

TROUT STREAMS OF FAYETTE COUNTY

FISHING GUIDE

AN ANGLER'S COMPANION TO THE PUBLIC STREAMS & RIVERS OF FAYETTE COUNTY

NORTHEAST IOWA'S HOTTEST HATCHES

Below is a month-by-month breakdown of the best hatches found in Northeast Iowa along with recommended dry and wet flies for each.

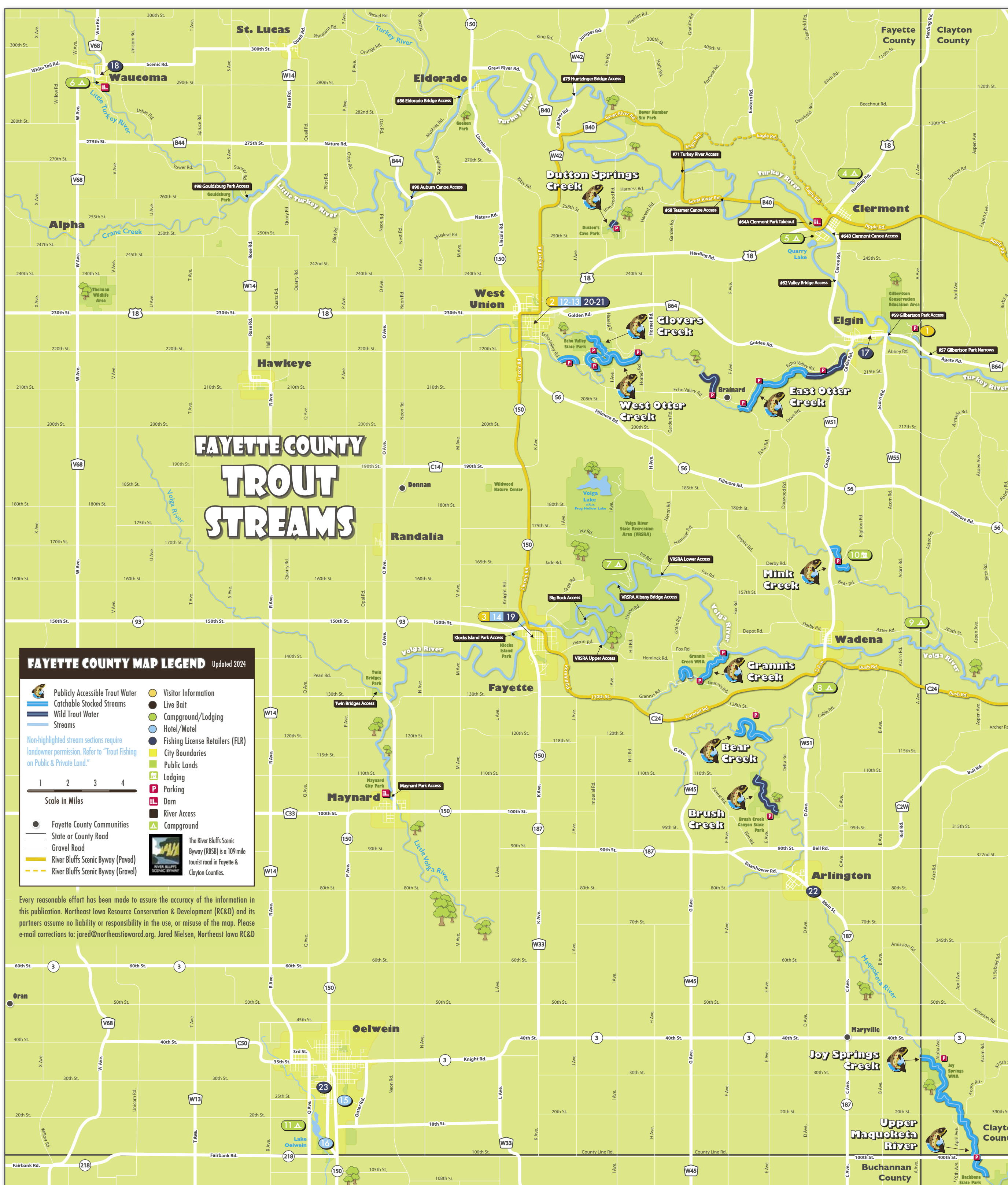
■ Insect hatches ■ Prime time for fishing each insect

HATCH	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	FLIES
Beetles				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Blue Winged Olive #16-22
Caddis				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Elk Hair Caddis #14-20
Hendrickson				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Adams & Dark Hendrickson #12
Hexagenia						■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Adams & Brown Droke #10-12
Midges	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Griffiths Gnat & Brassie #16-22
Scuds													Olive, Grey or Tan Scud #12-16
Stoneflies	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Beadhead Prince Nymph #10-16
Sulphurs						■	■	■	■	■	■	■	March Brown & Gray Fox #14-16
Terrestrials										■	■	■	Hoppers & Crickets #10-12
Trico													White Wing Black Trico #22
Other	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Mudler Minnow & Woollybugger #4-10

IOWA'S FISHING REGULATIONS

Below are guidelines that will be helpful when you fish Iowa. However, it is not a complete list of all fishing regulations and always be sure laws haven't changed. For more information, visit www.iowadnr.gov or contact the DNR Central Office in Des Moines at 515-275-8200.

- STREAM CLASSIFICATION.** Before you plan your trip, it is important to understand how trout waters are classified in Iowa. The trout management in Iowa divides trout fisheries into the three categories listed below. Please read each definition to gain an understanding of which stream segments contain catchable trout or are open to the public.
 - CATCHABLE STOCKED STREAMS** are open to the public and stocked regularly with catchable-sized trout that measure 10 to 12 inches in length and weigh between one-half and one pound.
 - RESTRICTIVE REGULATION (RR) STREAMS** are open to the public and can only be fished using artificial lures. Many have a catch-and-release regulation for all trout. There are no RR Streams located in Fayette County.
 - WILD TROUT WATER** is open to the public and managed under statewide regulations. However, no stocking occurs.
- IOWA'S TROUT SEASON.** Iowa's trout season differs from Minnesota, Wisconsin & Illinois in that the state offers continuous year-round fishing for brook, brown and rainbow trout.
- DAILY BAG LIMIT** The daily bag limit for trout is five and the possession limit is 10.
- FISHING LICENSE & TROUT FEE.** Anglers who fish for trout are required to pay the trout fee in addition to an Iowa fishing license. Both expire each year in January. However, children under 16 years of age may fish for free and possess trout if they fish with a licensed adult who has paid the current trout fee and they limit their combined catch to the daily limit of five trout. If young anglers want to fish for and keep their own limit of trout, they only need to purchase the trout fee.



FAYETTE COUNTY MAP LEGEND Updated 2024

- Publicly Accessible Trout Water
- Catchable Stocked Streams
- Wild Trout Water
- Streams
- Visitor Information
- Live Bait
- Campground/Lodging
- Hotel/Motel
- Fishing License Retailers (FLR)
- City Boundaries
- Public Lands
- Lodging
- P Parking
- L Dam
- R River Access
- A Campground
- Fayette County Communities
- State or County Road
- Gravel Road
- River Bluffs Scenic Byway (Paved)
- River Bluffs Scenic Byway (Gravel)

The River Bluffs Scenic Byway (RBSB) is a 109-mile tourist road in Fayette & Clayton Counties.

Every reasonable effort has been made to assure the accuracy of the information in this publication. Northeast Iowa Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) and its partners assume no liability or responsibility in the use, or misuse of the map. Please e-mail corrections to: jared@northeastiowarc.org. Jared Nielsen, Northeast Iowa RC&D

WELCOME TO IOWA'S TROUT COUNTRY



Fayette County is home to 10 spring-fed creeks that comprise over 14 miles of fishable water. Located in the heart of Iowa's trout region, Fayette County's tranquil landscape is home to some of the most popular trout fishing destinations in Iowa. Anglers are attracted to this area for its high concentration of prime trout waters, fish counts, trout stocking plants and year-round opportunities to catch brook, brown and rainbow trout. Iowa DNR efforts have also contributed to making this region of the state a world-class trout fishery. On average, the Iowa DNR stocks approximately 31,000 catchable-size rainbow trout into catchable stocked streams within Fayette County from April 1 - October 31. In addition, excess brood trout, or adult trout that typically measure between 14 and 24 inches in length and weigh anywhere from two to eight pounds, are released into streams each year. In addition to stocked fish, all Fayette County stocked streams also have naturally reproducing brook trout for anglers to catch. Dutton Springs Creek, in addition to brown trout, also has naturally reproducing brook trout. For more information about Iowa's stocking season, including a list of the streams that are scheduled for stocking, call the Big Spring Trout Hatchery at 563-245-2446, or visit the DNR website at www.iowadnr.gov/trout.

TROUT FISHING PLACES OF INTEREST

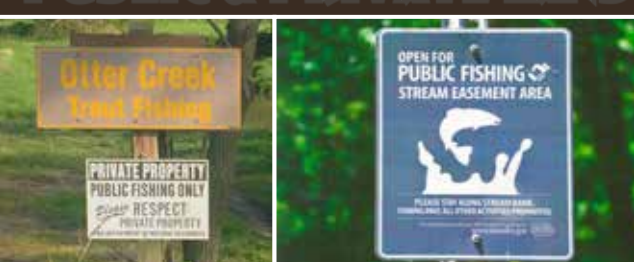
- GILBERTSON CONSERVATION EDUCATION AREA.** Nature center with campground and access to the Turkey River and fishing pond. FLR. 563-426-5740. 22580 A Ave, Elgin
- FAYETTE CO. ECONOMIC DEV. AND TOURISM.** Visitor center that can help with questions about where to eat, stay and shop. 563-265-5248. 101 N Vine St, West Union
- FAYETTE COUNTY TOURISM CENTER.** Visitor center that can help with questions about where to eat, stay and shop. 563-422-5073. 606 Water St, Fayette
- HERITAGE HILL CAMPGROUND.** 60 RV campsites with fishing pond located 2 miles from the Turkey River. 563-419-8534. 26411 Harding Rd, Clermont
- SKIP-A-WAY RESORT.** 172 RV campsites with restaurant, swimming beach and 18-acre lake for fishing. 563-423-7338. 3825 Harding Rd, Clermont
- TURKEY RIVER CAMPGROUND.** 20 RV campsites located next to the Little Turkey River. 319-334-0135. 206 3rd St SE, Waucoma
- VOLGA RIVER STATE RECREATION AREA.** 5,750-acre area with 75 campsites and a lake with boat ramp and fishing piers. 563-425-4161. 10225 Ivy Rd, Fayette
- DEER RIDGE CAMPGROUND.** RV campground with stocked fishing pond and playground near Bear Creek. 563-774-2067. 13762 D Ave, Wadena
- RIVER VALLEY CAMPGROUND.** 40 remote campsites with 3-acre fishing lake near Mink Creek. 563-379-3963. 1472 147th St, Wadena
- MINK CREEK LODGE.** Family built lodge located within walking distance from Mink Creek. 563-774-3055. 16724 Bighorn Rd, Wadena
- LAKE SHORE RV RESORT & CAMPGROUND.** 85 RV campsites located next to Lake Oelwein. 319-283-5234. 1418 Q Ave, Oelwein
- BEST REST INN & SUITES.** 48 room hotel near Glovers Creek and West Otter Creek. 563-422-3537. 108 IA-150, West Union
- ELMS MOTEL.** 15 unit motel with exterior corridors near Glovers and West Otter Creek. 563-422-3841. 705 IA-150, West Union
- BOARDERS INN & SUITES.** 41 room hotel near Grannis, Bear and Brush Creek. 563-425-0214. 515 1/2 W Water St, Fayette
- SUPER 8.** 39 room hotel near Joy Springs Creek and the Upper Maquoketa River. 319-283-2888. 210 10th St SE, Oelwein
- PARKVIEW MOTEL.** 35 unit motel near Joy Springs Creek and the Upper Maquoketa River. 319-283-3622. 2508 S Frederick Ave, Oelwein
- STRAHM HARDWARE.** Hardware store that sells fishing tackle, equipment, and fishing licenses. FLR. 563-426-5838. 249 Center St, Elgin
- THE RIVERSIDE BAR & GRILL.** Restaurant that sells fishing licenses. FLR. 563-776-4971. 102 Riverview Dr, Waucoma
- THE PUMPER.** Convenience store that sells fishing licenses. FLR. 563-425-3008. 551 W Water St, Fayette
- FAYETTE COUNTY COURTHOUSE.** Fishing licenses may be purchased at the County Records office. FLR. 563-422-3687. 114 N Vine St, West Union
- WEST UNION HARDWARE.** Hardware store that sells live bait, fishing tackle, equipment and fishing licenses. FLR. 563-422-5646. 301 IA-150, West Union
- CORNERS GAS & GRUB.** Convenience store that sells fishing licenses. FLR. 563-633-5118. 300 East St, Arlington
- LUMBER RIDGE HOME SOURCE.** Retailer that sells fishing licenses. FLR. 319-283-2122. 829 1st Ave SE, Oelwein

TURKEY RIVER RECREATIONAL CORRIDOR

This Trout Guide was sponsored in part by Fayette County Conservation, Fayette County Economic Development & Tourism, and the Turkey River Recreational Corridor. Design of the guide was completed by Northeast Iowa RC&D with input from the Iowa DNR Fisheries Bureau Staff and the Fayette County Conservation Board.



TROUT FISHING ON PUBLIC & PRIVATE LAND



Anglers may fish in waters found on public land such as Iowa State Forests, Parks, and Wildlife Management Areas. In the Driftless region, many of the trout streams flow through private land. Furthermore, in Iowa, the landowner also owns the streambed. So even if the stream is accessible from public access points, anglers still need permission to fish private property. On private property, two systems allow the opportunity for public fishing.

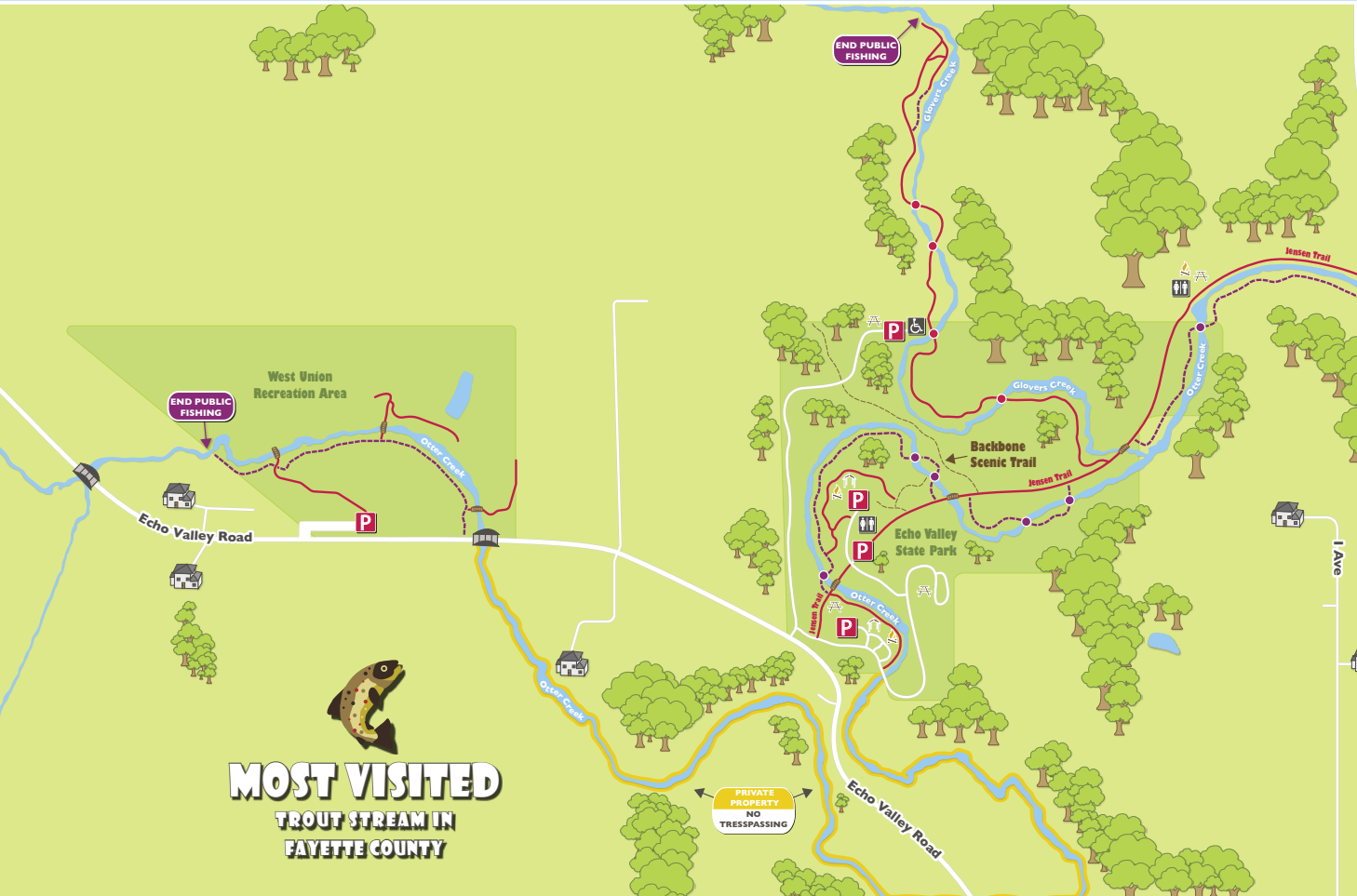
- **THE "HANDSHAKE AGREEMENT"** is simply a verbal agreement between the landowner and the state, allowing public fishing. On private property where a verbal agreement is in place, one will frequently see white signs which read, "Private Property. Public Fishing Only." Wooden ladder stiles, allowing one to easily cross over a fence, may also be present. However, the owner ultimately decides if these indicators to public fishing are allowed on the property.
- The second system is the **ANGLER CONSERVATION EASEMENT** that allows public fishing, fish stocking by the DNR, and habitat improvement on the stream. The easement consists of a corridor of 75 feet on both sides of the center line of the stream; therefore, the corridor moves as the stream changes direction. This allows continual access to the stream. Gray or dark blue signs reading "Open for Public Fishing - Stream Easement Area" have been posted on private property where an easement is present.
- **IF IN DOUBT**, and neither sign is present, stay out or ask the landowner for permission. There are plenty of fishing opportunities in the region.

DUTTON SPRINGS CREEK



LENGTH & TROUT: 0.25 mile stream with Brook Trout
DESCRIPTION: Dutton's Cave County Park is a 46-acre public area located 3.5 miles northeast of West Union. A large cave at the base of the park's 50-foot vertical limestone wall serves as both the park's main attraction and the origin of Dutton Springs Creek, which was discovered by Lorenzo Dutton in 1848. From the cave, a mowed path follows the stream segment 0.27 miles through a heavily wooded ravine and past both picnic and playground facilities. The spring run has limited reproduction of native brook trout and supplemental stocking occurs as needed. While trout population numbers are low, anglers can delight in pursuing Iowa's only surviving native brook trout, which are periodically stocked from South Pine Creek in Winneshek County. A campground with water, primitive sites, and two electric-hookup sites is located above the cave and is accessed by gravel road. The cave itself, and the hiking trail between the campground and cave are now closed in order to prevent people from accidentally spreading White-Nose Syndrome, a fungal disease that decimates North American bat populations.

GLOVERS CREEK AND WEST OTTER CREEK (ECHO VALLEY STATE PARK)



MOST VISITED TROUT STREAM IN FAYETTE COUNTY

LENGTH & TROUT: 3.6 mile stream with Brown & Rainbow Trout
DESCRIPTION: Echo Valley State Park located east of West Union is a beautiful natural area that includes two trout streams running through the park: Grovers and Otter Creek. Originally built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930's, the park contains many hand-built historical structures such as a dam, keystone archway, lime kiln, and shelter house. The historical park also features a 2.5-mile long gravel based trail known as the Jensen Trail that runs parallel to and provides access along Otter Creek. Grovers is stocked weekly April through October with catchable 10-12 inch rainbow trout, but Otter Creek gets too warm for stocking in July and August. Both streams offer many easy access points to the stream for anglers with limited mobility and are set within a beautiful limestone bluff backdrop. Stream-side paths (BYOT) will draw more adventurous anglers toward less-fished, even more scenic areas. Anglers may use a variety of baits to fish the deeper holes, as the occasional trout exceeding 20 inches may be caught. On warmer afternoons and early mornings, fish can be seen rising to hatches of stoneflies, midges, mayflies.



Limestone Bluffs along Otter Creek

BEAR CREEK



LENGTH & TROUT: 1.2 mile stream with Rainbow and Brown Trout
DESCRIPTION: Located 6 miles southeast of Fayette, Bear Creek is a fairly large stream that is accessible by completing a 1/2 mile downhill walk. Once you arrive at the stream, you find yourself immersed in a beautiful valley with clear water and steep wooded ridges on either side. Bear Creek is not a coldwater stream and does not support trout populations most summers. However, it is stocked weekly in April, May, June, September and October with catchable 10-12 inch rainbow trout. Lots of chubs, assorted panfish, and an occasional brown trout may also be caught. Access to the stream at certain times of the year may be difficult due to overgrown vegetation making hip or chest waders preferred.

BRUSH CREEK



LENGTH & TROUT: 1.6 mile stream with Brown Trout
DESCRIPTION: Brush Creek Canyon State Preserve exemplifies the dramatic landscape of a prominent ridge extending through northeast Iowa known as the Silurian Escarpment. Dedicated as a biological and geological state preserve in 1968, this 217-acre preserve features steep slopes and exposed bedrock formed by 150-foot-tall outcrops of Silurian dolomite. Access to this stream is challenging, as it is at the bottom of a steep valley, but is well worth the effort. This fishery contains deep pools and runs filled with stream-reared brown trout. This fishery contains deep pools and runs filled with stream-reared brown trout.

MINK CREEK



LENGTH & TROUT: 0.9 mile stream with Brown & Rainbow Trout
DESCRIPTION: Mink Creek is a spring fed tributary of the Volga River that flows in a southeasterly direction as it winds through mowed pasture, farmland, and tree plantings. The accessible trout water is entirely on private property and is open to public fishing through landowner agreements. The mowed trail section between W51/Cedar Road to Bighorn Road provides anglers with the best fishing access. Although this is a warm-water stream, don't hesitate to check it out. A reproducing wild brown trout population is present. Mink Creek is also stocked weekly from April through October with catchable 10-12-inch rainbow trout.

GRANNIS CREEK



ONLY WATERFALL ALONG A TROUT STREAM IN FAYETTE COUNTY

LENGTH & TROUT: 1.5 mile stream with Brown & Rainbow Trout
DESCRIPTION: Grannis Creek runs through both public and private property, where it is open to fishing only. It empties into the Volga River just a few short miles downstream of the Volga River State Recreation Area. Plenty of stream-reared brown trout in the 9 to 12-inch range await the angler, and a few fish over 15 inches may challenge the unwary. It is stocked weekly from April through October with catchable rainbow trout. Anglers will find a great deal of habitat improvements along the stream, so finding a good hole or bank hide to fish won't be a problem. Improvements to the stream's watershed include one mile of terraces, 18 sediment and water control basins, 3 grade stabilization structures and the installation of "lunker hides" for trout. Bank access along the MT sections of the stream is easy, while the BYOT section located between the Grannis Creek Wildlife Management Areas is challenging to access due to vegetation, undercut banks, 6-foot-high silt banks and deadfalls. For universal stream access, anglers can find a small paved sidewalk near the upstream parking lot along Grannis Road. Mayfly, midge, gnats, and caddis flies are common insects in these areas.



Waterfall along Grannis Creek

EAST OTTER CREEK



LENGTH & TROUT: 5.1 mile stream with Brown & Rainbow Trout
DESCRIPTION: The trout waters of Otter Creek start at the dramatic cliffs in Echo Valley State Park and run more than 9 miles to the town of Elgin. A fishable downstream section known as East Otter Creek is located 6 miles west of town at the intersection of Dove and Echo Valley Road. Although this river segment is considered a warm-water stream, 10-12 inch catchable rainbow trout are stocked weekly during the months of April, May, June, September and October. A popular fishing spot includes the easily accessible slow moving deep pool adjacent to the Echo Valley Road parking access. This location is easy to walk along and in an open enough space for fly-casting.



Brown Trout Caught in Otter Creek

TURKEY RIVER



Turkey River

LENGTH & TROUT: River with Brown and Rainbow Trout
DESCRIPTION: The river flows across Fayette and Clayton Counties towards the Mississippi River. Much of the river features high-quality fishing opportunities, with over 74 species of fish documented in the watershed. When targeting trout, anglers should focus wherever cold water tributaries enter the river. The most popular trout fishing on the Turkey River occurs at the Big Spring Trout Hatchery. Here, anglers have access to trails along the river, a trout pond open for public fishing, and a kids fishing pond for young anglers 15 and under. Trout are stocked in the Turkey River weekly from April 1 through the end of October.

TROUT STREAM MAP LEGEND

- Roads
- Mowed Trail (MT)
- Blaze Your Own Trail (BYOT)
- Parking Access
- Campground
- Road Bridge
- Shelter
- Spring/Waterfall
- Fire Pit
- Residential House
- Cow Pasture
- Playground
- Hiking Trail
- MT Stream Crossing
- BYOT Stream Crossing
- Public Restroom
- Pedestrian Bridge
- Picnic Area
- Stream
- TROUT SITE
- Universal Access
- Livestock Fence
- Bike Trail

TROUT GUIDE ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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IOWA'S TROUT FAMILY

- Brook Trout** are native to Iowa and are recognized by two main characteristics: vivid white lines on the front or leading edge of the lower fins, and the top portion or back is covered with light wormy streaks or mottlings on a darker background called vermiculations.
- Brown Trout** are brown with silvery sides and obvious black spots outlined by orange coloration. They have a square tail, and a lower jaw that juts out ahead of their upper jaw. Males, during the breeding season, often exhibit vivid yellow to reddish-yellow colors along the belly region and a sharply hooked lower jaw.
- Rainbow Trout** are olive to greenish-blue over most of the upper body, fading to a silvery-white along the belly. They are most easily separated from the other trout species by the strikingly prominent pink-red horizontal stripe that extends down each side of the fish and the small black spots on the sides, back, dorsal and caudal fins.