

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Fall fishing for Iowa's prize trout

Fishing Iowa's trout streams is a unique way to enjoy the cool fall weather and marvel at the amazing colors of Iowa's prize trout. Male brown and brook trout display their brightest, most vibrant spawning colors this time of year.

Iowa boasts some of the most beautiful and plentiful trout streams in the Midwest. A true angler's paradise, Northeast Iowa is dotted with hundreds of miles of trout streams. From easily accessible streams in state or county parks, to those found in Iowa's most wild and remote natural spaces, there are plenty of places to catch rainbow, brown and brook trout.

Although a little late for peak fall colors, the bluffs, valleys and rock outcroppings offer spectacular views. View some of the best bluffs in Northeast Iowa, starting with the narrow valley of Paint Creek, west of Harpers Ferry. Several overlooks give excellent views of the stream from above.

Look for trout behind larger boulders and under rock ledges. Let your lure or bait drift around the boulders and just in front of the ledges.

Catch stream-reared brown trout up to 18-inches and 10- to 12-inch stocked rainbow trout in the Maquoketa River. Several public access points connect to miles of river in Clayton and Delaware counties. Find rainbow trout in pools and runs while brown trout will be near wood habitat.

The best chance to catch all three trout species in one trip is at North Cedar Creek, southwest of McGregor. For anglers willing to hike, the remote Wildlife Management Area provides access to more than 1.5 miles of coldwater stream.

Learn to "read" a stream, to identify habitats that offer food and cover. Trout are not randomly scattered in a stream. They locate themselves along the edge of the current flow near protective cover. The stream current carries food to the trout while it waits.

Trout try to bulk up in the fall for winter and are always hungry. Brown and brook trout lay their eggs in nests called redds in October and November. The eggs stay in these areas of cleaned gravel on the stream bottom until they hatch in late winter

or early spring. Be careful where you walk to avoid stepping in or directly above these nests.

When using spin fishing gear it's best to fish on overcast and gray days. Trout are less wary of lures at this time. If fly fishing, target midday on sunny and bright days. In cooler fall temperatures, bright warm days can stimulate an insect hatch. Dry flies can still be productive, but the insect hatches become more sporadic and less intense than in the summer so nymphs may be a better option.

Northeast Iowa draws thousands of anglers from across the Midwest to its coldwater streams and excellent trout fishing. Iowa's trout season is open all year. Iowa's trout streams are too. About 80 coldwater trout streams await anglers in ten northeast Iowa counties.

Anglers need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. The daily limit is five trout per licensed angler with a possession limit of ten.

Learn more about Iowa's trout streams, including maps and amenities, and tips and tricks to catch trout on the Iowa DNR's website at [www.iowadnr.gov/trout](http://www.iowadnr.gov/trout).

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## Zebra mussels found in Saylorville Lake

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has recently confirmed zebra mussels in Saylorville Lake, after concerned boat owners contacted the DNR while removing their boats from Saylorville for the winter.

Staff with the Iowa DNR confirmed the presence of zebra mussels on multiple boats in the Saylorville Marina area and will conduct additional monitoring around Saylorville Lake next summer to determine the abundance and distribution of zebra mussels.

"The zebra mussels probably arrived on or in a boat that had picked up them up from an infested water body," said Kim Bogenschutz, the DNR's Aquatic Invasive Species Program coordinator.

This discovery also serves as a reminder for all boat and lake property owners to check their boats, docks, and lifts for zebra mussels before storing for the winter. To date, zebra mussels have been found in 18 Iowa lakes and nine rivers, mostly downstream of infested lakes, including the Mississippi, Missouri, and Big Sioux rivers.

Zebra mussels look like small, D-shaped clams that have alternating light and dark bands. Most are less than one inch long. They are filter feeders that can form dense clusters as they attach to hard underwater surfaces. In the case of large infestations, they may interfere with aquatic food chains, kill native mussels, clog water intakes, increase algae blooms, and cover beaches with dead shells. Currently there is no effective treatment to control zebra mussels once they have infested a lake.

“Young zebra mussels are microscopic and can be unintentionally transported with water in live wells, bilges, ballast or bait buckets,” she said. “That’s why draining all water is a critical step in preventing the spread of zebra mussels.”

Adult zebra mussels can attach to boats, trailers and aquatic vegetation. Boaters and anglers can help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species to new water bodies by cleaning, draining and drying their boats and equipment after each time on the water.

- CLEAN any plants, animals, or mud from your boat and equipment before you leave a waterbody.
- DRAIN water from all equipment (motor, live well, bilge, transom well, bait bucket) before you leave a waterbody.
- DRY anything that comes into contact with water (boats, trailers, equipment, boots, clothing, dogs). Before you move to another waterbody either: Spray your boat and trailer with hot or high-pressure water; or Dry your boat and equipment for at least five days.
- Never release plants, fish or animals into a water body unless they came out of that waterbody and always empty unwanted bait in the trash.

It is illegal to possess or transport aquatic invasive species or to transport any aquatic plants on water-related equipment in Iowa. Iowa law also requires boaters to drain all water from boats and equipment before they leave a water access and to keep drain plugs removed or opened during transport. It is also illegal to introduce any live fish or plants, except for hooked bait, into public waters.

Learn more about aquatic invasive species, including a list of infested waters in the current *Iowa Fishing Regulations* or at [www.iowadnr.gov/ais](http://www.iowadnr.gov/ais).

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