

NISHNABOTNA RIVER

Avoca (West) and Atlantic (East)
to Hamburg

A GLANCE AT A MAP of southwest Iowa reveals two streams snaking southward, nearly paralleling one another for 20 miles, until merging north of the Iowa-Missouri boundary. These are the East and West forks of the Nishnabotna River. They make up the third largest tributary of the Missouri River in Iowa.

BOTH THE EAST AND WEST Nishnabotnas originate in Carroll County, but not until two tiers of counties south do the streams become sufficient in flow to provide canoeing or fishing under normal



conditions.

MUCH OF THE NISHNABOTNA'S character and fish habitat were stripped away in the early 1900s when the river was channelized under the guise of flood control. With the passage of time, the streams have returned to a meandering state in some areas. The best fishing habitat is generally found along the outside of the more severe bends and around log jams.

ALTHOUGH THE TWO STREAMS are quite similar in appearance, the west arm is somewhat larger. It drains a larger area and is supplemented by larger feeder streams. The principal fishing in the

Nishnabotna River is provided by channel catfish and carp. Wading or floating stretches of the river are popular and productive methods of fishing the Nishnabotna. Drifting bait through the deeper holes and troughs is also productive.

UNFORTUNATELY, EASY ACCESS to the East and West Nishnabotna is lacking in many areas. Public ownership is scarce along the river, leaving the alternative of entering or exiting the streams at bridges.

A FLOAT TRIP DOWN the Nishnabotna lacks the spectacular scenery offered on some northern Iowa streams. Instead, it is a rather leisurely journey, requiring some degree of skill to follow the main channel of the river as it weaves its way through a series of sandbars typical of this stream. The Nishnabotna exits the state just below the city of Hamburg and empties into the Missouri River another 10 miles downstream.

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Distance from Previous Access	Access Name	Location
East Nishnabotna River		
0 miles	1. Elliott Boat Ramp	.5 mi W Elliott
12 miles	2. Red Oak Boat Ramp	W edge Red Oak
33 miles	3. Riverton Boat Ramp	.5 mi W Riverton
West Nishnabotna River		
0 miles	1. Botna Bend Park	W edge Hancock
6 miles	2. Chataqua Park	Oakland
5 miles	3. Old Town Park	1 mi. W Macedonia

