

# Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

**Weekly Report**  
**September 21-27, 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)

### BARTOW COUNTY

On September 27<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Byron Young answered a call for assistance on Allatoona Lake at the YMCA camp. A female driving on the private road ran her 2014 Honda Accord into Allatoona Lake. Bartow County Sheriff's Deputies reported that the female looked down to read a text on her phone and ran into the lake. The female and passengers exited the vehicle without injuries before it sank. The following morning the vehicle was pulled out of approximately 8 to 10 feet of water by a wrecker service.

On September 21<sup>st</sup>, Sgt. Mike Barr was in the Rydal area answering a complaint. He checked two fishermen at a small pond open to the public. While talking, Sgt. Barr noticed that one of the fishermen's pole bent over as it was being taken by a fish. The fisherman quickly set the hook but the fish got tangled in a tree in the water. The fisherman, Josh Ray of Cartersville, jumped into the water and lipped the bass just as it broke the 4 pound test line. As you can see, he was proud of the catch that the "game warden luck" brought him! The bass weighed 5 ¼ pounds weighed on a portable scale. Josh released the bass back into the water for another angler to also enjoy.



Josh Ray with the 5 ¼ pound bass he caught and released.

## **CHEROKEE COUNTY**

On September 21<sup>st</sup>, Cpl. Lee Burns was re-checking an area known to have baited deer in the past and happened up on a hunter that was hunting over a freshly baited stand. The hunter was charged with hunting big game over bait.



Whole corn and feeder

On September 21<sup>st</sup>, Cpl. Lee Burns was contacted about three hunters killing a fawn on a piece of property they did not have permission to hunt. Upon arriving at the scene, the landowner decided she did not want to prosecute the three for hunting without permission. Cpl. Burns issued written warnings to the three hunters and advised them to always obtain permission before hunting any property.

## **Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)**

### **HALL**

On September 21<sup>st</sup>, at approximately 1 a.m. Ranger First Class Mark Stephens responded to a drowning on Lake Sidney Lanier. Officer Stephens assisted Hall County investigators throughout the night with the death investigation. The individual was later recovered at noon the following Tuesday.

### **MADISON COUNTY**

On the morning of 26<sup>th</sup>, RFC Shane Sartor checked a deer stand that was baited with corn. A male subject was sitting in the stand and RFC Sartor asked him to climb down in order to check his hunting license. The subject did not have a big game or a hunting license. The subject was issued a citation for hunting big game over bait, no big game license and issued a warning for no hunting license.

## **DEKALB COUNTY**

For the past few weeks Cpl. Eric Sanders has been actively working an illegal tire dump in Dekalb County. Yesterday Cpl. Sanders and Ranger Shane Brown were conducting surveillance on the site when a truck arrived and the driver began dumping more tires. He was immediately arrested and was found to have a suspended driver's license and was in possession of illegal drugs and on probation. The subject was charged with all those violations as well as felony dumping for commercial purposes, since he was picking up tires from various locations for disposal. Cpl. Sanders is working with EPD on additional felony charges. It was estimated that there were over 3000 tires at this location



## **UNION COUNTY**

On September 26<sup>th</sup>, at approximately 10:00 a.m., RFC Kevin Dyer was patrolling United States Forest Service Road #100 on Gum Log Mountain. During the patrol in the area of Ross Gap RFC Dyer observed a camp that consisted of a two man tent, cooler and cooking supplies. While RFC Dyer was investigating the camp he observed a person dressed in camouflage walking down the mountain toward the camp. RFC Dyer met the person and identified her as Rachel Lynn Hall. Hall stated that she had been camping for two days and was leaving the area today. RFC Dyer asked where her vehicle was located and she stated that Billy Joe was going to pick her up today. RFC Dyer asked what was Billy Joe's last name and Hall stated that she did not know. RFC Dyer asked Hall what was she doing and Hall stated that she had walked to the top of the ridge this morning. RFC Dyer asked Hall where her Ginseng was at and Hall showed RFC Dyer where she had hid her fanny pack and digging tool. RFC Dyer asked Hall if she had a permit from the USFS to dig Ginseng and she stated no. (USFS Ginseng season ended on Sept 14). RFC Dyer located 16 Ginseng roots in the fanny pack and a pack of Buglers rolling papers. RFC Dyer asked Hall where the rest of the Ginseng was located and she stated that Billy Joe picked it up last night. RFC Dyer asked Hall if she had any marijuana and Hall stated no. Hall stated she was on the TV show "Smokey Mountain Money" hosted by National Geographic's. The show airs every Wednesday night at 10:00PM. RFC Dyer asked if they were filming today and she stated no they were going to film next week in Robbinsville N.C. RFC Dyer contacted USFS LEO Robert Burnette and Union County K-9 handler Chad Berry for assistance. RFC Dyer arrested Hall for digging Ginseng without permission and she was transported to the Union County Jail. USFS LEO Burnette used his K-9 to search the woods for anyone else that was with Hall but did not locate anyone. D/S Berry used his K-9 to search the camp for illegal narcotics but found none. While RFC Dyer and LEO Burnette inventoried the camp D/S Berry located a bag containing 178 Ginseng roots hidden in a hollow log approximately 10 yards beside the camp. RFC Dyer contacted North Carolina Game & Fish in reference to others involved in this case. The case is still under investigation with Federal charges pending. A total of 194 Ginseng roots were confiscated and RFC Dyer charged Hall with digging Ginseng without permission.

## **HART COUNTY**

On September 26<sup>th</sup>, RFC Tim Vickery checked an area where he had a complaint of several baited deer stands. RFC Vickery encountered an individual hunting one of the stands that had been baited with jar of peanut butter screwed to a tree about 20 yards away. The subject was issued a citation for hunting big game over bait.

## **FRANKLIN COUNTY**

On September 21<sup>st</sup>, RFC Tim Vickery received a call from a complainant regarding a gunshot he had heard that morning. The complainant stated that he heard his neighbor across the creek shoot at about 7:30 a.m. Later in the day, the complainant received a picture on his cell phone of the neighbor posing with a large buck. RFC Vickery got the information and picture. Later that afternoon, RFC Vickery and RFC Brandon Pierce went to the neighbor's house to see the deer and question the subject about whether it had been shot with a rifle. Upon arriving at the subject's house, the Rangers found him coming out of a side field near the house. The Rangers asked the subject about the deer and he showed it to them. It was still lying in the field where the picture had been taken that morning. The deer had not been field dressed and was covered in flies. The deer had been shot through the chest and guts and had been lying in the field for nine hours. RFC Vickery asked the suspect why he had not dressed and processed the deer. His answer was that he didn't eat deer meat. RFC Vickery asked for the subject's license and asked to see his bow. He showed the Ranger his bow and his license. The deer had not been recorded on the subject's license. The Rangers also asked the subject to show them where he had been hunting. He took them into the woods and showed RFC Vickery a tree. The tree had no climber marks on it. The Rangers went back to the deer and cut the skin around the entry wound. It showed signs consistent with being shot with a high powered rifle. RFC Vickery issued the subject a citation for failure to record deer harvest and seized the deer in order to test the entry wound for traces of copper and lead. The next day, the Franklin County Probate Judge called RFC Vickery and stated that the subject wanted to meet that afternoon. At the meeting that afternoon, the subject admitted to shooting the deer with a .270 caliber rifle. He was issued another citation for hunting with illegal weapon/ammo.



On September 27<sup>th</sup>, RFC Vickery received a call from Franklin County dispatch requesting assistance with a complaint. Two separate individuals had called about a suspicious truck parked near their house. The truck had a four wheeler and hunting related articles in the bed and the complainants stated that no one was supposed to be hunting there. RFC Vickery and a Franklin County Sheriff's deputy made contact with an individual about 50 yards in front of his truck. He was in a blind with his son and girlfriend. He stated that they were hunting on his aunt's 3 acres. RFC Vickery checked the area and found a jar of peanut butter on the ground in front of the blind. The individual admitted to putting it out the evening before. The subject was cited for hunting big game over bait.

## **Region III- Thomson (East Central)**

### **RICHMOND COUNTY**

On September 27, Cpl. Ben Payne and RFC Grant Matherly participated in National Hunting and Fishing Day at Fort Gordon. Three hundred kids showed up for the fishing derby. The kids caught channel catfish that were stocked earlier in the year. The kids received awards and prizes for participating and each age group had individual awards given. In the afternoon the kids were able to experience skeet shooting with 20 and .410 gauge shotguns. They also experienced shooting bow and arrows at targets. Range instructors also showed the kids how to sight align .22 caliber rifles on target. Game Management had animal demonstrations and DNR LE ran the Laser Shot Simulator.

### **CLARKE COUNTY**

On September 27<sup>th</sup> RFC Tim Butler cited a deer hunter for hunting without permission.

### **WILKES COUNTY**

On September 27<sup>th</sup> Cpl. Mark Patterson and RFC Tim Butler patrolled Clarks Hill WMA. During the course of the managed hunt Rangers addressed violations of hunting without a big game license, hunting within 50 yards of an open road, driving on a closed road, and illegal use of an ATV.

### **MCDUFFIE COUNTY**

On September 26<sup>th</sup>, RFC Brian Adams and RFC Robert Timmerman conducted a Shooting Sports I and E program at the Old Frontier Plantation in Thomson. A group of at risk children participated in a Hunter Education Seminar and live fire skeet events.

### **GLASCOCK COUNTY**

On September 27, RFC Brian Adams apprehended one subject hunting big game over bait. The subject was bow hunting for whitetail deer. He was cited and released.

### **LINCOLN COUNTY**

On September 27, Cpl. Ryan Swain assisted park staff at Elijah Clark State Park with their annual Kids Fish Fest event. The event lasted from 11 am till 4 pm. Forty Six kids showed up to participate in the event.

### **ELBERT COUNTY**

On September 25<sup>th</sup> Cpl. Julian Wilkins located a number of marijuana plants while on foot patrol. Cpl. Wilkins and Investigators from the Elbert County Sheriff's Department were able to locate the subject responsible for the plants at a nearby residence. Fifteen plants and a quantity of dried marijuana were seized in the arrest



## **Region IV- Macon (West Central)**

### **BALDWIN COUNTY**

On the morning of September 24<sup>th</sup>, Ranger Matt Johnson, Cpl. Lynn Stanford and Sgt. Bo Kelly responded to a 1000 acre hunting club in reference to a missing hunter. The hunter had not been heard from since the early morning hours the previous day and friends had become worried. DNR LED along with the Baldwin County Sheriff's Office, Baldwin County Fire/Rescue and DOC K-9 began working together in an attempt to locate the hunter. Approximately 1.5 hours into the search the hunter was located severely injured but alive. The hunter had fallen from his tree stand approximately 25 hours earlier and had been crawling for help with numerous leg fractures. The hunter was dehydrated and showing signs of shock and was quickly transported from the woods to an awaiting ambulance where he was transported to the Macon Medical Center. The incident is still under investigation.

### **JONES COUNTY**

On the evening of September 21<sup>st</sup>, RFC Jeremy Reese patrolled an area that he had located a baited deer stand earlier in the week. One hunter was located in the stand and was cited for hunting big game over bait.

### **MERIWETHER COUNTY**

On the morning of September 27<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Keith Waddell and Sgt. Brent Railey received a complaint from a hunter in north Meriwether County. The hunter was bow hunting for deer near a public dirt road and saw a truck driving slowly down the road. The truck stopped and several shots were fired in the direction of the hunter from the truck. The hunter called 911 and a nearby deputy stopped the truck and discovered a .22 rimfire rifle in the truck. The driver admitted shooting from the road but denied he was shooting at anything specific. He was arrested and charged with discharging a firearm from a public roadway.

### **PUTNAM COUNTY**

On the morning of September 22<sup>nd</sup>, Cpl. Lynn Stanford, Wildlife Tech Bobby Lord and Sgt. Bo Kelly responded to an area of Oconee WMA in reference to a hunting incident. A 53 year old hunter had falling approximately 14 feet out of a climbing deer stand as he was attempting to secure his safety strap. The officers assisted EMS with retrieving the hunter from the woods and he was airlifted to the Macon Medical Center with non-life threatening injuries.

### **TALBOT COUNTY**

On September 21<sup>st</sup>, Corporals Mitch Oliver and Jeremy Bolen were patrolling the Almo and Black Jack tracts of Chattahoochee Fall Line WMA. Cpl. Oliver located a truck while patrolling the Almo tract and ran the hunters tag information to confirm if he had a valid hunting license. It was determined that the hunter's license was expired. Cpl. Oliver wanted to locate the hunter before he had a chance to harvest a deer and make the situation worse. Cpl. Bolen was called so that he could utilize K-9 Rugar to track the hunter. The hunter was eventually located and it was confirmed that his hunting license was expired. He was issued a citation for hunting without a WMA license and given warnings for hunting without a license and hunting without a big game license.

## **Region V- Albany (Southwest)**

### **CRISP COUNTY**

On September 27<sup>th</sup>, while working a night hunting complaint Sgt. Al Greer observed the occupants of a truck hunting from the road. Both subjects were cited for hunting deer at night, hunting from a public road, hunting from a motor vehicle and hunting deer with an illegal weapon.

## **LEE COUNTY**

On September 21<sup>st</sup>, RFC Randy James located a baited dove shoot. As he approached the field he observed a subject running off the field carrying a shotgun and dove stool. After a foot-chase the subject was located hiding behind an equipment shed. A total of six subjects were charged with hunting over bait and other license violations. The subject that fled on foot was also charged with interference with the performance of a ranger's duties.

## **THOMAS COUNTY**

On September 26<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Greg Wade was patrolling in an area where night hunting complaints had been reported when he observed a vehicle being driven extremely slow, as the four occupants hunted from the road. Cpl. Wade stopped the vehicle and cited the group for hunting deer at night, hunting from a motor vehicle, and hunting from a public road.

## **CLAY COUNTY**

On September 24<sup>th</sup>, Rangers assisted the Clay County Sheriff's Department in recovering a light plane and its two occupants from the Chattahoochee River. The plane had been missing for seven days and was the focus of an intense search by agencies from Alabama and Georgia.



DNR Rangers pull a side scan sonar unit during a search for the missing plane.

## **Region VI- Metter (Southeast)**

### **WHEELER COUNTY**

On Friday, September 26, Ranger First Class Rodney Horne was working a night hunting detail in Wheeler County when he apprehended a hunter hunting from vehicle and shining a light. In conclusion of an investigation Ranger First Class Rodney Horne documented violations on the hunter for hunting raccoons out of season and hunting from a vehicle.

### **DODGE COUNTY**

On September 21<sup>st</sup>, Ranger First Class Allen Mills conducted a Hunter Education course at the Dodge County Public Fishing Area. Twenty one students received their certification.

On September 23<sup>rd</sup>, Ranger First Class Allen Mills was the guest speaker for the Eastman Lyons Club. Ranger Mills provided a twenty minute talk using the Law Enforcement Division's power point program. Twenty six individuals were in attendance.

On September 26<sup>th</sup>, Ranger First Class Allen Mills received a land owner complaint in reference to someone dumping several bags of trash on his property. Ranger Mills drove to the site and began collecting evidence from four bags of household garbage. Ranger Mills then made several phone calls and personal visits to a landlord, a grandmother, a stepfather, and an ex-wife, before finally making contact with a suspect. After a brief interview, Ranger Mills documented a violation of littering. Soon after, the suspect voluntarily returned to the dump site and removed all trash.

### **TELFAIR COUNTY**

On September 27<sup>th</sup>, Sgt. James McLaughlin and RFC Rodney Horne responded to an incident where an individual fell from a tree stand. The individual was bow hunting with his son and lost his footing and fell approximately 16 feet to the ground. His 12 year old son summoned help for his father. The individual was transported to the Dodge County Hospital.

### **ATKINSON COUNTY**

On September 23<sup>rd</sup>, RFC Tim Hutto and K-9 Gauge checked areas along Pudding Creek for fishing activity. Several licenses and creel limits were checked resulting in two documented violations for fishing without licenses. One subject was also arrested when RFC Hutto discovered the subject had active warrants out of Camden County, Georgia.

### **LANIER COUNTY**

On September 24<sup>th</sup>, RFC Tim Hutto finished an unlawful dumping complaint in the Teeterville area. One violation of unlawful dumping of waste was documented after a subject dumped a deer carcass beside a residence on the Teeterville highway.

On Sept. 25<sup>th</sup>, at approximately 11:30 P.M., Cpl. Tommy Daughtrey received a complaint from the Lanier County Sheriff's Dept. that they had caught two subjects shooting a gun at the dock area on Bank's Lake Federal Refuge. Cpl. Daughtrey responded to the scene. After talking to the subjects shooting the gun, Cpl. Daughtrey determined that the subjects were not attempting to take any type of wildlife. After talking with Federal Authorities, Cpl. Daughtrey warned the two subjects for discharging a firearm on a Federal Refuge.

### **BERRIEN COUNTY**

On Sept. 27<sup>th</sup>, Capt. Scott Klingel, Sgt. Morty Wood, Cpl. Tommy Daughtrey, RFC Keith McDonald and RFC Allan Mills operated the skeet shooting range at the annual Jake's Day at Paradise PFA. Also, RFC Tim Hutto and K-9 "Gauge" put on a K-9 demonstration for the Jake's Day visitors. 550 kids attended the event.

## **Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)**

### **BRANTLEY COUNTY**

On September 21, RFC David Brady was patrolling for activity when he passed a small car in a rural area of the county. As he passed, Brady could smell a strong odor of burning marijuana coming from the vehicle. Before he could get turned around the car took off and then a short chase ensued. As Brady was initiating the traffic stop one of the passengers threw a small white paper out the window. After a county unit arrived Brady searched the area and found the marijuana cigarette that had been thrown out. A search of the vehicle revealed several devices for smoking marijuana, a grinder, a container with marijuana in it, and rolling papers. All four occupants were arrested and charged with