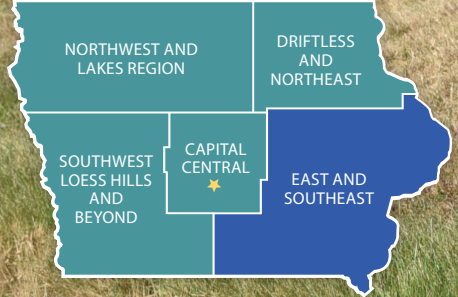




Many newer athletic complexes have fishing areas nearby. Pack the tackle to cast after practices or games. See some locations on page 24.



STORY BY SHANNON HAFNER AND DNR FISHERIES STAFF

Fishing doesn't require a special mega-trip, or need to last all day either. Keep tackle in your vehicle and you can wet a line—wherever, whenever—some quick casts over lunch break, after a shopping outing or when heading to that town with great tenderloins, antiques or farmer's market.

**EAST AND SOUTHEAST**

**JOHNSON**—A short drive from Cedar Rapids or Iowa City, Lake Macbride has nearly seven miles of accessible shoreline, seven public boat ramps and 14 fishing jetties/piers. Hook bluegill, crappie, bass, walleye and catfish. Walk the trails and see the waterfall, visit neighboring Macbride Nature Recreation Area, bike Sugarbottom Mountain Bike Area, search Devonian Fossil Gorge at the Coralville Dam, bring your wheels to the Lake View OHV Park, golf at Lake Macbride or Saddleback Ridge Golf Courses, or rent a

**Pack the tackle**—simple rod, reel and lures—to sneak in a short fishing spell as time allows. Iowa is blessed with rivers, lakes and ponds statewide. Wherever you go, pack the tackle for some spontaneous angling. Here, we offer great fishing spots, many in areas known for other activities and events where you can take the tackle.

pontoon or paddle craft. Celebrate Solon's annual Beef Days, mid-July with food, music and hay bale throwing contest. **LINN**—Renovated Pleasant Creek Lake has easy shore access with fishing jetties, piers and lots of fish habitat. Catch bluegill, crappie, bass, hybrid striped bass, walleye, catfish and muskellunge. One few eastern Iowa lakes with smallmouth bass. Campground, log cabins, multi-use trails, beach, playground and windsurfing launch. Short drive to Cedar Rapids shopping, live music, Czech Village, sports venues, museums and family-friendly festivals.

**JOHNSON**—Kent Park Lake is perfect for kids. Catch bass, crappie, bluegills, redear sunfish and catfish. Easy access walking trail rings the lake and large fishing pier at the boat ramp. Playground, beach, camping and nature center. Check out many attractions in nearby Iowa City including unique shops, museums, live music, sports venues and local events. **JOHNSON**—In North Liberty, family-friendly Liberty Centre Pond has great shore access. Paved walking trail, flat stone-block shorelines and large fishing pier and walk bridge. Catch bluegill, largemouth bass and channel catfish. Rainbow trout stocked spring and winter. Lots of restaurants nearby. **TAMA**—Easily catch bluegill, crappie, bass, walleye and catfish at Union Grove Lake around the fishing jetties. Camping, cabins and scenic trails. Shopping, Pioneer Trail and roadside attractions in Gladbrook and nearby Beaman, Traer, Conrad and Reinbeck. **JOHNSON**—Boat fishing or enjoying water sports is popular at Coralville Reservoir. Easy access with five public boat ramps and three marinas. The river below dam provides shore

fishing and pier. Catch bluegill, crappie, bass, walleye, hybrid striped bass and catfish. Seven campgrounds, two beaches, miles of hiking/biking trails, raptor rehabilitation center and fossil gorge at base of dam. Views limestone bluffs and trees along the water. A short drive to shopping, restaurants and attractions in Cedar Rapids or Iowa City. **JONES**—With many amenity upgrades in 2018, Central Park Lake offers plenty of shore access, fishing jetties and fishing pond just north of the lake. Hook bluegill, crappie, redear sunfish, bass and catfish. Campground, cabins, swimming beach, trails, nature center and paddling rentals. Travel the Grant Wood Scenic Byway and explore attractions in nearby Center Junction, Scotch Grove, Monticello and Wyoming. **IOWA**—Escape to Lake Iowa, 15 miles southwest of the Williamsburg Outlet Mall and off I-80 between Des Moines and Iowa City. Good shore fishing and fishing jetties. Catch bluegill, crappie, redear sunfish, bass and catfish. Camping, cabins, beach, trails and nature center. Check out attractions along the Iowa Valley Scenic Byway in Marengo,

## TAKE THE TACKLE!

Kid's outdoor sport seasons start soon with long hours at practices and travel. Heading to a sports complex with kids or grandkids? Pack the tackle. Let the post-practice traffic snarl subside while you and the kids catch fish and unwind. Many sports complexes, listed below, have great angling next door. But you have to pack the tackle!

Nationally, over 5 million kids ages 6 to 17 express interest in angling, creating a big opportunity to enhance fishing's future. But to get them hooked, you have to take the tackle.

**DALLAS**—Family-friendly Triumph Park is a great outdoor get away for Waukee residents and visitors. Take a break from sporting events at Waukee Northwest High School or the many baseball/softball fields in the park. Two ponds are surrounded by a popular trail system. Parking on the north side of the large lake. The larger of the two lakes has a fishing pier. A playground and restrooms are on the north side of the lake. Catch bluegill, bass and catfish. Rainbow trout are stocked during cooler months.

**HENRY**—East Lake is perfect to cast a line in between activities at the East Lake Park Sportsplex. Catch bluegill, bass and catfish. Stocked with trout in cool weather. Try a chunk of worm fished under a bobber. Change baits to entice catfish (chicken liver, stink baits, larger hooks baited with a full nightcrawler) in summer. Enjoy festivities at the Midwest Old Threshers Reunion in early fall. Keep the family entertained at shops and restaurants in downtown Mt. Pleasant. Camp at Oakland Mills Park, a short drive west of town.

**JEFFERSON**—Take a break from activities at Roosevelt Recreation Center and Cambridge Sports Complex and go fishing at Old Water Supply Reservoir in Fairfield. Pleasant Lake, Bonfield Lake and Walton Lake are stocked with bluegill, bass and catfish. Pleasant Lake often has the best fishing. A variety of lures and live baits will entice a bite whether you have just a few minutes or hours. Check out shops, restaurants, Central Park and the Fairfield Arts and Convention Center around the town square. Bike the Jefferson County Loop Trail around the entire city. Swimming is allowed at Bonfield Lake within Waterworks Park.

**MAHASKA**—Looking for a quick break from sports activities at Lacey Sports Park in Oskaloosa? Two ponds are conveniently



located nearby along the Mahaska Community Recreation Trail. Catch largemouth bass and bluegill at Lacey Rec Plex Pond just west of the elementary school. Galeston Pond, just west of the sports complex, was first stocked in 2024 with largemouth bass and bluegill and will be nice-sized soon.

**POLK**—Blue Heron Lake in Raccoon River Park is a great spot to fish and paddle. Take a break from soccer and softball games in the park. Catch bluegill, catfish and bass. Accessible fishing pier, boat ramp, beach, trails, restrooms, swimming beach, playground, dog park and plenty of parking.

**MUSCATINE**—Muscatine Slough in Kent State Park is a short walk from nearby athletic fields. An old oxbow of the Cedar River, it's stocked biennially with catfish and is abundant with many river fish. Use nightcrawlers, cut bait, stink bait or chicken livers under a bobber or on the bottom. Not far from popular downtown locations including the National Pearl Button Museum, restaurants, Riverside Park and the World's Largest Watermelon sculpture.

**POLK**—Need a break from sports activities at the Prairie Ridge Sports Complex in Ankeny? Catch bass, bluegill, crappie and catfish at Prairie Ridge Ponds. Good shore fishing access. Restrooms, trails, parking and playground. Close to a skate park, public pool, restaurants and other amenities.

**SCOTT**—Take a quick family break from activities at the TBK Bank Sports Complex located north of Hopewell Pond in Bettendorf. Hook bluegill, largemouth bass and channel catfish. Use a small chunk of worm suspended under the bobber. Explore downtown Bettendorf's new promenade, expanded walking corridor, an urban park and other attractions. Live summer events include the Independence Day parade.

**POLK**—Keep kids busy fishing at Lake Petocka in between sports events at the Bondurant Recreational Sports Complex. A nice trail surrounds this popular fishing lake. Catch bluegill, bass and catfish. Rainbow trout are stocked in the cooler months. You'll also find a dog park and restroom on the south side of the lake.

**WAPELLO**—Multiple ponds near Greater Ottumwa Park provide easy access to chase more than pop flies. Best fishing is the pond near the campground on the west side of Wapello Street (complete with a fishing pier) or the pond just east of Wapello Street. Both have excellent water access. Hook bluegill, crappie, bass and catfish. From the end of October to late May, the east pond is stocked with rainbow trout. Try river fishing in downtown Ottumwa. Park at the Bridgeview center or Main Street Parking lot near the Ottumwa Hydropower Facility and wander down to the Des Moines River. Fish for walleye, channel catfish, shovelnose sturgeon and bass— white, hybrid striped and smallmouth

Williamsburg, Blainstown and Belle Plaine and Amana. **APPANOOSE**—Escape to Honey Creek Resort at Rathbun Lake. Catch crappie and bluegill from the dock east of the resort. Occasional channel cats will challenge small tackle. Relax on benches at the fishing pier. Find dozens of specialty shops and restaurants in Centerville's historic town square with summer concerts, wine festival and Pancake Day in fall.

**CLINTON**—Recently renovated Emma Young Pond was restocked with bluegill, largemouth bass and channel catfish. They've grown to catchable size. Stocked with trout in cool seasons. Close to many attractions including Prospect League Baseball (Clinton LumberKings), Riverview Park, Eagle Point Park and the Mississippi River.

**SCOTT**—At newly renovated West Lakes Park in Davenport, catch bluegill, largemouth, channel cat and black crappies with live baits and artificial lures. Each lake has accessible shoreline, fishing jetties or piers. Lake of the Hills and Railroad Lake boat ramps allow small motorboats at no-wake speed. Close to Midwest League Baseball (Quad City River Bandits), the Mississippi River, Vander Veer Park Arboretum, Putnam Museum and Figge Art Museum.

**DES MOINES**—Named for 1850s Burlington businessman Charles Starker, Starker Lake is in Crapo Park. He was grandfather of Aldo Leopold—the “Father of Wildlife Management.” Stocked with bluegill, bass and crappies, it's where kids catch their first fish with a small chunk of worm and bobber. The park has an arboretum, botanical garden and is where Zebulon Pike first raised the American flag on Iowa soil in 1805. Enjoy Prospect League baseball (Burlington Bees), visit Snake Alley or Starr's Cave Nature Center.

**LEE**—Wilson Lake Park west of Ft. Madison is a family getaway with two ponds, campground, all-season cabins and shelter. Trout are stocked in cool weather. Try artificial and live baits. A chunk of nightcrawler and bobber are great for bluegill, while rubber worms and larger lures entice bass. Eateries, the Mississippi River, old Fort Madison and Historic Cellhouse Row District a short drive east on Highway 2.

**WASHINGTON**—Catch bluegill, bass and channel cat at Willow Pond in Washington. Try a chunk of nightcrawler and bobber for bluegills, rubber worms for bass or chicken liver, stink bait or nightcrawlers for catfish. Easy access via paved trail off Lexington Avenue on west side of town. Explore Washington Wellness Park, KeWash Trail, All Veterans Memorial, new YMCA and downtown shops and eateries.

**KEOKUK**—Hit Lake Yenrougis north of Sigourney. Catch bluegill, redear sunfish, bass, catfish and crappies. Toss a 1/32 oz. gumball jig tipped with a 1/2" curlytail or paddletail body for panfish. Use larger lures for bass. Try pungent baits for catfish. Water is very clear, so dark colored lures work best. Camping and small gravel ramp for boats with electric motors. Explore shops and eateries in downtown Sigourney. Nearby Lake Belva Deer offers camping and fishing.

## CAPITAL CENTRAL

**STORY**—Catch lots of largemouth and bluegills at Dakins Lake, north of Zearing. Excellent access around lake via walking trail. Restrooms, picnic shelter, natural playscape, lakeside camping, jetties and dock with fish cleaning station.

**STORY**—Family-friendly Hickory Grove Lake offers great bass, bluegill and walleye fishing from boat or shore. Camping, playground, picnic shelters, hiking trail around lake, boat ramp with kayak launch, swimming beach, jetties and fish cleaning station. Close to Ames eateries and events.

**POLK**—Recently renovated Easter Lake is a great family getaway after work or on weekends. Hook crappie, catfish, bass and walleye. Trails, picnic areas, restrooms, playgrounds, swimming beach and paddling rentals.

**POLK**—Southwest of downtown Des Moines, Grays Lake is a destination with bass, bluegill, crappie, catfish and hybrid



striped bass, plus river species in the Des Moines or Raccoon. Trails, restrooms, playground, boat rentals, ramp and parking. Close to shops, restaurants and metro attractions.

**MADISON**—From shore or kayak, Cedar Lake, northeast of Winterset, offers bluegill, crappie, catfish and bass. Stay in a yurt at historic Pammel State Park. Local attractions include Bridges of Madison County, John Wayne Birthplace and Museum, County Historical Complex and Iowa Quilt Museum. **MADISON**—Hit the lake at the popular Badger Creek State Recreation Area just outside West Des Moines. Catch bluegill, crappie, bass, walleye and channel catfish.

## SOUTHWEST LOESS HILLS AND BEYOND

**POTTAWATTAMIE**—Spectacular channel cat fishing at Carter Lake, an old Missouri River oxbow stocked by Iowa and Nebraska. Home to some of the area’s biggest largemouth. See college baseball’s World Series, Eppley Airfield, Henry Doorly Zoo and Omaha’s unique shops. **SHELBY**—Prairie Rose has one of Iowa’s highest quality bluegill populations. Catch 10+ inch bluegill, plus crappie and bass. Antique shops and festival in Walnut and Museum of Danish America in Elk Horn.

**CASS**—Easy shore access for spawning redear sunfish in May at Cold Springs. Camping, trails, beach, restrooms, playground and picnic area. Close to T Bone bike trail and Hitchcock house, a National Historic Landmark for its role in the Underground Railroad. Hike the trail to see where the East Nishnabotna River carved through bedrock outcrops.

**CASS**—Lake Anita is a family destination with campground movie night hosted by the Friends of Lake Anita and Christmas in July celebrations. One of Iowa’s best all-around lakes. Accessible pier for bluegills, crappies, bass and huge redear sunfish. Close to T Bone bike trail, tree in the middle of the road and Jesse James train robbery historical site.

**POTTAWATTAMIE**—Lake Manawa in Council Bluffs is best fished by boat for walleye, hybrid striped bass (wiper) and blue catfish. Action starts after ice out into spring and re-heats in fall. Find unique treasures at local shops, see the Union Pacific Railroad Museum, Historic General Dodge House and Hitchcock Nature Center.

**HARRISON**—Nestled in the Loess Hills, Willow Lake has extremely clear water. Catch large redear sunfish and catfish. Cabins, campground and new Willow Lake Nature Center overlooks the lake. Enjoy nearby Loess Hills State Forest and Brent Olsen Visitor Center, Preparation Canyon State Park with Loess Hills overlook, Murray Hill Scenic Overlook, County Historical Village and Iowa Welcome Center.

**POTTAWATTAMIE**—Well-maintained Arrowhead Park is close to the I-80 and 880 split, northeast of Council Bluffs. Lots of shore access for bluegill, largemouth, crappie and channel cat. Camping, cabins, playground and woodland hiking trails. Shopping, restaurants and more in Neola. Don’t miss Hoo Doo Days over Labor Day weekend.

**ADAIR**—Greenfield City Reservoir offers a quiet, lakeside

setting. Hook bluegills, crappies, catfish, bass and an occasional walleye. Easy shore access, fishing jetties and paved walking path around the lake. May and June are best for crappies and bluegills on spawning beds. Less than one hour from Des Moines, Adair County has many places to fish and recreate—Nodaway Lake, Orient Lake, Mormon Trail Lake and Meadow Lake. Stroll through Greenfield’s historic square with locally-owned shops.

**UNION**—Green Valley State Park offers plentiful bluegills and crappies easily caught from jetties. Rent a pine log cabin, camp, lakeside trails, swimming, playground or bike on paved trail from the park to Creston for eateries, shops, art gallery, restored railroad depot, museums or to see 30 murals in town.

**TAYLOR**—Relax at Lake of Three Fires State Park in a rental cabin. Catch bluegill and crappie from fishing jetties and big largemouth in brush piles. Hiking trails wind through wetlands and prairie around the lake. Camping, playground, horse trails and swimming beach. Explore Bedford’s specialty shops. Enjoy historic charm with visits to the 1892 county courthouse, Garland Hotel and Round Barn and Museum. **PAGE**—Rapp Park Lakes in Shenandoah has good shore access for bluegill, crappie, bass, catfish and hybrid striped bass. Revitalized downtown offers 125 Iowa-shaped sidewalk plaques, Wabash Arts Camp Murals, Veteran Memorial Museum and the Everly Brothers’ childhood home.

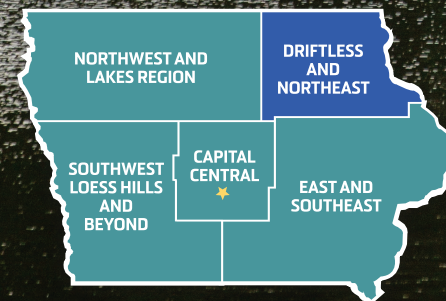
**DECATUR**—Catch bluegill and crappie at fishing jetties at Little River Watershed Lake. Brush piles and rocks hide big largemouth and fish lake points for walleye. Camping, cabins and playground. Fourth of July rodeo in Leon. Explore Decatur County’s eight parks with hiking, biking trails, fishing, swimming, camping, horseshoes and playgrounds.

**CLARKE**—Shore access at East Lake Park in Osceola makes it easy to catch bluegill, crappie, bass and catfish. Archery range, campground, restrooms, hiking trails, playground and picnic shelters. Explore Osceola’s Main Street, Tuesday Night in the Park and farmers’ market.

**ADAMS**—Spend a night at the well-maintained county recreation area at Lake Icaria. Hook bluegill, crappie, bass, channel and blue catfish, walleye and hybrid striped bass. Camping, modern cabins, lakeside cottages, playground and bait shop with boat rental. Explore nearby Corning to see Johnny Carson’s birthplace, House of History, French Icarian Village, commercial historic district, opera house, center for fine arts, freedom rock and speedway.

## DRIFTLESS AND NORTHEAST

**ALLAMAKEE**—Patterson Creek is perfect to introduce new anglers to fly fishing. Almost 2 miles of stream is a permanent angling easement in a scenic valley northwest of Waukon. It sustains wild brown trout and is stocked with rainbow trout. Roadside parking and stiles allow access. Browse shops and historical museum in Waukon. Explore historic gems nestled within the rugged land along the Driftless Area Scenic Byway. **CLAYTON**—Sny Magill and North Cedar trout streams



offer primitive camping, easy access, complex stream habitat, stocked rainbows and wild brook and brown trout. North Cedar is a tributary to Sny Magill with deep holes and fast runs. Pikes Peak State Park is near with camping and hiking for gorgeous views of the Mississippi River valley. Hit Marquette and McGregor shops and restaurants and explore the Marquette Depot Museum celebrating local railroad history, visit Effigy Mounds just north of Marquette, and discover the majestic River Bluffs Scenic Byway.

**FAYETTE**—Set within striking limestone bluffs, Echo Valley State Park boosts its beauty with Glovers and Otter creeks. Stocked with rainbow trout. Easy access for anglers with limited mobility. Explore West Union's shops and historic sites in nearby Fayette and Clermont.

**HOWARD**—Lake Hendricks just north of Riceville offers many places for fish to hide with rock piles, crappie condos, pallets, concrete culverts and cedar trees within casting distance of shore. Catch bluegill, crappie, bass and catfish. Fish shore from lake trail. Hard surface boat ramp, camping, restrooms, showers, playground, beach and picnic shelters. Explore local shops, restaurants and attractions in Riceville and nearby Osage and Elma.

**MITCHELL**—Explore Turtle Creek's two miles of public fishing just north of St. Ansgar or Spring Creek south of St. Ansgar and Osage. Private ground open to public fishing and public areas allow easy access. Both are stocked with rainbows and boast thriving wild brown populations. Find good sized walleye, bass and pike above and below the impoundments on the upper Cedar River and bluegill and crappie in off-channel areas or backwaters. Celebrate Town and Country Days in June and Cedar River Rendezvous and Autumn Artistry in September.

**BLACK HAWK**—Easy shore access to South Prairie Lake for bluegill, catfish and bass near the UNI Dome. Surrounded by a popular recreational trail walkable from the Cedar Falls tourism and visitor center. Shopping, restaurants and attractions galore on Main Street.

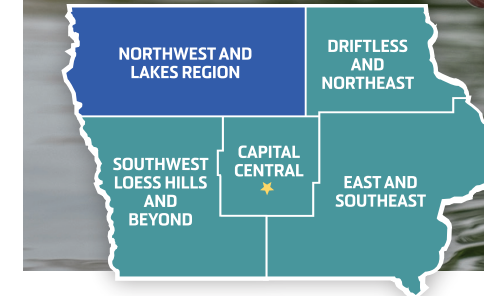
**DELAWARE**—Manchester Whitewater Park is a summer recreational destination. Easy access to Maquoketa River for bass, bluegill and crappie. Cast early before tubers and paddlers pack the park rapids. Manchester is a family destination with youth sports venues, farmers' market, Delaware County Fair and trout hatchery.

**DUBUQUE**—Bergfeld Pond in Dubuque has easy shore access to bluegill, catfish and bass. Recreational trail, restrooms and playground. Near Dubuque County Fairgrounds and west-end shopping district.

**JACKSON**—Experience some of Iowa's best trout fishing and most beautiful scenery at Mill Creek in Felderman City Park. Good parking with hard-surface trail that connects city park to Bellevue State Park. Admire beautiful Mississippi viewing vistas at Bellevue State Park and Big Mill Wildlife Area. Watch barges and boats travel through locks at Dam 12. Downtown Bellevue boat ramp area also offers good

Mississippi River shore fishing. More shore fishing around the DNR Fisheries Management office which also has a kid's trout pond.

**BUCHANAN**—Find easy Wapsipinicon River access at Three Elms Park in Independence for catfish, bass and walleye. Paddlers can access the Wapsi south of the Independence dam to continue down the water trail. The park is by the baseball/softball complex. Local attractions include Illinois



Central Railroad depot and museum, Captain D.S. Lee Mansion, freedom rock, Buchanan County Fair and Cedar Rock State Park.

**BREMER**—Catch channel cat, smallmouth bass and walleye along Waverly's picturesque Cedar River at Three Rivers, Kohlmann, and Brookwood parks. Historic downtown offers pedestrian-friendly shopping packed with locally-owned shops and restaurants. A destination for college, high-school, and youth sporting events.

**BUTLER**—Catch lots of catfish, bass and walleye on the Shell Rock River at Heery Woods State Park. Quiet camping with nature center and trails. Adjacent Clarksville frequently hosts youth sporting events and town celebrations.

**BLACK HAWK**—Easy shore access to Greenbelt Lake for bluegill, catfish, crappie and bass along a popular recreational trail and adjacent to a dog park and softball/baseball complex. Nearby Waterloo offer family fun with miles of biking, dining and sports and entertainment venues.

## NORTHWEST AND LAKES REGION

**O'BRIEN**—Hit Mill Creek Lake near Paulina for bluegill, crappie and bass. Easy shore access and jetties. Camping, cabins, trails, swimming beach, picnic areas and paddling access. Tasty treats at the concession building.

**LYON**—Fish from shore, boat or pier at Lake Pahoja. Use the fish cleaning station for bass, crappie, catfish, bluegill and walleye. A 3.5-mile concrete trail surrounds the lake. Rental cabins and campsites overlook the lake. Paddling rentals, playground and swimming beach. Just minutes away, fish the large rock rapids at the historic Klondike Dam location on the Big Sioux River. Explore Blood Run National Historic Landmark in Larchwood or 36 murals in Rock Rapids.

**DICKINSON COUNTY**—Fish always bite at Iowa's Great Lakes. Terrific yellow bass fishing, good numbers of yellow

perch, bluegill, crappie and pumpkinseed. Success from shore is best spring and early summer, but plenty of action all year. Numerous public access at West Okoboji to fish by dock or shore. Outstanding dining, shops, fireworks display over West Lake Okoboji, Arnolds Park Amusement Park, live entertainment, museums, farmers' markets and festivals within walking distance. Stop by DNR's historic Spirit Lake Hatchery to view native fish in aquariums and hatcher-raised walleye and musky. Public beach, boat ramps and public shores with easy fishing access nearby. Watch schools of bass, panfish, perch, walleye, muskellunge and carp attempt to make it upstream at the Spirit Lake spillway to East Okoboji.

**PALO ALTO**—Catch walleyes, yellow perch, yellow bass, bluegills and largemouth at Lost Island Lake. Easy access with numerous docks. Camping, cabins, trails, swimming beach and nature center. Shopping, dining, outdoor concerts and festivals in nearby Ruthven.

**PALO ALTO**—Catch yellow bass and walleye at Five Island Lake from shore or boat. Camping, golfing, swimming beach and playground. Shopping, dining, outdoor concerts and festivals in Emmetsburg.

**CLAY**—Easy fishing for bluegill, crappie and catfish at Scharnberg Pond. ADA fishing pier and rock jetties. Camping, cabins, beach, playground, hiking trail and paddling rental at county park. Check out the Clay County Fair in Spencer.

**PLYMOUTH**—Bass and bluegills are easy for new anglers at River's Bend Wildlife Area Lake. Restrooms, fishing jetties, camping, picnicking and hiking. Drive the Loess Hills Scenic Byway or tour Akron's historic opera house and area museum. Akron's trail system includes The Big Sioux River Trail, paved City Trail and 4.5-mile Prairie Trail, which winds through woods, prairie and bluffs.

**SAC**—Plan a family getaway to Black Hawk State Park. Catch crappie, walleye, bluegill and muskellunge. Half the shore is

public with restrooms near. Easy access with two stone piers, floating fishing pier and fish house. Fish cleaning station next to 30 Acres boat ramp. Great playground in Speaker Park. Two campgrounds plus miles of hiking trails within walking distance and paved bike trail runs over 30 miles to Carroll. Enjoy buildings and structures built by the CCC in the park. Check the City of Lake View's events calendar for free concerts, organized bike rides and more.

**CALHOUN**—Hook small yellow bass at North Twin Lake or troll for large walleye in May and early June. Good crappie fishing in spring and catfishing most of the time. Shore access along Featherston Park makes taking kids easy. Camping, playground, swimming beach and paved trail around the lake. Close to county historical museum, Freedom Rock and North Raccoon River Water Trail.

**PLYMOUTH**—At Willow Creek Campground Pond hook bass and bluegill. Camping, beach, bike trail, driving range, pickleball and sand volleyball, playground and paved trail.

**IDA**—Catch big bluegill and crappie, jumbo bass, catfish and occasional bonus perch Crawford Creek. Look for bluegill on spawning beds late May and early June. Best fished by boat. Any size motor is allowed, but run at no wake speed. Camping, lakeshore cabins, playground and swim beach. Historic sites and museums in Correctionville and Odebolt.

**BUENA VISTA**—The family will enjoy catching walleye, catfish, bass and crappie at Storm Lake. Visit the hatchery in

the marina the first week of April to see the walleye spawning process. Tons of public access and family parks. Local museums, galleries, multi-use trails and historic downtown.

**WEBSTER**—Scenic Brushy Creek is surrounded by rolling hills covered in old growth timber. When angling, look for areas where multiple habitats meet—where a weed line runs into standing timber next to a rocky point. Move often and look for panfish schools crowded around submerged timber or suspended over rock piles. Look for walleye along the dam face. Home to very large muskellunge and abundant largemouth bass. Camping, trails, swimming beach with cabanas and equestrian campgrounds and riding trails. Close to Dolliver Memorial State Park, unique for natural bluffs and geological formations along the Des Moines River.

**FRANKLIN**—Hike the two-mile trail around Beeds Lake State Park to view the historic dam. Several jetties scattered around the lake include the campground and south shore fishing pier. Easy access to bluegill, crappie and bass. A short walk from campground, the stream below the dam offers small bass and bluegills. Hit Hampton's unique specialty shops and historic landmarks—Carnegie public library, the Harriman-Nielsen Historic Farm, the G.A.R. Memorial Hall, Franklin County Courthouse and Windsor Theatre.

**CERRO GORDO**—Enjoy activities galore at downtown Clear Lake City Park all summer. Fish two large docks



near Clear Lake Seawall for crappie, bluegill, catfish, bass, walleye, perch, pike and muskellunge. Stop by historic Surf Ballroom to remember rock 'n' roll legends. Stroll beautiful Central Gardens of North Iowa along winding brick pathways and unique bridges. Stay in a yurt cabin at McIntosh Woods State Park. Enjoy farmers' markets, Thursdays on Main, July 4th Celebration, Paddlefest and Classic Car Cruise.

**WRIGHT**—Catch fish from camp at Lake Cornelia. Excellent shore access for bluegill, crappie, perch, bass and walleye. Clarion offers vibrant shopping and tasty restaurants. Tour the restored railroad depot or Heartland Museum.

**HAMILTON**—Easy access to Little Wall Lake with fishing jetty and boat ramp next to campground. Hook catfish, crappie and bass at the rock jetty. Trails, swim beach and paddling rentals. Jewell offers shopping, museum and family-friendly events all year.

**KOSSUTH**—Keep the family busy catching bluegill, crappie, bass and catfish at Smith Lake from jetties and fishing piers near camp sites. Enjoy outdoor activities at Water's Edge Nature Center on the west shore. Tour the World War II POW camp that held more than 8,000 Germans and Italians. Check out Algona's farmers' market and events like Founders' Day and Band Day Festival.

**HARDIN**—Find easy access points along the trail at Upper Pine Lake. Catch bluegill, crappie, and bass. Camping, cabins, playground, restrooms and swimming beach. Local attractions in Eldora include military, railroad and farm museums and historic library and house. 🏠

