



# *Iowa Outdoors*

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

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**July 18, 2006**

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## **STATEWIDE SURVEY OF UPLAND GAME TO BEGIN AUG. 1**

BOONE - The Iowa Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) annual survey of upland game populations will soon be under way with state biologists and conservation officers driving more than 200, 30-mile routes statewide between August 1-15.

The August Roadside Survey, as it is called, "is the DNR's main tool for determining whether our fall populations will be up or down from the previous year," said Todd Bogenschutz, upland wildlife research biologist for the DNR.

The surveys begin at sunrise on mornings with heavy dew and are driven primarily on gravel roads because of their lower traffic volume. A heavy dew causes hens to move their broods to the gravel roadsides to dry off before feeding, allowing them to be counted easily. Routes follow the same roads each year so that the information is comparable with previous years.

According to Bogenschutz, this survey is the best predictor of what hunters should find this fall. "Historically, when the roadside counts are compared to the small game harvest figures, they parallel each other nicely," he said.

However, since the survey depends on heavy dew for consistent results, hot dry weather in August can affect the results. "The birds do not come to the roads as consistently in dry years, which makes the counts more variable," Bogenschutz said.

Final results of the survey will be compiled in late August and will be released in early September. Small game hunters interested in this year's counts can log on to the DNR's webpage <http://www.iowadnr.com/wildlife/app/roadside/> and receive an e-mail notification when the roadside results have been posted.

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## **WIPERS ARE COMING ON**

By Joe Wilkinson

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Make no mistake. They're wipers, not white bass. Midsummer anglers get a welcome surprise, as they troll for walleye or white bass on Iowa lakes ranging from Macbride, Coralville to Manawa, Three Mile and Saylorville. "I had a guy call a few days ago, saying he'd caught a new state record white bass. It was a wiper," reports Chris Mack, fisheries technician at the Department of Natural Resources Macbride station.

Calls to the Macbride office pick up this time each summer; anglers asking about Iowa's white bass record (3 pounds, 14 ounces by the way) or just '*what is this big fish?*' that they just caught. If they think it's a white bass, they're half right. Wipers are a hybrid; eggs from ocean striped bass crossed in hatcheries with male white bass. Stocked in reservoir settings; they grow quickly, feeding on shad populations. It's not uncommon to pull in a 10-pounder or a sagging stringer of 4 to 5 pounders. I had a call a week ago from a Cedar Rapids angler whose son had hauled in one weighing over 13 pounds. A 19-pound, 10-ounce wiper taken from the Des Moines River a few years ago is the state record.

And while your heart will be pumping as you bring that big, white bass near-look alike over the boat transom, you're probably looking at its hybrid cousin. "If it is over 16 inches, it's probably a wiper," advises Mack, though noting that 17-inch white bass have come out of Pleasant Creek Lake in his area. While each is predominately white; side-by-side comparison tells them apart. Wipers have a bold stripe pattern. White bass stripes are less pronounced. Wipers take on more of a sleek 'torpedo' shape. "The most obvious difference, though, is the tongue patch," says Mack. "On a white bass, there is a 'U' shaped patch on the top of the tongue. On a wiper, the patch resembles two small unconnected ovals."

As hybrids, wipers do not reproduce. Hatcheries keep a steady stream of fry and fingerlings coming, though. Iowa gets its wipers from states like Oklahoma, Kansas and Nebraska, which hatch and stock them in larger reservoirs. It's usually a swap of surplus stock. "We traded walleye eggs to Oklahoma for their surplus wiper fry," says Mike Mason, DNR hatcheries program supervisor. "(Most) were stocked in Saylorville. The remainder went to our Mt. Ayr Hatchery, to be raised to a larger size." Larger, 1 to 1.5 inch fingerlings are released in some settings to increase survival prospects. The Macbride crew drove to Nebraska to bring back 62,000 fingerlings in June. Half went into Macbride, the other half in Coralville. They'll be catchable in two years. Smaller fry from Delaware were also stocked in Macbride.

One reason many anglers are surprised when they hook a wiper is that it's not really a fish you 'go fishing for.' Mack might pick one up a wiper while trolling for walleye and will then start fishing *for* them. "They seem to relate to deeper rock. They

are following the shad. You can look for shad on the surface. Just troll shad-colored (chrome, silver or white) crankbaits,” says Mack. “During mid summer, they’re on a feeding frenzy; the warmer water means their metabolism is higher. They have to eat more. They’re going after this year’s shad hatch.”

In eastern Iowa, Coralville Reservoir provides the big water setting. However, Lake Macbride, adjacent to the Reservoir, offers better fishing, this summer. And if you can afford an extra tank of \$3 a gallon gas, you might point west. “Lake Manawa (near Council Bluffs) has really excellent wiper fishing this year,” advises Mason. “We’ve been stocking there for a couple years and they have really taken off there.”

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## **MINNESOTA AND WISCONSIN OSPREYS TAKING TO IOWA**

BOONE – The 25 young ospreys placed at five sites around Iowa all seem to have weathered the relocation well. The young osprey face biological and climatic challenges associated with the relocation and will be helped by wildlife biologists and rehabilitators along the way.

Volunteers are welcomed to contact coordinators at each “hack,” or release site, to assist in these efforts to bring ospreys to Iowa. Financial support is especially appreciated at each site as no tax dollars or DNR Wildlife Diversity funds are budgeted for this project. Contacts for each site are Don Williams Lake, Boone County, 515-353-4237; Clear Lake, 641-357-5267; Marion County/Elk Rock State Park, 641-627-5935, White Rock Conservancy, Guthrie County, 712-683-5555, and Wickiup Hill at Linn County, 319-892-6485.

The young ospreys are developed enough to tear apart their favorite food, fish, by themselves. They will be attaining flight status about 53 days of age and allowed to fly freely from their “hack” or release site. Where the birds learn to fly and fish on their own becomes their “home” where survivors return to nest at four or five years of age. Volunteers and wildlife professionals at five sites have geared up to fill the niche the osprey adults were providing their young with fish and security. In conjunction with feeding the birds, the young ospreys are monitored daily to ensure they will be flight ready.

There have been 154 ospreys released at eight sites since 1997. Ospreys have successfully nested in Iowa since 2003 with eight young produced from four successful nestings.

In 2006 there have been six nesting attempts and four nests have produced eight young. There are currently active nests at Macbride Raptor Project, Hartman Reserve Nature Center, Jester Park, in Polk County.

All Iowa Ospreys have a purple band with number and letter on right leg and silver USFWS band on left leg. The wild-produced Ospreys from Iowa have a green USFWS band.

Website connection have been established at [http://www.iowadnr.gov/parks/state\\_park\\_list/elk\\_rock.html](http://www.iowadnr.gov/parks/state_park_list/elk_rock.html) for viewing of the Elk Rock Osprey site.  
Cltel.com at Clear Lake site and <http://webcam.linncounty.org> for the Linn County site

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## ***IOWA FISHING REPORT***

**For the week of July 18, 2006**

**[www.iowadnr.com](http://www.iowadnr.com)**

For current information on fishing conditions for your lake or area, contact the office in that district. Phone numbers are listed with each district report.

### **Southwest**

**Don Williams** (Boone): Bluegill fishing has been fair using night crawlers. Channel catfish are being caught using chicken liver.

**Hickory Grove** (Story): Bluegill fishing has been fair with worms. Channel catfish are being caught using night crawlers and other traditional baits. Largemouth bass fishing has been fair.

**Big Creek** (Polk): Bluegill fishing has been good using jigs or worms/hooks with better fishing in deeper water offshore. Anglers reported catching walleye with jigs and minnows. Channel catfish fishing has been good.

**Easter Lake** (Polk): Bluegill and crappie fishing is slow using night crawlers and bobbers. Largemouth bass fishing is slow along the rocky areas. Channel catfish fishing has been good at night with night crawlers, chicken liver and chubs.

**Saylorville Lake** (Polk): White bass fishing is starting to pick up with jigs and spinners and catfish fishing has been fair.

**Below Saylorville Dam** (Polk): White bass/wiper fishing has been fair using jigs and/or minnows. Channel catfish fishing has been fair to good.

**Rock Creek** (Jasper): Crappies are slow on jigs and minnows in deeper water and anglers report picking up an occasional 2 to 3 pound walleye. Channel catfish fishing is fair with chicken liver.

**Red Rock** (Marion): White bass fishing has been good and anglers report some success with crappie fishing. Channel catfish fishing has been fair using cut baits and liver.

**Below Lake Red Rock** (Marion): White bass fishing has been excellent with jigs in the tailwater area. Channel catfish fishing has been fair using cut baits and liver.

**Roberts Creek** (Marion): Crappie fishing has been slow to fair using jigs and minnows in deeper water. Channel catfish fishing has fair using a variety of baits.

**Lake Ahquabi** (Warren): Bluegill and redear sunfish fishing has been fair. Channel catfish fishing has been good.

**Hooper Lake** (Warren): Largemouth bass fishing is best along the rocky dam area with crankbaits. Channel catfish fishing has been good.

**Contact: Dick McWilliams (515) 432-2823, Ext.108, for information on the above area lakes. For more information on general fishing in southwest Iowa, call the SW Regional Office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.**

**Green Valley** (Union): Bullheads are biting on night crawlers. Some channel catfish are biting on night crawlers or liver.

**Three Mile** (Union): Channel catfish fishing is fair using night crawlers or liver. Some walleyes are being caught on leeches and night crawlers from the mounds and steep drop-offs.

**Icaria** (Adams): Fishing is good for small to mid sized fish of all species.

**Little River** (Decatur): Channel catfish are biting on night crawlers and liver.

**Three Fires** (Taylor): Several 2 pound channel catfish are being caught using night crawlers or liver. The medium sized bluegills are biting well.

**Contact: Gary Sobotka (641) 464-3108 for information on the above area lakes. For more information on general fishing in southwest Iowa, call the SW Regional Office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.**

**Orient** (Adair): Fishing is fair for 2 to 3 pound channel catfish using night crawlers and prepared baits. Bluegills are fair using night crawlers with bobber and small jigs.

**Greenfield** (Adair): Bluegills are slow using jigs tipped with night crawlers fishing structure and drift fishing. Fish in the 7 to 8-inch range are common. Channel catfish are fair using liver.

**Nodaway** (Adair): Channel catfish are being caught on liver in shallow areas. Greenfield and Nodaway have low water levels. Shore anglers best fishing would be off the dam.

**Meadow** (Adair): Largemouth bass are being caught around brush piles. Bluegills are fair using night crawlers on sunken trees. Crappies are slow around sunken trees using minnows.

**Morman Trail** (Adair): Fishing is slow for bluegills on rocked shoreline along south side of lake. Channel catfish is fair using liver and night crawlers.

**Littlefield** (Audubon): A few bluegills are being caught drifting night crawlers, but overall fishing is slow. Crappie fishing is slow drifting minnows. A few channel catfish are being caught using liver or cut bait.

**Anita** (Cass): The lake is still 5 feet low and has limited shoreline access. The south boat ramp can be used with a small (14 foot) boat. The lake contains a good fish population and fishing should be good. Fishing for 12 to 15-inch largemouth bass has been good.

**Manawa** (Pottawattamie): Fishing for wipers is slow with a few being caught on east shore by outlet tube using white twister tails. Walleyes are slow drifting night crawlers and leeches close to rock shorelines. Channel catfish fishing is fair with shrimp or cut bait close to shore around rocks. Fish from 2 to 8 pounds are common. Bluegill

fishing is fair using night crawlers or wax worms on a bobber in canals and around the boat docks.

**DeSoto Bend** (Harrison): Crappie fishing is slow using jigs and minnows around deep structure. Channel catfish is fair in shallow areas using night crawlers or blood bait. Carp are being caught mostly on dough balls.

**Prairie Rose** (Shelby): Crappies are fair along rocky shorelines using jigs. Channel catfish fishing is fair on liver and prepared baits along rocky shorelines. Bluegills have slowed, but a few are being caught drifting jigs tipped with night crawlers.

**Willow** (Harrison): Crappie fishing is slow. A few are being caught using minnow and bobber in 8 to 10 feet of water. Channel catfishing is slow; a few are being caught on prepared baits.

**Farm Ponds:** Fishing is fair for bluegills using jigs tipped with night crawlers. Largemouth bass fishing is also good.

**Contact: Chris Larson (712) 769-2587 for information on the above area lakes. For more information on general fishing in southwest Iowa, call the SW Regional Office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.**

### Southeast

**Mississippi River Pools 16 to 19:** The water temperature at Lock and Dam 16 (Muscatine) is 84 degrees and the river pool stage for Pool 16 is 11.47 feet. Water levels are expected to drop slightly over the next several days.

With the recent warm weather, warm water temps, and lower summer water levels fishing has been slow on Pools 16 to 19 of the Mississippi River. Walleye anglers are picking up a few walleyes on **Pool 16** near Credit Island, outside Sunset Marina, and near the Interstate 280 Bridge on the Iowa side. Try fishing walleyes around the wing dams and rock piles with jigs tipped with leeches or minnows, and crankbaits. Channel catfishing has slowed but anglers are catching a few catfish on **Pools 16 to 19** on worms, leeches, crushed minnows, dip baits, shrimp and dead shad. Channel catfish can be found around drift piles, in the backwaters, and the mouths of tributary rivers and streams. Flathead catfishing has been fair to slow in the deeper holes throughout the Mississippi River, in the tail water areas and below the emergency spillways of the navigation dams. Fishing for both channel and flathead catfish has been best in the evening, night and early morning. Fishing has been fair for largemouth bass and bluegills in accessible backwaters on artificial baits and live bait rigs. Bluegill fishing has been fair in the backwaters and below the emergency spillways. Try the backwaters of Credit Island and Sunset Marina in **Pool 16**, Big Timber Area in **Pool 17**, Huron Island, in **Pool 18**, and Lake Odessa **Pools 17/18** for bluegill and bass.

**Lake Darling** (Washington): Water temperature is in the middle 80s. Catfishing has been fair to good in the evenings using chicken liver. During the hot days, mornings have been fairly good as they are cooler than the evenings.

**Lake Geode** (Henry): Water temperature has stayed around 85 degrees during the day. Anglers have been fishing mostly in the morning hours and are gone by noon. Look for the bluegills to be off the deeper ledges on the north side and down along the dam. Bass anglers have been finding the bass along those same areas, on the outside edges of the water willows.

**Lake Belva Deer** (Keokuk): Catfishing has been good in the morning along the rocky shorelines before the sun gets up. Bluegill fishing is fair to good as long as you are there before the sun is. Anglers have been catching bluegills over deepwater areas in the top two or three feet of water, where the fish are feeding on insects on top of the water. As soon as the sun hits the water, the bluegills head back down.

**Lake Wapello** (Davis): Bluegills have been hitting on small jigs tipped with a chunk of night crawler drifted in the deepest parts of the lake. Channel catfish have been biting on night crawlers and stink bait. Largemouth bass have been hitting on a variety of artificial lures, with buzz-baits and spinner-baits being productive.

**Lake Keomah** (Mahaska): Channel catfish have been biting on liver and night crawlers. Largemouth bass have been hitting on spinner-baits and plastic worms fished along the weed line and the ends of the jetties.

**Lake Miami** (Monroe): Channel catfish have been hitting on liver. Crappies have been hitting on minnows drifted in the deepest parts of the lake.

**Lake Rathbun** (Appanoose): White bass have been hitting on crankbaits and white jigs fished around schools of shad seen breaking the surface. Channel catfish have been biting on stink bait and chubs. Crappies have been hitting on jigs and minnows fished around brush piles in 20 plus feet of water.

**Lake Macbride** (Johnson): Some largemouth and spotted bass can be caught around the shallow cover or deeper structure. Bluegills are plentiful and are biting on worms fished around rocks and wood.

**Pleasant Creek** (Linn): Largemouth bass are being caught around the dam and rock jetties. Plastic worms and live baits (bluegills/crayfish) have been working best. Remember the 18-inch size limit. Suspended bluegills are being picked up on night crawlers. A few nice channel catfish are being caught on night crawlers as well.

**Kent Lake** (Johnson): Bluegills can be picked up on small worms. Try around structure or suspended off the bottom. Channel catfish are also being picked up on night crawlers and stink bait, with evening offering the best fishing.

**Hannen Lake** (Benton): Channel catfish are biting on stink bait. Rocky areas should produce best, especially towards dark. Smaller largemouth bass are consistently being caught on a number of different lures.

**Otter Creek** (Tama): Anglers looking for lots of action should come here and fish for yellow bass. These scrappy, tasty fish are marginal in size but numbers will make up for it. Channel catfish are also picking up and can be caught on night crawlers and liver.

**Iowa River** (Louisa): Fishing for catfish has been picking up as the spawn is winding up and the catfish are starting to feed again. Get the kids to catch grass frogs to use as bait and you'll soon find out why frogs don't like to stay in the river when you scare them into the water.

**For more information on fishing in southeast Iowa, call the regional office in Brighton at 319-694-2430.**

### **Northeast**

**Mississippi River Pools 9 to 15:** Water levels on the Mississippi River are at low summer levels and projected to remain low. Care should be taken when navigating over wing dams and shallow areas as many logs and stumps are being exposed or are just

below the surface. The entrances to many backwaters and sloughs are getting too shallow to boat. Water clarity is excellent and main channel water temperature has risen to the middle 80s. River stages are 7.8 feet at Lansing, 12.55 feet at Lynxville, Wis., 6.0 feet at Guttenberg, 4.4 feet in Dubuque, and 3.8 feet at Bellevue. Fishing continues to be outstanding.

Bluegills are biting in **Pools 9 to 15** in areas with current such as wing dams and daylight markers. The *pocket* areas near the dams at Lynxville (**Lock and Dam 9**) and Guttenberg (**Lock and Dam 10**) have been outstanding spots for bluegills. In addition, the wing dam areas near the shore have been excellent producers. Bluegills are being caught on a piece of night crawler floated under a bobber.

White bass are schooled up now and action can be very fast in **Pools 9 to 15**. Watch for schools feeding on minnows. If you see areas where minnows are continuously being chased, try to maintain some distance from the melee to avoid spooking the white bass. Any lure that has some flash, such as a spoon or spinner bait, will work. Anglers are also reporting success using white jigs, spinners or shad-colored crankbaits. Make long casts into the areas where the minnows have been breaking the water. The hottest spots for white bass currently are near the exposed rocky wing dams close to **Lock and Dams 9 and 10** and the pocket below **Lock and Dam 12** near Bellevue.

Freshwater drum (sheephead) fishing is good to excellent in **Pools 9 to 15**. These fish are being caught in current areas such as the tailwaters and along the main channel. Drum can be caught using a sliding egg sinker and a hook baited with worms or crayfish. If you plan to filet drum, store the freshly caught fish on ice to keep the meat firm. In addition, cut out the red meat from the rest of the fillet. If you take these two simple steps, drum are an excellent fish to eat.

Walleye fishing has been fair to good in **Pools 9 to 15**. Anchor above the wing dams and cast crankbaits or jigs over the top of the dam and work it back to the boat. Try trolling crankbaits near the closing dams for actively feeding walleye. Some anglers are having better luck fishing during the late evening hours using three-ways with floaters or spinners tipped with a night crawler or leech.

Largemouth bass fishing has been good to excellent throughout **Pools 9 to 15** using a variety of baits and lures including shad and crawfish imitating crankbaits, spinner baits and soft plastics. Focus on areas with structure—look for areas with rock, wood or vegetation or try to find spots with a combination of these. You might also try spinner baits thrown along the weed edges for hungry bass. Many backwater lakes are very shallow and bass have moved to the deeper sloughs and along the main channel border areas.

Smallmouth bass are being caught in very good numbers in **Pools 9 to 11**. Smallmouth are found in swift current areas with rock. These areas are generally associated with main channel habitats including bank stabilization rock, day markers or wing dams. Spinner-baits and crankbaits are the lure of choice for this feisty fish, but crankbaits seem to catch the larger fish.

Fishing has been good for channel catfish on night crawlers and stink baits fished along the upper sides of snags in deeper water in **Pools 9 to 15**. Channel catfish can also be caught along rocky shorelines floating a night crawler under a bobber.

Many other fish species are being caught and will continue to provide excellent localized fishing. These fish include crappies, yellow bass, yellow perch, rock bass, northern pike, and flathead catfish. All these species are predaceous fish eaters and will hit on a variety of jigs and spinners.

**Cedar River** (Black Hawk): Channel catfish are hitting chicken liver and leeches fished in the riffle areas below the dams. Walleye fishing is good on jigs tipped with night crawlers or leeches.

**Maquoketa River** (Delaware): Fishing is good for channel catfish using chicken liver fished in deeper water around brush piles and outside bends. Walleye, smallmouth bass and largemouth bass were hitting jigs tipped with a night crawler.

**Shell Rock River** (Bremer and Butler): Anglers are catching walleyes on jigs tipped with a night crawler and on crayfish-colored crankbaits.

**Cedar** (Mitchell and Floyd), **Turkey** (Howard, Fayette and Clayton), **Upper Iowa** (Winneshiek and Allamakee) and **Volga** (Fayette and Clayton) **Rivers**: Water clarity is good to excellent. Walleye and smallmouth bass fishing is very good using dark-colored jigs tipped with a worm.

**Wapsipinicon River** (Buchanan): Fishing is good for smallmouth bass and walleye on jigs and crankbaits. Water clarity is very good and flows are good, but low at this time.

**Backbone Lake** (Delaware): Largemouth bass fishing is good on plastic worms fished in the early morning and late evening hours.

**Brinker Lake** (Black Hawk): Crappie fishing is good in 12 feet of water next to structure using a minnow and a slip bobber. Look for fallen trees and sunken structure. Walleye fishing is good casting a jig tipped with a leach from shore. Channel catfish are biting on chicken liver and cut baits.

**Lake Hendricks** (Howard): Crappie, largemouth bass and bluegill fishing is good using jigs tipped with a worm and poppers.

**Lake Meyer** (Winneshiek): Bluegill fishing is good on angle worms or a piece of night crawler fished under a bobber. A few largemouth bass and crappies are being caught on dark jigs.

**Volga Lake** (Fayette): Small crappies and bluegill are hitting tube jigs. Largemouth bass are being caught just under the surface using dark jigs with a twister tail. Fishing for channel catfish is fair on night crawlers, cut baits and chicken liver fished next to rocky structure.

**Trout** fishing excellent and stream conditions are good to excellent. Trout fishing is often better during the early morning or late evening hours during the hot days of summer. Stocking information for specific streams can be found on the web by going through the DNR web site at [www.iowadnr.com](http://www.iowadnr.com) or directly to <http://www.iowadnr.com/fish/news/stockrep/groupstock.pdf>. Anglers may also call the recorded trout stocking information hotline at 563-927-5736.

**For information on fishing in northeast Iowa, call the regional office in Manchester at 563-927-3276.**

### **Northwest**

**Spirit Lake** (Dickinson): Walleye are being caught at the North Grade with a slip bobber and leech. Walleyes are also being caught from shore on leeches and slip bobbers

in the evening at Marble Beach. Also try crankbaits along weed lines or try spinner rigs with leeches in 20 feet of water. Slip bobbers and leeches are also producing around the rock piles. Largemouth and smallmouth bass can be caught around docks using plastic baits. Bluegills are being caught at the Buffalo Run outlet on night crawlers.

**West Okoboji Lake** (Dickinson): Walleyes are being caught along the weed lines trolling crankbaits. An occasional largemouth is being caught while trolling crankbaits. Bluegills and yellow perch are being caught on deep rock piles and weed lines with small jigs tipped with worms.

**East Okoboji Lake** (Dickinson): Channel catfish are being caught on the north end using cut bait or stink bait.

**Silver Lake** (Dickinson): Anglers are catching walleyes trolling crankbaits fast. The trolling is also producing a few perch, drum, white bass and northern pike. Walleyes are also being caught from shore using a slip bobber and leech. There are a few bullheads being caught from shore.

**West Fork Des Moines River** (Emmet-Palo Alto): Channel catfish are being caught on night crawlers fishing around holes and snags.

**Little Sioux River** (Dickinson): Try using dip baits and cut baits for channel catfish.

**Brushy Creek** (Webster): The warmer weather has caused bass to seek shelter under the moss, or other vegetation, or to go to deeper water. Channel catfish fishing in the evening remains good. There are some nice bluegills being caught in 10 to 15 feet of water, but some sorting among smaller fish is necessary.

**Black Hawk Lake** (Sac): Fishing is good to excellent for channel catfish using stink bait, liver or night crawlers, with early morning and late evening the best times.

**Storm Lake** (Buena Vista): A few walleyes and white bass are being caught using No. 5 shad raps. Channel catfish are being caught on night crawlers or leeches.

**Crawford Creek** (Ida): Fishing is fair to good for nice sized bluegills using small leadheads tipped with wax worms or Crappie Nibbles. The lake is very low and launching larger boats may be difficult.

**Clear Lake** (Cerro Gordo): Walleye fishing has been fair. Fish are being caught trolling crankbaits or using live bait around the reefs. Remember Clear Lake has a 14-inch minimum length limit. Fishing is fair for bullheads at the Ventura Grade and Ventura Access using night crawlers on the bottom. Channel catfish are hitting on night crawlers, stink bait and chicken liver.

**Beeds Lake** (Franklin): Bluegill fishing is good using wax worms. Crappies are being caught trolling small jigs in 6 to 10 feet of water.

**Crystal Lake** (Hancock): Anglers are catching good numbers of bullheads on night crawlers. Channel catfish are hitting on chicken livers and prepared stink bait.

**East Fork Des Moines River** (Kossuth): Channel catfish are excellent using cut bait and worms near the snags.

**Lake Smith** (Kossuth): Channel catfish are hitting on chicken liver in the evenings.

**Lake Cornelia** (Wright): Channel catfish are good using chicken liver and night crawlers. Fish the catfish in the evenings, on the north shoreline for the best action. Bullheads are hitting on crawlers fished on the bottom.

**For more information on fishing in northwest Iowa, call the regional office in Spirit Lake at 712-336-1840.**

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