

Old Fish Hatchery Public Access Area



Located: 1 mile east, 9 miles north, and 1 mile east of Waubay, South Dakota on Pickerel Lake.

Day County, Twp 124N Rng 53W Sec 35

Access: Gravel road, parking lot, boat ramp, and pit toilet. No camping allowed at site.

Marsh marigold along Hatchery Creek (photo by Dennis Skadsen)

Description:

The Pickerel Lake State Fish Hatchery was located at this site from 1929 until a new hatchery located on Blue Dog Lake opened for operation the spring of 1983. Springs located upstream from the old hatchery site provided water for the hatchery. The springs are still active today and provide most of the water you see flowing to Pickerel Lake. Additional water comes from further upstream in Pickerel Lake's watershed. The moist rich woodland adjacent to this creek provides the right habitat for several wildflowers. Look for Bloodroot, Large-flowered bellwort, and Nodding trillium in bloom during late spring along the north-facing slope. The Marsh marigold, a semi-aquatic plant growing along the creeks swampy margins, is one of the first wildflowers to bloom in late-April early-May.

Several species of butterflies and dragonflies can be observed at this site. Butterflies include the Mustard white, White admiral, and one of our smallest butterflies the Least skipper, found flying along the edge of the creek. The Twelve-spotted, Four-spotted, and Widow skimmers are just three species of dragonflies easily observed here. The Phantom crane fly is an interesting insect that can be found along the creek in the late spring.

