

# Fishing News

CONSERVATION AND RECREATION



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

## NORTHWEST

### [Arrowhead Lake](#)

The lake is ice free.

### [Black Hawk Lake](#)

The lake is ice free. Shore fishing has been productive. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Use a waxworm small minnow or jigs. Fishing along shore has been productive. Especially around Ice House Point and the inlet bridge area. **Walleye** - Good: Anglers have been doing well fishing from shore in 1 to 5 feet of water. Evenings near sunset has been most productive but fish are being caught any time of day. Anglers have had luck using twisters in Town Bay fishing from shore and from floating dock and the stone piers. Ice House Point shoreline and the inlet bridge area have been productive as well.

### [Black Hawk Pits](#)

The lake is ice free.

### [Brushy Creek Lake](#)

The main lake is open. The boat ramps are still iced in; the west and north ramp will likely be ice free by the weekend. The courtesy dock on the west ramp is in place.

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

Most of the lake has opened up. The Marina is open water. There is still ice in front of the Bel Air boat ramp, and a sheet of ice near Casino point that is blocking access from the marina to the main lake.

Most area lakes are completely open. Some of the northern area lakes have ice in bays. For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

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### Clear Lake

Clear Lake is about fifty percent ice free. If you decide to launch a boat, be aware of shifting ice sheets that may block ramps. **Walleye** - Fair: Reports of walleye being caught with slow presentations using jigs and minnows.

### Winnebago River

**Northern Pike** - Fair: Suckers, chubs and slow retrieved jigs work well for early season pike.

Area lakes are opening up, but lakes in northern Iowa counties still have some ice. For additional information contact Clear Lake Fisheries Office at 641-357-3517.

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### East Okoboji Lake

Many areas have opened up. A few anglers have already launched boats. Courtesy docks are not yet in place. **The walleye season is currently closed. Black Crappie** - Good: **Bluegill** - Fair: **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Many fish have been observed; sorting will most likely be needed.

### Ingham Lake

The lake is mostly open. **Walleye** - Fair: Morning and afternoon bite is best.

### Silver Lake (Dickinson)

Large portions of the lake have opened up. **Walleye** - Fair: The bite has been hit-or-miss.

### Spirit Lake

Some areas can still be fished if traveling by foot. Many accesses and areas are now open water. **The walleye season is currently closed. Black Crappie** - Good: Anglers have been finding fish of quality size up to 14-inches. **Bluegill** - Good. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Sorting is needed; anglers are finding many of acceptable size.

### West Okoboji Lake

Large portions of the lake have opened up due to high winds. Many smaller holes have started to pop up. **The walleye season is currently closed. Black Crappie** - Fair: **Bluegill** - Fair.

Ice conditions on most area lakes has deteriorated heavily. Larger lakes have areas that have opened up significantly. Smaller lakes still have areas that allow foot traffic for ice fishing. Access from shore may be hard to find. **The walleye season on the IGL's is closed until May 3rd.** For current conditions, call 712-330-2542.

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## **NORTHEAST**

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

Open edges in the backwaters. **Ice fishing is not recommended.** Majority of the ice is off the main river. **Walleye** - Slow: Walleye fishing is starting to improve. Use a jig tipped with a minnow or plastic tail.

### **Decorah District Streams**

Clarity on most streams is good. Stream flows are up with recent rain. Rain over the weekend may cause stream clarity to decline. **Brook Trout** - Slow: Use a midge minnow or leach pattern for fish looking to get more bang for their effort. Midge hatches on sunny afternoons. **Brown Trout** - Good: Brown trout activity improves when water get cloudy. Float a line past an undercut bank or current seam for luck. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Hatchery holdovers remain in the streams. Use small spinner baits or hair jigs floated past undercut bank or through a deep hole.

### [Lake Hendricks](#)

Ice covers about 1/3 of the lake and open around the edges. **Ice fishing is not recommended.**

### [Lake Meyer](#)

**Ice fishing is not recommended.** Open water around edges.

### [Volga Lake](#)

**Ice fishing is not recommended.** Open water along edges.

For more information, contact the Chuck Gipp Decorah Fish Hatchery at 563-382-8324.

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

Water levels are up with some turbidity. Northern pike fishing should pick up in backwater areas in preparation for the upcoming spawn. **Northern Pike** - No report: Float a live chub/shiner under a bobber or cast and retrieve flashy spoons in backwater areas. **Walleye** - Fair: Use a jig head with plastics with or without a live minnow. Look for the deeper pools current breaks and tail ends of riffles.

### **Manchester District Streams**

Trout streams are in excellent condition. Next week's forecast calls for temperatures in the 60s; should be good aquatic insect hatches taking place providing for some great trout fishing.

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

We have received no fishing information this week. **Walleye** - No Report: Use a jig head with plastics with or without a live minnow. Look for the deeper pools current breaks and tail ends of riffles.

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

We have received no fishing information this week. **Northern Pike** - No Report: Float a live chub/shiner under a bobber or cast and retrieve flashy spoons in backwater areas. **Walleye** - No Report: Use a jig head with plastics with or without a live minnow. Look for the deeper pools current breaks and tail ends of riffles.

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

We have received no fishing information this week. **Northern Pike** - No Report: Float a live chuck/shiner under a bobber or caste and retrieve flashing spoons in backwater

areas. **Walleye** - Fair: Use a jig head with plastics with or without a live minnow. Look for the deeper pools current breaks and tail ends of riffles.

Interior river levels have bumped up from recent rainfalls and ice melt. Reports of anglers catching walleye on the Cedar and Wapsipinicon rivers. Northern pike fishing should pick up as they are the earliest to spawn. With next week's weather, there should be many aquatic insect hatches taking place on trout streams. For more information, contact Manchester Hatchery at 563-927-3276.

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## MISSISSIPPI RIVER

### Mississippi River Pool 9

Water level is stable at 8.2 feet at Lansing. **Any remaining backwater ice is unsafe for fishing.** Water temperature is near 42. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Pre-spawn pike are biting. **Sauger** - Fair: Use a hair jig tipped with a minnow in the tailwaters of the Lock and Dam. **Walleye**- Fair: Try a hair jig tipped with a minnow in the tailwaters of the Lock and Dam. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Perch fishing is good where lower ends of backwaters can be accessed.

### Mississippi River Pool 10

Water level is stable 15.2 feet at Lynville. **Any remaining backwater ice is unsafe for fishing.** Lynxville boat ramp is open for tailwater fishing; main channel is ice free. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Pre-spawn pike are biting. **Sauger** - Good. Use a hair jig tipped with a minnow in the tailwaters of the Lock and Dam. **Walleye** - Good: Tailwater fishing for walleye is starting to pick up. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Lake winter perch bite has begun.

### Mississippi River Pool 11

Water level is 6.8 feet at Guttenberg and is expected to rise to 7.2 feet over the next week. Water temperature is 41. **Any remaining backwater ice is unsafe for fishing.** Guttenberg boat ramps are open for tailwater fishing; main channel is ice free. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Pre-spawn northern are biting. **Sauger** - Fair: Use a hair jig tipped with a minnow in the tailwaters of the Lock and Dam. **Walleye** - Fair: Tailwater fishing for walleye has slowed, but is improving with the rising water temperature. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Perch fishing should pick up in the tailwaters.

Ice is almost completely gone out of backwaters. Recent rains and snow melt have the Upper Pools 9-11 of the Mississippi River ramps open for fishing. Tailwater fishing at the Lock and Dam is starting to pick up. Water temperature is warming up into the 40s this week.

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### Mississippi River Pool 12

Water level at Dubuque Lock and Dam is steady at 6.8 feet and 9.0 feet at the RR Bridge. Water is clear. Water temperature is around 42 degrees in the main channel. **Black Crappie** - No report: Rumors of anglers targeting crappies in the same location where they were ice fishing, but no confirmed report. **Bluegill** - No report: Bluegill population are strong; no reports of anglers fishing for them since ice out. **Northern Pike** - Good: Pike fishing remains good;

new catches have been reported from the Olearys area in upper Pool 12. **Walleye** - Good: Small walleyes and a few nice saugers are being caught on jigs and minnow rigs.

### [Mississippi River Pool 13](#)

Water level is steady at 7.0 feet at Bellevue. Water is clear. Water temperature is near 43 degrees in the main channel. **Bluegill** - No report: Lots of bluegills were caught during the ice fishing season; expect a good open water fishing season. **Northern Pike** - No report: Pike spawning season is upon us. Pike are one of the earliest of spawners on the Mississippi; they can be difficult to catch when they lay eggs. **Paddlefish** - Good: Paddlefish opener was very good. Lots of small paddlefish were caught with a few very nice paddlefish were reported. [Please review the rules for paddlefish snagging](#). Heavy paddlefish angling pressure is being seen at Bellevue. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: The Kids' trout pond north of the DNR fisheries station is stocked with trout and should remain good fishing until April/May when it will weed over. **Walleye** - Good: The tailwater has been open most of the winter; Bellevue City Ramp is open. Most anglers are using a jig and minnow rig. Lots of small walleye are being reported. **Yellow Perch** - No report: Some could be caught in the tailwaters as it is common this time of year.

### [Mississippi River Pool 14](#)

Water level is steady at near 6.6 feet at Fulton, 10.7 feet at Camanche, and 5.4 feet at LeClaire. Water is clear. Water temperature is around 45 degrees. **Bluegill** - No report: It was a good ice fishing season this year; hopefully that translates to a good open water season. **Channel Catfish** -Good: Seems early, but good channel catfishing is occurring by anglers using blood baits. **Northern Pike** - No Report: Pike will be spawning in Pool 14 in the next few weeks. **Paddlefish** - Good: Paddlefish season on the Mississippi River is March 1 through April 15. Snagging is only allowed within 500 yards of navigation dams and their spillways. [Please review the rules for paddlefish snagging](#). **Walleye** - Fair: Hit-or-miss bite.

### [Mississippi River Pool 15](#)

Water level is steady at near 7.1 feet at Rock Island. Water is clear. Water temperature is around 45 degrees.

Tailwater ramps are open throughout the district. Some minor ice flows are still reported, but conditions are good. If you have angling questions, call Bellevue Fisheries Management at 563-880-8781.

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

Tailwater stage is 7.11 feet at Lock and Dam 15 in the Quad Cities and forecast to stay fairly steady over the weekend. The Marquette St. boat ramp is open; anglers are able to access the tailwaters. There is a dock in the water. **Sauger** - No Report: Look for saugers in the tailwaters. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows. **Walleye** - No Report: Look for walleyes below the dam. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows.

### [Mississippi River Pool 17](#)

Tailwater stage is 5.72 feet at Lock and Dam 16 in Muscatine and forecast to stay fairly steady this weekend. The ramps at Muscatine are open; anglers are able to access the tailwaters for walleye and sauger fishing. **Sauger** - Fair: Sauger fishing below the dam at Muscatine is being reported as fair. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows or

crankbaits. **Walleye** - Fair: Walleye fishing below the dam at Muscatine is being reported as fair. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows or crankbaits.

### [Mississippi River Pool 18](#)

Tailwater stage is 6.82 feet at Lock and Dam 17 at New Boston and forecast to stay fairly steady over the weekend. The Toolsboro ramp is open; anglers are able to access the tailwaters. **Paddlefish** - Fair: Some anglers had moderate success snagging paddlefish below the dam. **Sauger** - Slow: Sauger fishing below New Boston is being reported as slow. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows. The bite may change with changing river conditions. **Walleye** - Slow: There has been some tailwater fishing for walleyes below the dam at New Boston. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows.

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

Tailwater stage is 4.04 feet at Lock and Dam 18 above Burlington and forecast to stay fairly steady this weekend. We have not received any reports on tailwater fishing for walleyes and saugers this week.

Tailwater stages have been fairly steady the past few days. Main channel water temperature is around 42 degrees. Water clarity is fair. There has been some tailwater fishing for walleye and saugers. 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](#)

The lake is ice free.

### [Discovery Park Pond](#)

The spring trout release will be at noon on Friday, March 21. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

### [Emma Young Pond](#)

The spring trout release will be at 10:00AM on Friday, March 21. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

### [Lake Belva Deer](#)

Water temperature is in the low 40s. A few boats have been out; little fishing pressure.

### [Lake Darling](#)

Surface water temperature is up to 46 degrees. The boat docks are not in yet. A few boats have been out just to get out on the water; no fishing pressure yet.

### [Lake Geode](#)

The lake is ice free. Water temperature at the surface is in the mid-40s.

### [Lost Grove Lake](#)

The last of the ice is gone. The gate on the road going to the boat ramp at the dam is still locked. Docks will not be in for a little while longer.

### [Vista Park Pond](#)

Vista Park Pond in Kalona (South Town) will be stocked with trout on Friday March 21 at 10:00AM as part of the Community Trout Stocking Program. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

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

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### [Cedar River \(Cedar Rapids to Moscow\)](#)

**Channel Catfish** - Slow: Use cut bait. **Walleye** - Slow: Try fishing jigs in current seams; few fish caught. **White Bass** - Slow: Try fishing current seams and eddies; few fish caught.

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

**Channel Catfish** - Slow: Use cut bait; few fish caught. **Walleye** - Slow: Try fishing jigs; few fish caught.

### [Central Park Lake](#)

**Largemouth Bass** - Slow: Few bass have been caught by shore anglers.

### [Coralville Reservoir](#)

**Black Crappie** - Fair: Few fish have been reported around brush piles and docks. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Try cut bait on bottom or below a bobber along wind-blown shorelines or neck down areas at bridges.

### [Diamond Lake](#)

Fish cleaning station will be opened in April when the water is turned on for the park.

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

**Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Few bass getting caught in afternoons around brush.

### [Iowa River \(Coralville Lake to River Junction\)](#)

**Channel Catfish** - Slow: Few fish caught. **Walleye**- Slow: Few fish caught.

### [Iowa River \(Marshalltown to Coralville Lake\)](#)

**Walleye** - Slow: Use jigs; few fish caught.

### [Lake Macbride](#)

**Black Crappie** - Slow: Few fish getting caught around brush piles in 8-12 feet of water. **Bluegill** - Slow: Few fish getting caught around brush pile in 8-12 FOW. **Channel Catfish** - Slow: Few channel cats getting caught on cut bait in the upper arms of lake. **Muskellunge** - Slow: Few have been caught near green aquatic vegetation.

### [Liberty Centre Pond](#)

2000 rainbow trout will be stocked on Thursday, March 20th at 10:30AM. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

### [Pleasant Creek Lake](#)

**Largemouth Bass** - Slow: Few fish caught near brush. **Muskellunge** - Slow: Few fish caught near brush piles.

### [Prairie Park Fishery](#)

2000 rainbow trout will be stocked on Saturday, March 22nd at 10:00AM. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

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

Dredging has been completed at the Pinicon Ridge Park. The park boat ramp will be opened when the frost is out of ground and parking lots have firmed up. **Channel Catfish** - Slow: Few fish caught. **Northern Pike** - Slow: Walleye anglers are catching a few pike. **Walleye** - Slow: Few fish caught.

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

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### [Hawthorn Lake](#)

**Channel Catfish** -Slow: Try shad guts or dead minnows on wind-blown shorelines.

### [Lake Keomah](#)

Lake Keomah is drained for a lake restoration project. **Please stay out of the lakebed.**

### [Lake Miami](#)

**Channel Catfish** - Slow: Try dead minnows on wind-blown shorelines .

### [Lake Sugema](#)

**Channel Catfish** - Slow: Use shad guts or dead chubs on wind-blown shorelines.

### [Lake Wapello](#)

**Channel Catfish** No report: Try dead minnows on wind-blown shorelines .

### [Ottumwa Park Pond South \(Trout Pond\)](#)

Trout are scheduled to be stocked on Saturday, March 22nd 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 903.54 msl; recreation pool is 904 msl. Lake Rathbun has zebra mussels; [properly drain, clean and dry equipment](#) before transporting to another waterbody. The lake is open water. Water temperatures are in the mid-30s. **Channel Catfish** - Slow: Use shad guts on wind-blown shorelines.

### [Red Haw Lake](#)

**Channel Catfish** - Slow: Try dead minnows on the shorelines.

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

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## SOUTHWEST

### **Boone District Farm Ponds**

Community ponds are the quickest to warm up after ice out, creating a fair to good pre-spawn largemouth bass and crappie bite. Check the [Fish Local page](#) to find ponds with public access. **Black Crappie** – Fair: Slowly retrieving small twister tails or swim baits. If it exists in



the pond, target edges of cattail stands and any wood habitat. **Largemouth Bass** - Good: Slowly retrieve plastics and shallow diving crankbaits.

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

**Walleye** - Slow: Cast jigs with twister tails, swimbaits or live minnows below the Saylorville Spillway and Des Moines dams .

Ponds and lakes in Central Iowa have open water. For information on Central Iowa lakes and rivers contact Andy Otting at 515-204-5885.

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### [Lake Anita](#)

Lake Anita will provide good fishing this spring. The lake has good bass, bluegill and crappie populations.

### [Mormon Trail Lake](#)

**Black Crappie** - Good: An angler reported catching 8-inch black crappie in 25 feet of water.

### [Prairie Rose Lake](#)

Prairie Rose will again be a good fishing destination this season. The lake has an excellent largemouth bass population, large bluegills and black crappies.

Lakes and ponds are open water in the southwest district. For information on lakes in the Southwest District, call the Cold Springs office at 712-769-2587.

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### [Lake Icaria](#)

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

### [Three Mile Lake](#)

**\*\*Driving is prohibited on any service roads used to access the lakebed and the lakebed itself.\*\*** Lake level is 11 feet below normal pool. Boat ramp lanes are out of the water at the main boat ramp.

Lakes in the Mount Ayr district are 100% ice free. For more information, call Mount Ayr Fisheries office at 641-931-6031

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## **Spend your summer in a state park or forest as a campground host**

Several Iowa state parks are still looking for campground hosts for the 2025 season. If you enjoy the outdoors, camping and meeting new people, consider becoming a **volunteer campground host** and spend your summer in a park.

Campground hosts volunteer 20 – 30 hours per week, including weekends and holidays, while living in a free campsite in the park or forest.

Learn more about how to apply on the [DNR's volunteer page](#).