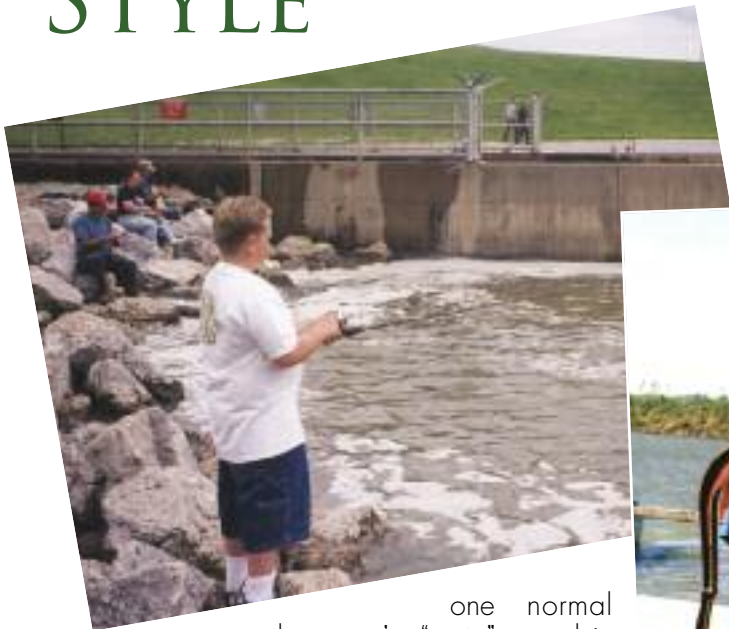


Every year anglers make approximately 50,000 – 100,000 fishing trips to Rathbun Lake. This high use is no accident! The abundance and quality of several species of fish represent an outstanding opportunity that has been enjoyed since the early 1970's. Every year people targeting crappie take approximately half of these trips. Rathbun is the most popular crappie destination in Iowa, and is known throughout the Midwest as

Mother Nature cooperates she provides outstanding numbers of crappies and makes the adults ripe for the catching. In 2005 anglers caught more than 270,000 crappies on Rathbun Lake and harvested about 170,000 fish. But the rest of the story is these were quality size fish. Most were in that 9 to 11 inch size group and provided outstanding quality action. The angling in 2006 and 2007 was a repeat of that. In 2008 our crappie numbers are down

FISHING IN 2008: RATHBUN LAKE STYLE



one of the area's "go-to" places for great numbers and big "slab" crappie. That reputation is well-deserved. So, what can anglers expect to find when they start sampling Rathbun's most-caught fish? In 2006 we expected great things from Rathbun's crappies. The stage was set for likely the best quality crappie angling in at least 10 years. We had two dominant year classes, fish hatched in both 2001 and 2002 provided large numbers of fish in the 9 to nearly 12-inch sizes. Good spring weather conditions and somewhat elevated water levels help make good crappie year classes. That's the key to Rathbun crappies. When

normal pool in the early spring of 2007 we produced a tremendous year class of crappies that will fuel crappie fever on Rathbun Lake for years to come. In a word, Amazing!

Most years the second most-sought fish on Rathbun Lake is walleye and with good reason! In recent years Rathbun Lake has been shown to be in the top 25% of all walleye waters in the world! Usually about 20% of all those anglers out there are targeting the "eyes". The walleye population at Rathbun Lake represents one of

a bit, but size quality is outstanding! Look forward to consistent numbers of crappies over 11 inches in size and 12 and 13's should be fairly common. Because the lake returned to



Iowa's greatest resources for this toothy predator. Each year the walleye population at Rathbun provides anglers with excellent opportunity to catch a variety of sizes. Annually anglers harvest between 5,000 and 13,000 fish. In addition, approximately 20,000 – 40,000 walleyes are caught and released each year. Walleye angling in 2007 got off to a "gangbusters" start, and then slowed a little in the mid-summer, which is often some of the best walleye angling of the year. However, fall surveys proved to us that the walleye population is healthier than ever! Most harvest-size walleyes at Rathbun Lake are in the 14 to 21 inch range, but as many Rathbun anglers know, truly trophy size fish are available!

It's true that catfishing on Rathbun is hard to beat. When you go catfish angling on Rathbun you can often find the activity to be fast and furious and the size of fish is excellent with trophy fish available. In addition, ice-out catfishing provides some of the earliest open water angling around! Anglers can find success as early as March with cut bait, such as dead shad. However, catfish are the most consistent producer month in and month out so keep them in mind during all months of the year.

If it's fast-paced action you are after, you might consider targeting the white bass on Rathbun. I find that starting in mid-May through August you can often spend a spectacular day of boating literally hundreds of fish. It's hard to imagine a fish that fights harder pound for pound than a white bass. Look for most fish on Rathbun to be between 12 to 15 inches in 2008. Be prepared for beefy 15 inch plus fish to challenge anything you throw at them. As my

enthusiastic 8 year old daughter says "They are huge"!

If it's a family outing you are looking for, don't forget that the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Rathbun Fish Hatchery, located below Rathbun Dam, is available for visitors. The hatchery has a visitor's center that is open to the public from 8:00 am – 3:30 pm Monday through Friday. Guided tours are available for groups. If you have further questions contact the Iowa DNR at 641-647-2406.

Overall, fishing on Rathbun Lake in 2008 looks to be outstanding! Anglers from all over Iowa and the United States will enjoy one of Iowa's truly great fishery resources. Make sure you and your family can join those ranks!

Mark Flammang is the DNR fisheries management biologist for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources at the Rathbun Fisheries Management District.

Fish Species and Numbers Produced at Rathbun Fish Hatchery Annually

• 2 inch channel catfish	105,000
• Cage channel catfish	60,000
• 7 inch channel catfish	175,000
• 10 inch channel catfish	7,050
• 5 inch largemouth bass	25,000
• 10 inch muskellunge	2,000
• Walleye fry	50,000,000
• 8 inch walleye	166,000

Rathbun Fish Hatchery
Iowa Dept. of Natural Resources
(641) 647-2406
Open: Monday - Friday 7:45 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.

BEADS and Fabric

Book your parties with us!
Quilting & beading classes are available.

From Maravia, Go 4 miles West on J18, then follow blue sign

Shops at Grandma's House
"Bead, Quilt and Live Happily"

Wed - Fri, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Sat, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
641-724-3131
Jill, Robin & Sharon Prater, owners

The Manhattan

Steakhouse & Golf Club

- SUNDAY BRUNCH
- DAILY LUNCH BUFFET - MONDAY - SATURDAY
- SEAFOOD BUFFET - FRIDAY NIGHT
- PRIME BEEF & USDA CHOICE STEAKS
- SEAFOOD, PASTA AND CHICKEN
- WEDDING RECEPTIONS & REHEARSAL DINNERS
- PRIVATE ROOMS AVAILABLE FOR ALL SPECIAL OCCASIONS
- FULL MENU SELECTION
- FULL SPORTS BAR

MANHATTAN GOLF CLUB

9 HOLES OF CHAMPIONSHIP GOLF
CENTERVILLE'S ONLY PUBLIC GOLF COMMUNITY.

- DAILY FEES
- MEMBERSHIPS
- DRIVING RANGE
- FULL AMENITY PRO SHOP
- BUILDING SITES AVAILABLE

641-856-8165 • 641-856-8177
3 Miles S. of Hwys. 2 & 5 Intersection - 24256 Hwy. 5 South, Centerville, IA
Hours: Sun-Mon 11-2 • Tues-Sat 11-2, 5-Close