



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

# Iowa Fishing Report

Conservation and Recreation



## [Top Iowa Fishing Spots for the Week of March 14](#)

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## NORTHWEST

### [Black Hawk Lake](#)

Courtesy docks are in at Ice House Point boat ramp and the state campground boat ramp. Water temperature is in the upper 40s. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Anglers are picking up crappie from the fish house in Town Bay, in the marina and along Ice House Point shoreline. **Bluegill** - Fair: Find bluegill in the marina and near the inlet bridge. **Walleye** - Fair: Pick up walleye along the north shore of Town Bay and the south shore of Town Bay near Ice House Point. Most are being caught on twisters and crawlers. Expect walleye fishing along the east shore of the lake and near the outlet to improve if water temperatures continue to increase. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Some perch are being picked up in Town Bay on minnows and crawlers.

### [Brushy Creek Lake](#)

Courtesy docks are in on the north, east, and south ramps. **Black Crappie** - Fair: With recent above normal temperatures, look for crappie in bays and shallower areas that warm up faster than deeper areas of the lake. **Yellow Perch** – Fair.

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

Water clarity is good. Water temperature in the marina is in the upper 40s. Main lake temperatures are in the mid-40s. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Pick up crappie in the marina and along shore. **Walleye** - Fair: A few walleye have been picked up in the marina over the last week. **White Bass** – Fair. **Yellow Bass** – Fair. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Anglers have picked up some perch in the marina.

Water temperatures are in the mid to upper 40s. For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

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### [Clear Lake](#)

Water temperature is in the mid-40s. Water level is 13.9 inches below crest. The courtesy dock is in at the Ritz ramp. A temporary courtesy dock is in at McIntosh until the new docks are installed. 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 4.57 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.

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## NORTHEAST

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

Rivers are sparking angling activity. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Catfish bite slowed this week; should pick up soon. Use dead chub or nightcrawler fished on the bottom. **Smallmouth Bass** - Good: Bass are more aggressive to creel; most are small. **Walleye** - Fair: Walleye bite slowed with the current front passing through. Find walleye in deeper holes or below dams. Use a jig tipped with minnow or a crawler in a worm harness.

### **Decorah District Streams**

Trout continue to provide anglers with nice catches. [Catchable trout stockings start April 1](#). Plenty of brown and rainbow trout remain in streams to tease anglers. **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. Fish activity is picking up as the water warms. **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 40s. More anglers out on nice days. **Black Crappie** – Fair: Anglers are finding crappie with bluegill. **Bluegill** – Fair: Use a bobber with a small jig and waxworm off the jetty or near submersed structure. **Largemouth Bass** – Slow.

#### Upper Iowa River (below Decorah)

Anglers are finding a variety of fish in deeper holes and along current breaks. **Smallmouth Bass** – Good. **Walleye** - Good: Use a jig tipped with a ringworm or other neutral colored plastic near the 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** – Fair: Use a small jig tipped with a minnow around jetties or places with submersed structure. **Bluegill** – Fair: Try a small jig tipped with a waxworm under a bobber. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Find fish in shallower water near evening. Use a crankbait with a slow return.

Highly variable weekend temperatures with low 50's for highs to upper 20's for lows and breezy. For additional information, please contact the Chuck Gipp Decorah Fish Hatchery at 563-382-8324.

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#### Brinker Lake

Anglers are catching a few crappie.

#### Cedar River (Nashua to La Porte City)

Anglers are catching walleye, smallmouth bass, northern pike and crappie. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Try jigging colored tube jigs along rock shorelines mid to late afternoon. **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)

Anglers are catching smallmouth bass. Walleyes should be on the bite before the spring spawn. **Smallmouth Bass** - Fair: Cast and retrieve lead head jigs tipped with plastics and a minnow. **Walleye** - No Report: Cast and retrieving 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; 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-

## MISSISSIPPI RIVER

### Mississippi River Pool 9

Water level is 8.1 feet at Lansing and is expected to stabilize over the next week. Water temperature is 46 degrees. The docks are in at New Albin Landing. Water level is low; use caution to avoid backing into the scour hole off the end of the ramp. **Black Crappie** - Good: Use light tackle and small plastic baits in the brush piles. **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** - Excellent: Try plastics or live minnows and worms at Shore Slough, Lansing marina or Village Creek area.

### Mississippi River Pool 10

Water level is near 613.4 feet at Lynxville and is expected to stabilize over the next week. Water temperature is 48 degrees at the Lock & Dam at Lynxville. **Black Crappie** - Good: Use light tackle and small plastic baits in the brush piles. **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: Nice-sized sauger are being caught on jig and minnow below the dam. **Walleye** - Good: The bite has picked up. Some sorting of slot-fish; nice fish are being caught on live bait in the tailwaters and off tips of wing-dams. **Yellow Perch** - Excellent: Perch are well into the spawn and biting on plastics or live minnows and worms.

### Mississippi River Pool 11

Water level is 5.1 feet at Guttenberg and is expected to remain stable over the next week. Water temperature is in the upper 40s. Tailwater fishing at the Lock & Dam is going strong. The dock is in at the Guttenberg ramp. **Black Crappie** - Good: Use light tackle and small plastic baits in the brush piles. **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** - Good: The bite has picked up. Some sorting of slot-fish; nice fish are being caught on live bait in the tailwaters and off tips of wing-dams. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Try plastics or live minnows and worms from shore at the Guttenberg boat ramp.

Upper Mississippi River levels have risen slightly and are predicted to stabilize. The bite has been good for a variety of species. Water temperature is in the upper 40s. Live bait and a slower presentation are key to entice the early bite. Main channel temperatures are climbing into the upper 40s with backwaters much warmer.

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### [Mississippi River Pool 12](#)

The river is steady at Dubuque at near 5.3 feet at Lock and Dam 11 and 7.9 feet at the railroad bridge. Water temperature is around 49 degrees. Water clarity is good. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Pike are more difficult to find with the low water; places they normally spawn at are dry. Reports of post spawned fish coming in; spawning season for pike is probably not quite complete. **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 4.9 feet at Bellevue. Water clarity is good. Water temperature is around 50 degrees. **Channel Catfish** - Good: Some catfish are being caught. Seems early, but anglers who target them can have good catches. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Pike are more difficult to find with the low water; places they normally spawn at are dry. Reports of post spawned fish coming in; spawning season for pike is probably not quite complete. **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. **Walleye** - Fair: Most anglers are catching small saugers with an occasional keeper mixed in; use 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, 9.5 feet at Camanche and 4.3 feet at LeClair. Temperature is around 50 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** - Fair: Paddlefish season is underway. 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 warms up. **Walleye** - Fair: Most anglers are catching small saugers with an occasional keeper mixed in; use 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 50 degrees.

Angling has been concentrating in the tailwaters for walleyes and sauger; more species are starting to be reported as the water temperatures warm. If you have angling questions, please call Bellevue Fisheries Management at 563-880-8781.

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### [Mississippi River Pool 16](#)

Tailwater stage is 5.40 feet at Lock and Dam 15 in the Quad Cities and is forecast to reach 5.8 feet over the weekend. **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 4.22 feet at Lock and Dam 16 in Muscatine and is forecast to rise slightly over the weekend to 4.7 feet. **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 4.39 feet at Lock and Dam 17 at New Boston and is forecast to reach 5.3 feet over the weekend. Tailwater fishing for walleye and saugers is being reported as hit-or-miss. **Paddlefish** - No Report: Look for paddlefish below Lock and Dam 17 at New Boston. **Sauger** - No Report: Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows. **Walleye** - No Report: Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows.

#### [Mississippi River Pool 19](#)

Tailwater stage is 2.62 feet at Lock and Dam 18 above Burlington and has risen close to a foot with the recent rains. 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 **are forecast to rise over the weekend due to recent heavy rains**. Main channel water temperature is around 48-50 degrees. Recent heavy rains that has muddied up the river. 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.

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## SOUTHEAST

### [Big Hollow Lake](#)

A few days in the 70's warmed the water into the low 50's. Forecast cooler weather will most likely drop water temperature drop for at least the next few days. **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. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Work the small islands along the north side towards the lower end of the lake. The shallow water flats around them attract bass early in the season looking for an early crayfish to eat.

### [Lake Belva Deer](#)

Several boats and kayaks have been out this week. Water temperature is in the mid to upper 40s. **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. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Bass fishing has picked up with the warmer weather. Use soft plastics or jigs with trailers with a slow presentation; work the north shore where the sun is warming the water. **Walleye** - Slow: An angler caught a nice walleye while crappie fishing on March 13; broke his ultralight pole in two, but he landed the fish.

### Lake Darling

Water temperature is in the upper 30s. A few boats out on the lake; very little actual fishing pressure. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Not much fishing pressure due to the windy days. March 13 rains filled up the lake to full pool; night crawlers were out. Try nightcrawlers in the wiers in the inlake silt dams. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: A few largemouth were being caught along the rocks. Use soft plastics or jigs bounced slowly along the bottom along the rocks. A few crawdads have been seen.

### Lake Geode

Water temperatures are in the low 50s; expect temperatures to drop with the forecast cooler weather. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Target the long rock mounds at the upper end of the lake where the rocks absorb some of that suns heat. Use crawdad or salamander imitations with a slow presentation.

### Lost Grove Lake

Anglers are getting out when the wind allows. Water temperature is in the mid-40s. **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. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Bass fishing along the north shore is picking up with the warmer weather. Work next to and over the rocks jigging soft plastics and jigs; work them slowly.

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

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### 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.

### Ottumwa Park Pond South (Trout Pond)

Trout will be stocked on Saturday, March 23rd at 11 AM. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

### Rathbun Reservoir

The current lake level is 902.79 msl; recreation pool is 904 msl. Surface water temperature is 44 degrees. The Dedication Site boat ramp has reopened; use caution as the lake is still below recreation pool. Docks have not been installed; very little fishing activity. 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. **Walleye** - No Report: All walleye less than 15" must be immediately released unharmed.

### [Red Haw Lake](#)

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

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

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## 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](#)

All docks are in. **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](#)

**Rainbow Trout** - Fair: 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](#)

**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](#)

**Rainbow Trout** - Fair: 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.

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### **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** - Fair: Target crappie on a wind-blown shoreline on warm days. **Bluegill** - Slow: A small piece of crawler under a bobber works well. **Channel Catfish** - Good: Early spring is a good time to target channel catfish. 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** - Slow: 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** - Slow: 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** - Slow: Try shad sides or cut bait on the windy side of the lake.

### [Prairie Rose Lake](#)

**Black Crappie** - Slow: Black crappies will move close to the shore on warm sunny days. **Bluegill** - Slow: Target bluegills around their winter habitat.

### [Viking Lake](#)

**Black Crappie** - Slow: Black crappie will move shallow in the campground area of the lake this time of year. **Bluegill** - Slow. **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.

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### [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. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Try jigs tipped with a

minnow fished along the creek channel in the flooded timber to catch crappie of all sizes.

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

Boat ramps remain closed due to low water conditions.

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

