

IOWA OUTDOORS

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

www.iowadnr.gov

Editor: Mick Klemesrud, 515/281-8653

mick.klemesrud@dnr.state.ia.us

Oct. 9, 2007

1. Rendezvous History and the Outdoors – by Joe Wilkinson
2. Trout Stocking at Banner Lake Set for Oct. 18
3. Waterfowl Hunters Reminded to Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers
4. Iowa Fishing Report

RENDEZVOUS HISTORY AND THE OUTDOORS

By Joe Wilkinson

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Over the rhythmic sighs of the bellows, blacksmith George Shimek clanged out a triangular point on the red-hot iron bar. “You can see the color is going out of it. I’m working at about 1,800 degrees,” called out Shimek to the audience circling his outdoor shop. “A good place to work is 2,000, 2,200 degrees.”

Gradually, his ‘tremmel’ took shape. Shimek demonstrated how it adjusted to hold cooking pots over a fire. Around him were lanterns, tools and household goods hammered out through his years on the rendezvous circuit and in his custom blacksmith shop in Waterloo.

His tent here at the Fort Atkinson Rendezvous was a throwback to the 1840s. On this day, the crowd was curious; among the 1,200 high schoolers on field trips. In the ‘old days,’ they would have been customers. The blacksmith was the lifeblood of the village...or in this case...the fort. “The military didn’t want Indians to come into the Fort. They’d haul the blacksmith shop out of the fort with horses. He would work and trade with the Indians. Then, they would bring it back into the fort at night,” Shimek explained.

His coal-fired forge was just one stop on the grounds here. Crumbling limestone walls remain, showing signs of restoration. Foundations, where barracks stood, are marked. Wooden palisades have been erected, partially restoring the look here when U.S. soldiers patrolled this neutral zone in northeast Iowa in the 1840s, after the Winnebago Indians were relocated from Wisconsin.

Kaylee Michelson was impressed with it all. “Just all the different things they have and talk about,” noted the North Fayette student. “The blacksmith made everything that no one else could make.” She was also sold on the fry bread and popcorn. Tyler Leatherberry, of Clayton Ridge, was impressed with the tomahawk display. “It’s like throwing a baseball. You can be very accurate with it. I like that this has a lot of historical facts.”

While the fort is here everyday, rendezvouchers come and go in a couple days. By this weekend, many will be set up somewhere else; throwing tomahawks, target shooting with their flintlock rifles, making pottery, trading with the flatlanders (that’s you and me) or demonstrating other skills of the frontier. There will be a few other smaller rendezvous this fall in Iowa. As cold weather moves in, though, the larger encampments conclude. Some of these buckskinners head into the winter wilds of Iowa, truly roughing it as they live off the land for a few days. Others pack their 19th century tents and equipment into 21st Century vehicles for the winter circuit.

“Through January and February, we’re in Florida. There’s a lot of Seminole and Creek influence there. The military periods are a little different, too,” compares Jon Eldeen of North Liberty. “Alabama has an unusual one; with a French fort from the 1740s and a reconstructed 1812 U.S. fort on the same grounds.” Similarly, encampments in the Northwest feature Rocky Mountain traders, Chinese workers and other Asian or Spanish influences, arriving centuries ago from San Francisco to Seattle. “People forget that Russians were fur-trading there as early as the 1600s,” reminds Eldeen.

He and his wife, Jan, run one of the kitchens which feed the buckskinners, soldiers and visitors. Fry bread and coffee are staples. So are sandwiches; prepared in period ovens, over open fires, but with enough 21st Century stainless steel to satisfy the health department. He’s been at it for 29 years, 16 of them full time. “I’d be hard-pressed to find something more fun than this,” Eldeen admits. “It’s the people. I have friends from all over the world...England, New Zealand, Japan. I wouldn’t have met them without these re-enactments. The kitchen? I had to have something to support my hobby.”

Their ‘hobbies’ are serious for most rendezvous participants, who pay strict attention to their period’s clothing and insignia, campsites and tools. There might be a sack of groceries or a small television, but they are *behind* the tent flaps, not out in public. On display, are trade blankets; featuring everything from hand-woven dreamcatchers to wooden toys, jewelry, pottery, iron tools, knives and leather goods.

It is common to see a rendezvouser involved in a casual lesson with a just a couple visitors or an entire class. Duane Hartwig of Waverly displayed state-backed paper ‘scrip,’ explaining how it was virtually worthless across state lines. On the other hand, Spanish and Continental dollars were standard; made more versatile as you snapped them into ‘pieces of eight’ for smaller transactions. He then segued into a quick lesson on firearms with his ‘Brown Bess’ musket and his flintlock rifle. “During the Revolution, muskets had the advantage of being loaded faster. As they progressed into

the hunting and settling (periods), they wanted a hunting weapon. The rifle (evolved) so they could take game," he explained.

Mass production, digital everything and other vestiges of our concrete and gigabyte world may rule the day for now. But these canvas and wood encampments remind us what it took to tame the wild outdoors and deliver our unmatched standard of living.

###

TROUT STOCKING AT BANNER LAKE SET FOR OCT. 18

INDIANOLA – The Iowa Department of Natural Resources will stock 1,500 rainbow trout in South Banner Lake around noon on Oct. 18. The DNR stocks the 59-acre lake three or four times during the fall and winter months to offer a different type of fishing experience in central Iowa.

Summerset State Park is the only trout fishery in central Iowa. The trout are raised at the Big Spring hatchery near Elkader. Anglers who want to fish for the trout are required to purchase a trout stamp (\$11) in addition to an Iowa fishing license. The daily bag limit for trout is five and the possession limit is 10.

For more information, contact Ben Dodd at 515-432-2823.

###

WATERFOWL HUNTERS REMINDED TO STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS

BOONE - Boaters and anglers are continually reminded during the summer months to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. Now it is the waterfowl hunters' turn to help stop aquatic hitchhikers and protect Iowa lakes, rivers, and wetlands.

Invasive species such as Eurasian watermilfoil, purple loosestrife, and zebra mussels can damage habitat for waterfowl, fish, and other wildlife species. These aquatic invasive species can be unintentionally transported on boats, decoys, and blind material if waterfowl hunters do not take the proper precautions to prevent their spread.

"Preventing the spread of aquatic invasive species into new waters is the key to controlling these species in Iowa," said Kim Bogenschutz, the DNR's aquatic invasive species program coordinator.

Hunters should follow a simple set of procedures each time when leaving the water.

- Remove any visible plants, animals, or mud from decoy lines and anchors, push poles, boats, and waders before transporting
- Drain water from boat, motor, and bilge before transporting.
- Switch to elliptical, bulb-shaped, or strap decoy anchors that do not collect submerged aquatic plants as easily.
- Cut cattails or other plants above the water line when used as camouflage for boats or blinds.
- Clean and dry anything that comes into contact with water (boats, trailers, decoys, waders, dogs).

To kill or remove invasive species that are difficult to see, such as young zebra mussels, hunters should clean boats and equipment with high-pressure or hot (at least 104 degrees) water before launching in another water body. Alternately, boats and equipment can be allowed to dry for at least 5 days.

For more information contact Bogenschutz, at 515-432-2823.

###

IOWA FISHING REPORT

For the week of October 9, 2007

www.iowadnr.gov

Fishing reports will be issued every other week into the fall. 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.

Northeast

Mississippi River Pools 9 to 15: Water levels on the Mississippi River have stabilized at low levels once again. River stages are 4.1 feet at Guttenberg and 3.56 feet at Bellevue. Water temperatures are 60 degrees at Guttenberg and 62 degrees at Bellevue and clarity is very good. Fishing has been picking up as the water temperature has cooled and the fish are putting on the feed bag heading into fall.

A few walleyes and saugers are being reported by anglers fishing minnows near the tips of the wing dams in **Pools 9 to 15**. Walleyes commonly use the outside *tip* of the wing dam during low flow conditions. You can also use three-way rigs or cast crankbaits along the wing dams for walleye. In **Pools 12 to 15**, sauger fishing is best in the tailwater areas and anglers have found three-way rigs with spinners or small floating crankbaits are working well for hungry saugers.

Bluegill fishing continues to be very good in **Pools 9 to 15** floating a piece of night crawler. You may have to sort out some smaller bluegills, but areas such as Bussey Lake (**Pool 10**) continue to produce nice bluegills. Other good locations for hungry bluegills include the backwater areas and side channels or sloughs with structure.

A few nice crappies are being caught in **Pools 9 to 11** using small minnows and fishing next to brush piles. Crappie fishing is better in **Pools 12 to 15** for anglers using minnows or small jigs fished around snags in the backwaters, side channels and sloughs. Crappies are suspended in 4 to 6 feet of water so adjust your bait until you can locate actively feeding fish.

Yellow perch fishing is fair next to brush piles for anglers in **Pools 9 to 11**. Small minnows are the best bet for catching yellow perch.

Smallmouth and white bass are biting on jigs and spinners fished in the tailwaters of Lynxville, Wis., and Guttenberg (**Pools 10 and 11**). Look for schools of white bass working the shorelines. They can often be spotted along sandy stretches of the river.

Largemouth bass fishing is good in Minnesota Slough (**Pool 9**), Harpers Slough (**Pool 10**) and Cassville Slough (**Pool 11**). Anglers are using spinner baits fished along fallen trees.

Cedar River (Mitchell, Floyd, Bremer and Black Hawk): Smallmouth bass fishing is good on jigs, spinner baits and crankbaits. Walleye fishing is good on night crawlers or jigs tipped with a night crawler fished on the bottom below the dams or in areas with rock or rip rapped shorelines.

Shell Rock River (Butler and Bremer): Smallmouth bass are hitting crankbaits and jigs. Walleye are being caught fishing night crawlers or jigs tipped with night crawlers. Concentrate on areas with rock or rip rapped shorelines.

Maquoketa River (Delaware): Smallmouth bass fishing is good using crawdad-colored crankbaits, jigs or night crawlers or minnows fished along the rocky areas. The catch-and-release area below the Delhi Dam has the best habitat and the highest density of smallmouth bass. As the water temperature drops, live bait tends to work better for bass. A few walleyes are being caught fishing night crawlers along the bottom.

Turkey River (Fayette and Clayton): Smallmouth bass and walleyes are moving to their over-wintering areas and fishing is good using night crawlers or dark colored jigs.

Upper Iowa River (Howard, Winneshiek and Allamakee): Smallmouth bass fishing is good on dark colored jigs or live baits. Walleye fishing is good on dark colored jigs. Trout fishing is excellent near Volney.

Big Woods and Brinker Lakes (Black Hawk): Fishing is good for 8 to 9-inch crappies casting jigs tipped with a minnow. Crappies are being caught in 8 to 10 feet of water; however, some are also found 20 feet down.

Lake Hendricks (Howard): Fishing has slowed for all species.

Lake Meyer (Winneshiek): Bluegills are biting on jigs near the shoreline. Anglers are also catching nice-sized largemouth bass.

Volga Lake (Fayette): Nice-sized largemouth bass are being caught along the dam on dark-colored jigs. Take along extra worms if you fish for bluegills and crappies as these fish are hungry and attacking baits fished along the shorelines.

Trout stream conditions are good to excellent and fishing for trout at this time of year is excellent. Fly fishers are using imitation grasshoppers, scuds and nymphs. Other anglers are most successful using spinners, jigs and live baits. Trout stockings in October

are not announced; however, most streams are still being stocked at the same rate as they were in September. Fishing pressure is lower during October so many streams will maintain good, fishable populations of trout throughout the winter. You can't beat trout fishing in northeast Iowa in the fall. The ospreys and eagles are traveling through the state heading for their winter homes. Many eagles will over winter in northeast Iowa and can be seen throughout the winter.

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

Northwest

Spirit Lake (Dickinson): Bluegill fishing has been excellent on the Grade and at Buffalo Run using small plastics jigs and wax worms, and around Hales Slough from a boat. Yellow perch fishing is good around weed lines on the south shoreline and at Hales Slough using small jigs.

West Okoboji (Dickinson): Muskie fishing is good casting large muskie lures. Smallmouth bass fishing is good on shallow rocks using jigs and plastics. Anglers are catching yellow perch fishing the weed beds in Smith's Bay, the North Bay and Emerson Bay. Bluegill fishing is good in many areas of the lake small jigs tipped with garden worms. To find bluegills, find standing vegetation.

East Okoboji (Dickinson): Walleye fishing is starting to pick up casting jigs near bridges. White bass fishing is good near bridge areas in the evening.

Little Spirit (Dickinson): Fishing is excellent for panfish on the south end of the lake.

Five Island (Palo Alto): Anglers are catching channel catfish in the evening. Fishing for panfish is good around the railroad bridge.

North Twin Lake (Calhoun): Yellow bass fishing is good on night crawlers. Fishing is fair for bluegill and crappie.

Black Hawk Lake (Sac): Fishing is good for 7-inch bluegills off the west stone pier. A few catfish are still being caught on shrimp, cut bait or stink bait.

Storm Lake (Buena Vista): Fishing is fair to good for catfish, especially near rocky shoreline at night. Few walleyes are being caught on twisters.

Clear Lake (Cerro Gordo): Yellow bass are hitting live bait or cut bait. The Baptist Camp, artificial weed beds, deep water around the Island, and shorelines with wave action are producing the best catches. Yellows in the 7 to 9-inch range are being caught, along with a few ones. Walleye fishing is fair around the rock reefs or rush beds using a jig and night crawler or trolling crankbaits.

Brushy Creek (Webster): Bluegill fishing is good using a small hook and bait right off the bottom in 8 to 15 feet of water. Bass can be caught through out the lake. A few crappies have been caught on minnows.

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

Southwest

Icaria (Adams): Channel catfish are being caught in the bays and near riprap on night crawlers. Some mid sized walleyes can be caught in the rock mounds or rock shoreline areas.

Little River (Decatur): Fishing for channel catfish is fair at the upper end of the lake.

Green Valley (Union): Channel catfish are fair on stink bait or night crawlers in the shallows. Some nice sized bluegills have been caught in the stake beds.

Three Mile (Union): A few walleyes can be caught from the flooded trees near the mounds or the creek channel. Some crappies have been caught from the flooded trees in the coves on jigs or minnows. Some fair sized bluegill and yellow perch have been picked up in the flooded trees.

Three Fires (Taylor): Nice sized channel catfish can be caught on stink baits. Bluegill and crappie can be caught from the flooded trees or edges of the fish mounds.

Twelve Mile (Union): Several mid-sized walleyes and largemouth bass are being caught from the mounds and steep rock shoreline areas. Nice sized bluegill can be caught from the fish mounds using night crawlers.

Fogle Lake (Ringgold): Several nice channel catfish can be caught on night crawlers in the bays. Crappies can be caught from the flooded trees on minnows.

Walnut Creek Marsh (Ringgold): Anglers are catching 10-inch crappies on twisters fishing shoreline areas or along the vegetation edges.

Farm Ponds: Channel catfish and largemouth bass fishing is good.

Contact Gary Sobotka (641) 464-3108 for information on the above area lakes.

Big Creek (Polk): Crappies are still providing some action on small jigs either drifted or trolled over the main lake. The best bite seems to be early morning and dusk. Bass fishing is still pretty good in the mornings and evenings on plastics and top-water lures. Try fishing the wind swept shorelines with crankbaits and spinner baits during the day.

Saylorville Lake (Polk): Fishing is decent right now for a variety of species. Lots of channel cats are being caught with worms and shad. Big crappies and lots of small walleyes are being caught with jigs and minnows off points and humps. Bass up to 15 inches are providing lots of action on plastics fished around shore. White bass are still being caught with some fish up to 17 inches. Most anglers are trolling with small shad colored crankbaits.

Ahquabi (Warren): Bluegills and bass are providing most of the action right now. Small top-water baits in the mornings have been giving anglers good action. Jigs tipped with a piece of worm under a bobber have been the ticket for some nice bluegills.

Easter Lake (Polk): Anglers are catching 8 to 9-inch crappies on jigs fished under a bobber. Channel cats up to 5 pounds are still biting steady on liver and stink bait. A few walleyes are also being picked up.

Don Williams (Boone): Crappie and bluegill fishing is fair right now. Jigs tipped with bait drifted or trolled over deeper water has accounted for most fish. Channel catfish are biting cut baits around rocks. Bass fishing is fair on plastic worms and top-water baits.

Rock Creek (Jasper): Bluegills and crappies are taking jigs and minnows right now with some fish up to 9 inches. Channel catfish are still biting on cut baits.

Red Rock (Marion): White bass fishing has been good lately. Trolling or casting jigs, blade baits and crankbaits are accounting for most of the action. Fish up to 17 inches are being caught.

Robert's Creek (Marion): Big crappies have been consistently caught with jigs and minnow under bobbers, trolled slowly.

Contact Ben Dodd (515) 432-2823, Ext.108, for information on the above area lakes

Orient (Adair): Channel catfish are fair during the day on prepared baits. Bluegills are fair using small jigs tipped with night crawlers. Largemouth bass is fair using a slow retrieve and plastic worms in the evenings.

Nodaway (Adair): Bluegill and crappie are slow, but a few are being caught around brush piles. Channel catfish is fair using liver in the evenings.

Greenfield (Adair): Bluegill fishing is fair around brush piles or drifting jigs tipped with night crawlers. Largemouth bass are being caught using plastic baits and spinner baits. Channel catfish fishing has been fair using liver.

Morman Trail (Adair): Bluegills are fair on south and west side of lake in brush piles. Channel catfish is fair using liver around jetties and shallow bays in the evening. Largemouth bass can be caught on plastic baits.

Littlefield (Audubon): Crappie fishing is slow, but a few are being caught drifting a jig and minnow. Bluegills are slow casting a small jig tipped with night crawlers. Channel catfish has been fair in shallow bays and corners of the dam using stink bait.

Anita (Cass): Anglers are catching 7 to 8-inch bluegills using jigs from shore and around the jetties. Channel catfish, 2 to 6 pounds, are being caught on night crawlers and blood bait. Largemouth bass fishing has been fair for fish up to 18 inches. Crankbaits and jigs have been used around brush piles and rock piles.

DeSoto Bend (Harrison): Crappie fishing is slow. Channel catfish is fair using dip baits with a red worm.

Manawa (Pottawattamie): Channel catfish is fair drifting cut bait or shrimp. A few wipers are being caught east side of lake throwing twister tails.

Arrowhead (Pottawattamie): Bluegills are slow using jigs with night crawlers. Fish are 7 to 8 inches. Channel catfish are fair using liver and prepared bait close to shore around jetties.

Prairie Rose (Shelby): Fishing is slow for crappies and bluegills drifting jigs tipped with minnows or night crawlers. Channel catfish is slow fishing shallow bays with liver. A few largemouth bass are being caught using crawdad-colored lures.

Willow (Harrison): Bluegill fishing is slow with a few fish being caught on jigs tipped with night crawlers. Bass fishing has been fair with 12 to 14-inch fish being caught on plastic worms and crankbaits.

Schaben (Harrison): Bluegills are fair using small jigs tipped with night crawlers. Largemouth bass are also being caught on night crawlers and plastic baits.

Middle Raccoon River (Guthrie): The "No Kill" stretch below Lenon Mills is fair for smallmouth bass using 1/32-ounce jigs tipped with a night crawler. Bluegill fishing has been good using jigs tipped with night crawlers.

Farm Ponds: Farm ponds are good for largemouth bass, bluegill and channel catfish. Be sure to ask permission from the landowner first.

Contact: Bryan Hayes (712)769-2587 for information on the above area lakes.

For more information on fishing in southwest Iowa, call the regional office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.

Southeast

Mississippi River Pools 16 to 20: The river water level has risen about one foot over the weekend and is expected to stay steady over the next week. Current water temperature is around 71 degrees.

Current tailwater stage in **Pool 16** is 8.2 feet. Channel catfishing has been good on stink bait, chicken liver, shrimp, minnows and worms. The mouth of the Rock River has been producing some channel catfish. A few flathead catfish are being caught on live baits, like green sunfish and bullheads. Crappies are being caught in the backwaters floating minnows around brush piles, including the **Davenport Harbor** around Credit Island, the backwaters in **Andalusia Island** and **Andalusia Slough**. White bass are being caught in Sylvan Slough up by the Arsenal Dam and the Power Plant Dam. Some walleyes and saugers are being caught on the wing dams below the 280 bridge.

Current tailwater stage in **Pool 17** is 6.82 feet. Channel catfish are biting on stink bait, chicken liver, shad and night crawlers. There are some reports of flatheads being caught on live bait in the tailwaters of **Lock and Dam 16**. Crappies are being caught in the **Big Timber** complex floating minnows around brush piles. Walleye and sauger fishing has been slow but is expected to pick up with cooler temperatures coming.

Current tailwater stage in **Pool 18** is 8.8 feet. Channel catfish are biting on stink bait, chicken liver and shad guts. Crappies are being caught on minnows in the **Huron Island** complex.

Current tailwater stage in **Pool 19** is 5.1 feet. Channel catfish are being caught on shad guts. Some flatheads are being caught on live bait near **Green Bay Bottoms**. Crappies are being caught on minnows around brush piles.

Current stage in **Pool 20** is 6.58 feet, but is fluctuating due to dam releases. There have been some reports of blue catfish being caught.

Lake Darling (Washington): Catfishing has been very good this last week with some really nice fish being taken. Catfish seem to have moved into the rocky shorelines where the green sunfish and crawdads are staying. Crappies are still in deeper water waiting for cooler weather.

Lake Geode (Henry): The road at Geode from the beach turn off by the campground all the way to the turn off at the dam on Hwy. J-20 remains closed as construction has fallen behind schedule. Both boat ramps and the beach remain closed. The only access points on the lake will be shore fishing from the dam/spillway areas, shelter 3 and shelter 4 on the south end of the lake.

Lake Belva Deer (Keokuk): Bluegill fishing remains good. The fish are still in 10 feet of water waiting for the temperature to cool. Catfish fishing is very good with the catfish working the rip rap and around the fish cleaning stations.

Lake Odessa (Louisa): Look to the Horseshoe Bend and Burris Ditch areas to catch some very nice crappies as they start schooling up to make the fall migration to the over wintering areas. Catfishing is still very good in the Sand Run area.

Lake Rathbun (Appanoose): White bass have been hitting on crankbaits trolled along rock reefs. Crappies have been hitting on small jigs tipped with minnows. Walleyes have been hitting on jig and minnow combinations fished around underwater rock piles.

Lake Sugema (Van Buren): Bluegills have been hitting on small jigs. Largemouth bass have been hitting on a variety of artificial lures.

Lake Wapello (Davis): Crappies and bluegills have been hitting on small jigs drifted in the deeper parts of the lake. Channel catfish have been biting on night crawlers. Largemouth bass have been hitting on a variety of artificial presentations.

Lake Hawthorn (Mahaska): Channel catfish have been biting on night crawlers.

Lake Keomah (Mahaska): Largemouth bass have been hitting on crankbaits and spinner baits. Channel catfish have been biting on night crawlers.

Skunk River (Washington and Henry): Catfishing is fair to good. The water temperature remains in the upper 60s and low 70s. Look for the catfishing to pick up when the temperature is in the low 60s and the catfish start feeding in preparation for their fall migration to their over wintering areas.

Iowa River (Louisa): The river level is rising with the extra water coming from the Cedar River. The forecast is for it to start going back down by the middle of the week. Catfishing has been fair.

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

###