

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
January 12-18, 2014

This report is a broad sampling of events that have taken place in the past week, but does not include all actions taken by the Law Enforcement Division.



Region I- Calhoun (Northwest)

GORDON COUNTY

On the night of January 18th, Cpl. Shawn Elmore received a call from a landowner in Fairmount who heard a high-powered rifle shot behind his residence and could see a vehicle shining the clear-cut on a hunting club. Cpl. Elmore, Fairmount Police Officer Brady Dover and Georgia State Patrol Cpl. Jack Lawrence responded to the area. Cpl. Elmore and Cpl. Lawrence went in to the hunting club and located four individuals searching the clear-cut with lights. It was found the group was hunting hogs and had shot at one. All were checked and one of the hunters was issued a warning for hunting without license.

FLOYD COUNTY

On January 18th, RFC Ben Cunningham and Cpl. Shawn Elmore patrolled the Coosa River area for waterfowl hunters. No hunters were located.

CHATTOOGA COUNTY

On January 18th, RFC Ben Cunningham and Cpl. Shawn Elmore responded to Valley Springs Rd in Menlo in response to a citizen's complaint about someone possibly hunting waterfowl without permission. The rangers located two men legally hunting waterfowl.

FULTON COUNTY

On January 18th, RFC Chad Cox and RFC Daniel Gray patrolled Fulton County to work waterfowl activity and the extended archery season for deer hunting. Three individuals were checked duck hunting and had harvested two mallards.

On January 14th, Ranger Mark Puig was just finishing walking an area for illegal hunting activity and was monitoring the Alpharetta dispatch radio frequency. Ranger Puig heard that dispatch was on the phone with a woman who was just involved in an accident that was very close to his position. Dispatch went on to say that two men from the other vehicle had fled into the woods after the accident. Ranger Puig immediately headed to the location and while enroute heard the dispatcher say that the men were now headed out of the woods and back towards the vehicle with the single female in it. Dispatch advised her to stay in her car and lock her doors. When Ranger Puig got to the scene the Alpharetta Fire Department had already made contact with the female and determined she was okay while the two men were standing by their damaged vehicle. Ranger Puig searched the two men for weapons while the Milton Police Department arrived on scene. After speaking to the woman Ranger Puig found the tracks where the two men ran into the woods and awaited Milton K9 Officer Chris Ward. Once on scene Officer Ward and Ranger Puig searched the woods for any discarded contraband and after not finding anything determined the two men had just tried to hide in the woods to avoid capture. Milton Police Department arrested the driver for driving without a license or insurance.

Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

HALL COUNTY

On January 17th, at approximately 1830 Ranger Kevin Goss was dispatched to a boating Incident on Lake Lanier in Shoal Creek where two duck hunters were forced to swim to shore after their boat sank. Both men were taken to the hospital for hypothermia. After making contact with one victim at Gwinnett Medical Center Ranger Goss determined that the boat sank due to being swamped by a large cabin cruiser. Meanwhile Sgt. Lee Brown and Ranger Barry Britt responded by boat to try to locate the sunken vessel.

FORSYTH COUNTY

On January 18th, Sgt. Lee Brown and RFC Mitchell Crump were patrolling the county for duck hunting activity. A total of 8 duck hunters were checked. Citations and warnings were issued for hunting with an unplugged shotgun, hunting without a Georgia Waterfowl License, and failure to sign the federal duck stamp.

GWINNETT COUNTY

On January 12th, Cpl. Eddie Tompkins interviewed a subject in reference to possible hunting without permission and without license. During the interview Cpl. Tompkins determined that the subject had killed a 10 point buck on City of Suwanee property without permission. It was also determined that the subject did not have a big game license, deer harvest record, and that he had not recorded his deer harvest. The subject was issued citations/warnings for hunting without permission, hunting without big game license, and failure to record deer harvest. The rack from the 10 point buck was seized as evidence.



HALL COUNTY

On January 17, at 8:00p.m., RFC Barry Britt and Sgt. Lee Brown responded by vessel to a capsized boat on Lake Lanier in Shoal Creek. Two duck hunters went into the water when their boat was swamped by a large wake. They made it to shore and were treated for mild hypothermia. Ranger Britt and Sgt. Brown attempted to locate the sunken vessel and the hunter's equipment but were unsuccessful due to the low visibility and high winds.

HART COUNTY

On January 12th, RFC Brandon Pierce and Sgt. Stan Elrod patrolled the county for any hunting activity. Several hunting licenses and equipment was checked for proper requirements. A total of four hunting license were checked. As a result, four warnings and citations was issued. The violations consisted of hunting waterfowl without GA waterfowl license, hunting without federal waterfowl stamp, hunting without a license, and failure to record deer harvest. A six point buck rack was confiscated as evidence.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

ELBERT COUNTY

On January 17th RFC Tim Butler responded to a report of a sunken boat. Two men were in the boat when it started taking on water. They managed to get the bow of the boat tied to a dock before the stern sank to the bottom. The hull of the boat had a crack in it that was likely caused during the recent cold weather. A vessel towing and salvage company recovered the boat the following day.

GREENE COUNTY

On January 18, Cpl. Derrell Worth cited a duck hunter for hunting without a federal duck stamp. The driver of the boat was also cited for operating a vessel with insufficient PFD's.

On January 18, RFC Ricky Boles checked five duck hunters while patrolling Redlands WMA on Lake Oconee. One hunter was cited for hunting without a federal duck stamp and the driver of the boat was cited for operating a vessel with insufficient PFD's.

On January 19, Cpl. Derrell Worth cited a duck hunter for hunting without a license.

MORGAN COUNTY

On January 19, Cpl. David Allen and RFC Ricky Boles checked six fishermen while patrolling Hard Labor Creek State Park. Three fishermen were cited for fishing without a license.

LINCOLN COUNTY

On January 19th, Cpl. Ryan Swain conducted a concentrated patrol of Little River and Amity Rec. Area. Several waterfowl violations were detected and several subjects were issued written warnings for license issues.

COLUMBIA COUNTY

On January 19th, RFC Robert Timmerman conducted a vessel patrol of Clarks Hill Lake for waterfowl violations. Due to high winds and dangerous lake conditions, RFC Timmerman had to return to shore and only was able to inspect one waterfowl hunter.

On January 19th, Sgt. Doyte Chaffin, Cpl. Ryan Swain, and RFC Robert Timmerman conducted a concentrated patrol of Clarks Hill Lake for late waterfowl hunting. Cpl. Swain heard several subjects hunting waterfowl after hours. Sgt. Chaffin and RFC Timmerman responded to the area but made no contact with any illegal hunters.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

BALDWIN COUNTY

On Wednesday, January 15th, RGR Matt Johnson, Cpl. Lynn Stanford and Sgt. Bo Kelly checked four waterfowl hunters who were hunting a baited swamp. The swamp had been previously found to be baited with whole corn. All four hunters were charged with hunting ducks over bait and four wood ducks were confiscated.



JONES COUNTY

On Saturday, January 18th, RFC Jeremy Reese and Cpl. Lynn Stanford checked three hunters hunting a baited duck swamp. The area had been previously found to be baited with corn. All hunters were charged with hunting over bait. While issuing these citations, more shots were heard on the same swamp. Contact was made with two more hunters who were hunting without permission. Both hunters were charged with hunting on lands of another without permission.

Another group of duck hunters was checked that morning by Sgt. Bo Kelly. These hunters were hunting on private property in the north end of Jones County. No violations were found. Below is a picture of the morning's harvest.



MERIWETHER COUNTY

On January 18th, at about 2200 hours DNR Law Enforcement personnel assisted the Meriwether County Sheriff's Office (Sheriff Chuck Smith) with raiding a dogfighting event outside of the city of Greenville. Cpl. Keith Waddell and Major Doc Watson did an initial flyover in the DNR helicopter to locate the dogfight and estimate the number of people present. Soon after this, the dogfight was raided by several tactical teams from Meriwether County and surrounding Sheriff's Departments. DNR Sgt. Brent Railey, Sgt. Jim Bradfield, Cpl. Mitch Oliver, Cpl. Jeremy Bolen with K9 Ruger, and RFC Russell Epps had responded to assist. Sgt. Railey and Sgt. Bradfield assisted with securing several suspects at the scene of the fighting pit. They also secured a nearby house several suspects were seen running into while an investigator obtained a search warrant for the house. Cpl. Oliver, Cpl. Bolen, K9 Ruger and RFC Epps assisted in searching the

surrounding woods for people hiding. K9 Ruger found four suspects hiding in the thick woods surrounding the site of the fight. Once the search warrant for the house was obtained, Cpl. Keith Waddell and Cpl. Mitch Oliver, members of the DNR Counter Terrorism Task Force, assisted the Sheriff's Office with serving the search warrant as part of the house entry team, while the other Rangers present secured the perimeter to ensure no one escaped. Three people were found in the house and arrested. A total of 34 people were arrested and charged with multiple charges ranging from gambling, dogfighting, cruelty to animals, etc. stemming from the dogfighting operation. Seized as part of the illegal operation were 27 vehicles, over \$28,000 in cash, guns and other related items, including a mobile hot wing stand brought to the fight to sell food to the spectators. One dog was taken into custody to be given necessary medical care.

MUSCOGEE COUNTY

On January 13th, Cpl. Jeremy Bolen went to court in Columbus on several citations that were issued back in November. A subject who had received a fishing without license citation failed to appear in court. Later that day, Cpl. Jeremy Bolen and Cpl. Mitch Oliver were eating in a restaurant in Columbus, when Cpl. Bolen noticed this same individual walk into the restaurant. Cpl. Bolen contacted the Muscogee County Sheriff's Office to verify if a warrant for failing to appear in court that morning was already active. The warrant was validated and the Rangers informed the subject that he had an active warrant for failure to appear in court. The subject was arrested and transported to jail by a Muscogee County Deputy.

WILKINSON COUNTY

On Saturday, January 18th, RGR Matt Johnson checked a group of hunters hunting ducks. Lead shot was found on two of the hunters and there were additional license violations. Charges were made for hunting waterfowl with lead shot and hunting without a Georgia waterfowl license.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

DOUGHERTY COUNTY

On January 15th, Ranger Eric White was conducting a waterfowl patrol along the Flint River when he located a vehicle and boat trailer that had been observed there on two previous occasions. The subject returned to the ramp after dark, at which time he was found to have been bow hunting a section of the Miller Brewing Company property. The subject admitted that he had not attempted to gain permission from any landowner, despite having been warned on a previous encounter with DNR Rangers. Upon contacting officials with the Miller Brewing Company, it was determined the subject was hunting the property without permission and he was subsequently charged for the violation.

DOOLY COUNTY

On January 18th, Cpl. Bob Holley and Cpl. Clint Martin conducted a vessel patrol of Lake Blackshear and the Flint River. During the patrol, eight vessels that were engaged in waterfowl hunting were checked. Three hunters were cited for hunting waterfowl without a Georgia waterfowl conservation license. A fourth hunter was also cited for hunting waterfowl without a Georgia waterfowl conservation license and for hunting without a license.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

ATKINSON COUNTY

On January 11th, RFC Tim Hutto responded to a K-9 call in Axson to locate a suspect for the Atkinson County Sheriff's Department. RFC Hutto used K-9 "Gauge" to track the suspect to the city limits of Pearson, where he was apprehended and turned over to the Atkinson County S.O. for a probation warrant.

COOK COUNTY

On January 12th, Cpl. Tommy Daughtrey responded to a shots being fired call behind a trailer park just outside of Adel. It was just before dark when the shots were fired. Cpl. Daughtrey along with several Cook County Deputies arrived in the area and located a subject that had been shooting ducks in a swampy area behind the trailer park. The subject was cited for hunting waterfowl after hours and warned for not having a Federal Waterfowl Stamp.

BERRIEN COUNTY

On January 18th, Cpl. Daughtrey was patrolling Paradise PFA when he noticed four subjects fishing in a small jon boat on Lake Patrick. Cpl. Daughtrey walked closer to the subjects as they headed toward the bank. Cpl. Daughtrey watched as two males in the rear of the boat drank several Bud Light beers and then sank the cans into the lake. Cpl. Daughtrey also observed a subject in the front of the boat smoke a marijuana cigarette. As the boat came to shore, Cpl. Daughtrey ordered the subjects out of the boat. The subject in the front of the boat was arrested for possession of marijuana. Cpl. Daughtrey found a partially smoked marijuana cigarette in the front shirt pocket of the subject and a small bag of marijuana in the subject's wallet. The other two males in the boat were charged with littering and unlawful consumption of alcohol on a PFA. The three subjects were transported to the Berrien County jail. The female in the boat was not charged.



COFFEE COUNTY

On the 11th, RFC Hilton was responding to a hunting complaint and witnessed an individual cross the road, carrying a firearm. RFC Hilton proceeded past the individual and then returned to perform a license check, but the individual was out of sight. RFC Hilton proceeded to the original complaint. Upon finishing the complaint, RFC Hilton proceeded back to the location the individual was seen earlier crossing the road with the firearm. RFC Hilton arrived at the location and saw the suspect inside the wood line. RFC Hilton then exited his patrol vehicle and noticed the subject lying down on the ground. RFC Hilton proceeded toward the suspect and as he closed the distance the suspect returned to his feet and began to flee. RFC Hilton apprehended the suspect. The suspect was arrested and issued citations for hunting without a license, hunting big game without a big game license, hunting with an illegal weapon, hunting deer without fluorescent orange, hunting under the influence, possession of a firearm by a convicted felon and interference with ranger's duties.

LOWNDES COUNTY

On January 20th, RFC Keith McDonald responded to a call reference unlawful burning in south Lowndes County. RFC McDonald observed an individual burning several chairs in an empty lot. RFC McDonald advised the individual the laws concerning burning wastes. A citation was issued for unlawful burning of waste.

IRWIN COUNTY

On January 11th, Sgt. David Reckley was on routine patrol near the Willacoochee River in North Irwin County when he heard a dove shoot. While checking the peanut field, he noticed a wide band of shelled, split peanuts broadcast in the middle of the field. The hunt was stopped and violations for hunting over bait and unlawful enticement were addressed.

On January 12th, Sgt. David Reckley checked a duck shoot in the Brushy Creek area of Irwin County. Three hunters were checked and violations of hunting without a license, hunting without GA waterfowl license and hunting without a federal duck stamp were documented.

LAURENS COUNTY

On January 18th, Cpl. Dan Stiles checked a morning duck shoot. Four subjects were checked. One violation for hunting waterfowl without Federal Duck Stamp was documented. One juvenile was given verbal guidance for hunting with unplugged shotgun.

On January 18th, Cpl. Dan Stiles patrolled the River Bend WMA. Several hunters were checked and one violation was found for transporting loaded firearm in a vehicle. Also a vehicle was located on the WMA with suspended registration. Cpl. Stiles located the subject who owned the vehicle and turned the subject and vehicle over to the Laurens County Sheriff's office.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

BRYAN COUNTY

On Jan. 14th, the Bryan County Sheriff's Dept. received an anonymous call reporting that someone had shined and shot near a field in the area of Hwy. 119. A Bryan Co. deputy spotted and stopped the suspected vehicle. Sgt. Phillip Scott was contacted and responded to the call and obtained information on the two suspects. The next day, Jan. 15th, Sgt. Scott and RFC Jack Thain met with and interviewed one of the suspects who confessed to hunting deer at night, from a vehicle and from a public road. On Jan. 19th, the two rangers met with the second suspect who also confessed to the same violations. It was determined that the violations had actually occurred just across the county line, so both suspects were each cited for the three violations in Bulloch County State Court.

On Jan. 18th, 13 rangers from Region 7 and a Ga. Forestry pilot, with RFC Jack Thain acting as the aerial observer in the plane, participated in a night flight detail in northern Bryan County to detect illegal night hunting. Ranger Jason Miller and Cpl. Bill Bryson stopped two juveniles who were seen hunting deer at night from a truck. Later, the same rangers found and cited two teenagers who were underage drinking. Sgt. Phillip Scott and Cpl. Chris Ridley stopped a suspicious vehicle with three persons and found a crack pipe. One person was arrested for possession of drug paraphernalia by the Bryan County Sheriff's deputy who assisted with the stop.

LIBERTY COUNTY

On Jan. 15th, Cpl. Jay Morgan and RFC Jack Thain were checking deer-dogging hunters in the Riceboro area and RFC Thain cited one hunter for hunting deer with dogs without a deer-dogging license.

On Jan. 17th, Ranger Jason Miller, Cpl. Bill Bryson, and Sgt. Phillip Scott conducted a saltwater- patrol and boarded one shrimp boat returning from offshore to check the boat's Turtle Excluder Devices, which are designed to release turtles alive from the shrimp nets.

GLYNN COUNTY

On January 19, Ranger Jay Bright was returning from a night hunting detail when he noticed a vehicle failing to maintain lane. Ranger Bright observed the vehicle swerving side to side as if the driver was impaired or distracted. Ranger Bright decided to stop the vehicle and see what was causing the sporadic driving. After a brief conversation with the driver, Ranger Bright decided the driver needed to be checked for driving under the influence. The driver of the vehicle was turned over to the Georgia State Patrol and subsequently arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol.