.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER

[Mississippi River Pool 9](#)

Water level is 7.7 feet at Lansing and is expected to stabilize over the next week. Early ice out has given anglers a jump on spring fishing. Water temperature is 42 degrees. The docks are in at New Albin Landing. Water level is low; use caution to avoid backing off the end of the ramp. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Catfish anglers are catching a few channel cats on crawlers. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Northern pike fishing will pick up as they finish the spawn. Try fishing the shallows along weed beds in backwater lakes. **Sauger** - Good: Try hair jigs tipped with a minnow in the tailwaters or off tips of deeper wing-dams. **Walleye** - Fair: Use hair jigs tipped with a minnow in the tailwaters or off tips of deeper wing-dams. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Perch fishing is picking up pre-spawn. Plastics or live minnows are hot. Try fishing at Shore Slough and the Lansing marina area.

[Mississippi River Pool 10](#)

Water level is near 613 feet at Lynxville and is expected to stabilize over the next week. Water temperature is 45 degrees at the Lock & Dam at Lynxville. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Catfish anglers are catching a few channel cats on crawlers. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Northern pike fishing will pick up as they finish the spawn. Try fishing the shallows along weed beds in backwaters. **Sauger** - Fair: Nice-sized sauger are being caught on jig and minnow; bite can be slow at

times. **Walleye** - Fair: Slow bite at times; nice fish being found on live bait. **Yellow Perch** - Slow: Perch are near spawn; the bite is picking up.

[Mississippi River Pool 11](#)

Water level is near 5 feet at Lynxville and is expected to remain stable over the next week. Water temperature is near 43 degrees. The boat ramps in Guttenberg are open. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Catfish anglers are catching a few channel cats on crawlers. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Northern pike fishing will pick up as they finish the spawn. Try fishing the shallows along weed beds in backwaters. **Sauger** - Good: Try a jig and minnow; a lot of sorting is happening. **Walleye** - Fair: Slow bite at times; nice fish being found on live bait. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Perch fishing is picking up pre-spawn Plastics or live minnows are hot. Try fishing from shore at the Guttenberg boat ramp.

Upper Mississippi River levels are predicted to remain stable, making for good fishing this week. The main channel has opened up; many anglers are taking advantage of the early open water fishing. Live bait and a slow presentation are key to enticing the early bite. Expect the bite to pick up as water temperatures rise. Main channel temperatures are climbing into the mid-40s.

[Mississippi River Pool 12](#)

The river is steady at Dubuque at near 5.2 feet at Lock and Dam 11 and 7.9 feet at the railroad bridge. Water temperature is around 44 degrees. Water clarity is good. **Northern Pike** - No Report: Spawning may be occurring shortly, weeks before the normal spawning season. **Sauger** - Fair: Most anglers are using a jig and minnow or one eye rig. Fishing has been good at times this spring for many anglers with many small fish and an occasional keeper being caught. **Yellow Perch** - Good: First good reports of yellow perch being taken in the tailwater and backwater lakes. Most anglers are using simple worm rigs.

[Mississippi River Pool 13](#)

The water level is steady at near 5.1 feet at Bellevue. Water clarity is good. Water temperature is around 44 degrees. **Channel Catfish** - Good: Some catfish are being caught. Seems early, but anglers who target them can have good catches. **Paddlefish** - Good: Paddlefish are a bit spread out at times but anglers seem to be able to catch some. Check page 11 of the [Iowa Fishing Regulations](#) for snagging regulations. **Rainbow Trout** - Excellent: The kids trout pond north of the DNR fisheries station is stocked with trout and can provide fun action for kids throughout the winter. If you plan to keep trout, limit yourself to 2 trout per child so we can keep good fishing in the pond throughout the winter. **Walleye** - Fair: Most anglers are catching small saugers with an occasional keeper mixed in using a jig and minnow rig. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Reports of yellow perch being caught on worm rigs in the backwater lakes.

[Mississippi River Pool 14](#)

The water level is steady at near 4.9 feet at Fulton, 9.7 feet at Camanche and 4.6 feet at LeClair. Temperature is around 44 degrees. **Channel Catfish** - Good: Some catfish are being caught. Seems early, but anglers who target them can have good catches. Try cheese baits or cut shad for bait. **Paddlefish** - Not Report: Paddlefish season has started. Check page 11 of the [Iowa Fishing Regulations](#) for snagging

regulations. **Smallmouth Bass** - Fair: Smallmouth bass, pike and yellow perch are just starting to be reported as the River wakes up from the ice season. **Walleye** - Fair: Most anglers are catching small saugers with an occasional keeper mixed in using a jig and minnow rig.

[Mississippi River Pool 15](#)

The water level is steady at near 5.4 feet at Rock Island. Water clarity is good. Water temperature is 45 degrees.

Angling has been concentrating in the tailwaters for walleyes and sauger. Reports on many species are starting to trickle in. If you have angling questions, please call Bellevue Fisheries Management at 563-880-8781.

[Mississippi River Pool 16](#)

Tailwater stage is 5.13 feet at Lock and Dam 15 in the Quad Cities and has been fairly steady. **Sauger** - Slow: Some boats are fishing below Lock and Dam 15 and in Sylvan Slough. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows. **Walleye** - Slow: Walleye fishing below the Lock and Dam is being reported as slow.

[Mississippi River Pool 17](#)

Tailwater stage is 4.10 feet at Lock and Dam 16 in Muscatine and has been fairly steady. Tailwater fishing has been slow. **Sauger** - Slow: Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows. Mostly smaller fish with keeper sized fish mixed in. **Walleye** - Slow. **White Crappie** - Fair: Reports of some crappies being caught in Big Timber. Look for crappies around brush piles; use minnows under a bobber or jigs and minnows.

[Mississippi River Pool 18](#)

Tailwater stage is 4.06 feet at Lock and Dam 17 at New Boston and has fallen slightly this past week. Tailwater fishing for walleye and saugers is being reported as hit-or-miss. **Paddlefish** - Fair: Some paddlefish are being snagged below Lock and Dam 17 at New Boston. **Sauger** - Fair: Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows. **Walleye** - Fair: Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows.

[Mississippi River Pool 19](#)

Tailwater stage is 2.00 feet at Lock and Dam 18 above Burlington and has been fairly steady. We have not received any fishing reports for this pool this week. **Sauger** - Slow: Look for saugers below the Lock and Dam. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows; mostly small sauger being caught. **Walleye** - Slow: Look for walleyes below the Lock and Dam. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows.

Tailwater stages have been fairly steady this past week. Main channel water temperature is around 45 degrees. Water clarity is good. Tailwater fishing for walleye and sauger is being reported as hit-or-miss. If you have questions on fishing Pools 16-19 contact the Fairport Fish Hatchery at 563-263-5062.

SOUTHEAST

Big Hollow Lake

Water temperature is holding around 40 degrees most of the time. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: If you can be there when the wind is blowing into the dam, you can find a few catfish concentrated there looking to feed; use cut bait.

Lake Belva Deer

Winds are limiting angler pressure. Water temperature is around 38-40 during the afternoons **Black Crappie** - Slow: Anglers are picking up a few crappies out from the beach when the wind allows them to slow drift with ice fishing jigs. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Anglers are picking up a few catfish along the face of the dam using cut bait.

Lake Darling

Water temperature is in the upper 30s. A few boats out on the lake; very little actual fishing pressure. **Black Crappie** - Slow: When the lake is calm, you can pick up a few crappies in the middle of the lake hanging around the cedar trees. Use ice fishing jigs tipped with minnows.

Lake Geode

Getting more boat traffic out on the lake; mostly to get out on the water more than to catch fish.

Lost Grove Lake

The wind is tough on this lake. Watch for ice on the boat ramps on colder mornings. Water temperatures are in the mid to upper 30s. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: When the wind is blowing into the dam or into the bays on the northside, using cut bait will give you a chance for some nice catfish.

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

Cedar River (Cedar Rapids to Moscow)

Sauger - Fair: Try jigs or live bait in deeper holes. **Shovelnose sturgeon** - Fair: Use crawlers in holes along deeper sandbars. Walleye - Fair: Try jigs or live bait in deeper holes.

Coralville Reservoir

the lake level is 384 feet. No docks are in at this time. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Try bright jigs or minnows over deeper brush or rock ledges. **Channel Catfish** - Slow: A few fish are being caught on cut bait in the upper end of the lake and some wind-blown flats.

Diamond Lake

The lake is ice-free.

Hannen Lake

The lake is ice-free.

Iowa Lake (Iowa Co.)

The lake is ice-free.

[Kent Park Lake](#)

The lake is ice-free.

[Lake Macbride](#)

The docks were being put in this week; slips are available at main and opie ramps. Water temperatures are in the low 40s. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Use minnows over brush/stumps in 10-20 feet of water. **Bluegill** - Fair: Try fishing stumps or rock piles in 8-12 feet of water. **Walleye** - Slow. **Wiper (Hybrid Striped Bass)** - Fair.

[Otter Creek Lake](#)

The lake is still empty due to the renovation project; the project is complete and the lake will fill as mother nature allows.

[Pleasant Creek Lake](#)

The docks are in; a permanent loading slip is available at the main ramp. Water temperatures are in the mid40s. Fishing has been slow.

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

A dredging project is in progress in the Pinicon Ridge backwaters. **Walleye** - Fair.

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

[Hawthorn Lake](#)

Try cut bait for channel catfish in areas with the wind blowing in.

[Lake Miami](#)

Target channel catfish on the wind-blown shorelines using cut bait.

[Lake Sugema](#)

Try cut bait for channel catfish along the wind-blown shorelines.

[Lake Wapello](#)

Use cut bait to catch catfish on the wind-blown shorelines.

[Rathbun Reservoir](#)

The current lake level is 902.78 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** - Fair: Try cut bait on the wind-blown shorelines.

[Red Haw Lake](#)

Channel catfish will move into wind-blown shorelines; use cut bait in those areas.

Area lakes are completely open water. Contact the Rathbun Fish Hatchery at 641-647-2406 with questions about fishing in south central Iowa.

SOUTHWEST

[Ada Hayden Heritage Park Lake](#)

Rainbow Trout - Good: Use ice fishing panfish jigs tipped with waxworms under a float or cast small plastics, spoons, spinners and blade baits. Trout tend to swim

close to shore in depths out to 10 feet. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

Big Creek Lake

Walleye - Slow: Cast jigs with plastics or live minnows near rocky shorelines and jetties in the evenings.

Des Moines River (Saylorville to Red Rock)

Walleye - Fair: Good river conditions have created an early season opportunity. Cast jigs with twister tails, swim baits or live minnows below the dams and in the deeper pools with slow water.

Des Moines River (Stratford to Saylorville Lake)

Walleye - Fair: Early ice out combined with good river conditions have created an early season opportunity. Cast jigs with twister tails, swim baits or live minnows in the deeper pools with slow water.

Lake Petocka

Additional trout were stocked recently. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Use ice fishing panfish jigs tipped with waxworms under a float or cast small plastics, spoons, spinners and blade baits. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

Terra Lake

Additional trout were stocked recently. **Rainbow Trout** - Fair: Try ice fishing panfish jigs tipped with waxworms under a float or cast small plastics, spoons, spinners and blade baits. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

Triumph Park West

Additional trout were stocked recently. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Use ice fishing panfish jigs tipped with waxworms under a float or cast small plastics, spoons, spinners and blade baits. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

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

Cold Springs District Farm Ponds

Water temperatures in farm ponds warm sooner than larger lakes. Ponds are an excellent fishing destination after ice out. Remember to get permission to fish private farm ponds. **Black Crappie** - Good: Target crappie on a wind-blown shoreline on warm days. **Bluegill** - Slow: A small piece of crawler under a bobber works well for bluegills in ponds. **Channel Catfish** - Good: Early spring is a good time to target channel catfish in ponds. Try shad sides or cut bait for best success this time of year. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Some of Iowa's best bass fishing occurs in farm ponds.

Greenfield Lake

Black Crappie - No Report: Greenfield has a good population of 10-inch black crappies. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Target channel catfish in the upper end of the lake where water temperature is warmest.

Lake Anita

Black Crappie - No Report: Black crappie will move into the upper end of the pontoon arm on warm sunny days. Cast a small jig under a bobber. **Bluegill** - No Report: In early spring, boat anglers should target bluegills around deep tree piles and along the roadbed in the lake. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Anglers report catching largemouth bass with a slow presentation around deep structure.

Orient Lake

Orient Lake is a good spring destination for channel catfish. **Channel Catfish** - No Report: Try shad sides or cut bait on the windy side of the lake.

Prairie Rose Lake

Black Crappie - No Report: Black crappies will move close to the shore on warm sunny days. **Bluegill** - Slow: Target bluegills around their winter habitat.

Viking Lake

Black Crappie - No Report: Black crappie will move shallow in the campground area of the lake this time of year. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Anglers report catching 2-pound channel catfish using shad sides. **Largemouth Bass** - No Report: Viking Lake has a good largemouth bass population. Some of the best fishing of the year can be early spring.

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 boat ramps.

Lake Icaria

Channel Catfish - Fair: Try cut bait along wind-blown shorelines to catch channel catfish of all sizes.

Little River Watershed Lake

The dock is in at the main boat ramp.

Three Mile Lake

Lake level is 8 feet below normal pool.

Twelve Mile Creek Lake

Docks are in at the main boat ramp.

West Lake (Osceola)

Boat ramps remain closed due to low water conditions.

Mount Ayr district lakes are ice-free. Water temperatures are in the mid-40s. For more information, call the Mount Ayr Fisheries office at 641-464-3108.



MIDWEST WALLEYE CHALLENGE
MARCH 30 - JUNE 30



ENTER TODAY!