

## Fishing Webster County

### BADGER LAKE

Area: 45 acres.

Shoreline: 10 mi.

Maximum depth: 20 ft.

Drainage: 8730 acres.

Lake type: Man-made recreational.

Stratifies: Yes.

Boat access: Gravel ramps

Motor restrictions: Electric only

Special Regulations: none

Facilities: Camping, toilets, picnic tables

Badger Lake has a good population of largemouth bass, bluegill, crappie, and catfish. Crappie average between 8 and 10 inches, while bluegill up to 9 inches are commonly harvested. There is a fifteen inch minimum length limit on the largemouth bass. Channel catfish are stocked annually, providing excellent angling opportunities.

### BRUSHY CREEK LAKE

Area: 690 acres

Mean depth: 29 ft.

Maximum depth: 80 ft.

Drainage: 52,200 acres.

Lake type: Man-made recreational.

Stratifies: Yes.

Boat access: Hard surface ramps

Motor restrictions: None at no wake speed.

Special Regulations: 15" minimum length limit on black bass and 40" minimum length limit of muskellunge

Facilities: Camping, Swimming, Hiking

Brushy Creek has an excellent population of bluegill, largemouth bass, walleye, smallmouth bass and channel catfish. Crappie fishing is also expected to be excellent. Muskies have been stocked to provide a trophy fishery.



## Fishing Basics: Beginning Fishing

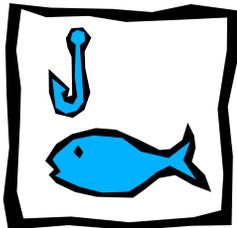


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## Start Fishing

A child's first fishing trip is exciting for both parent and child. A fun experience can lead to future years of fishing enjoyment. Here are some simple tips for taking kids fishing.

- pack plenty of snacks and cold drinks
- choose a spot close to home
- make sure there are restrooms near
- morning trips are best – the fish bite better and kids have more energy
- pick a sunny day with moderate temperatures
- keep the trip short – a couple hours at most
- leave *your* fishing rod at home
- emphasize that **fishing is fun**, *catching* is a bonus
- take plenty of breaks from fishing
- have fun!
- take pictures
- plan alternate activities to do if the weather turns bad or your child gets bored
- remember you are taking the kids — they aren't taking you



### Fishing Trip Checklist

- bobbers
- camera
- cooler/ice
- drinks
- fishing license
- fishing rods, youth
- first aid kit
- insect repellent
- life jackets
- snacks
- sunglasses
- sunscreen
- wet wipes
- worms

### Who Needs a Fishing License?

All anglers 16 years and older must have a fishing license to fish Iowa waters. Yearly, seven-day, or 24-hour licenses are available. Licenses are sold at several locations including Dahls, Hy-Vee, Kmart, Wal-Mart, the county recorder, bait and tackle shops, banks, sporting goods stores, or online.

Call 1-800-367-1188 to purchase a license 24 hours a day. License fees and an excise on fishing equipment fund stocking, shoreline and fish habitat improvement, construction and repair of fish jetties, fish surveys, and angler education programs.

### Fishing Poles

Choose a fishing pole that fits your child's hands. It should be about as long as your child is tall. There are a variety of youth-size rods and reels (complete with line) for sale.

The simplest fishing rod is a cane pole. It can be made of bamboo, fiberglass, graphite, or even a tree branch. Fishing line is tied to the end of the pole. There is no reel. You simply toss the line into the water and wait for a fish to bite.

A spincast rod is great for beginners. The fishing line comes out of a hole in the reel cover. A thumb button releases the line or stops it from going too far.

### Tackle and Bait

Start with worms and a small bobber. Hooks are sharp, make sure you help children put the worm on. Hook the worm through the body two or three times. Nightcrawlers work great and you can even have a fun evening collecting them. Keep the worms in a closed container inside a cooler with ice to keep them fresh.

Minnows are another good bait for beginners. You can buy them at local bait and tackle shops. Keep them in a bucket of water. Use a small dipping net to catch them. Run the hook through the back just below the dorsal fin — don't hook it through the spinal cord.

Bobbers keep your bait suspended off the bottom and where the fish are biting. They bob up and down when you have a bite. Kids love to watch them.

### Fishing Regulations

There are limits on the size and/or number of fish you can catch at one time for some species. A more complete description of laws is in the *Iowa Fishing Regulations*, available where you buy a license and Department of Natural Resources offices. They also are available online.

### Tips for Catching, Cleaning, &Cooking

May and June are the best time to catch fish because they are hungry and close to shore. Bluegills, bullheads, channel catfish, and crappies are easy to catch.

#### Bluegills

- eat aquatic insects
- small pieces of worms are the best live bait
- small hooks (#6 or 8)

#### Bullheads

- eat off the bottom
- eat nearly anything they can swallow
- worms are a great bait

#### Channel Catfish

- eat mainly off the bottom
- prefer worms and various stink baits

#### Crappie

- often found under docks or near jetties where there is plenty of food and the water is cooler
- small minnows (1- to 1 1/2-inches) are the best live bait

### Cleaning Fish

Freshly caught fish tastes great if it's cared for properly. Store caught fish in a cooler with ice until you get home. To preserve a fresh taste, clean your fish as soon as possible. Filleting, pan dressing, and skinning are three simple ways to clean your catch.

### Cooking Fish

Wash cleaned fish thoroughly. If you are not going to cook the fish right away, freeze immediately in a container (milk carton, pop-top plastic container, freezer bag, etc.) filled with water. Thaw fish in the refrigerator or under cold running water. Do not thaw fish more than one day before cooking.

Rinse fresh fish in cold water and pat dry. Make several shallow, diagonal cuts in large fillets to shorten cooking time. Cook refrigerated fish within three days.

There are several ways to cook fish.

Fish cooks very fast. When done, it will pull apart and flake. To check if it is done, cut into the thickest part and make sure there is no opaque color or jelly texture left.

*Do not overcook.*

