

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
April 17 – April 23, 2016

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 April 17, RFC Bart Hendrix and RFC Zack Hardy were on patrol on Allatoona Lake. The officers stopped a vessel with several children without lifejackets on. The officers immediately detected the odor of alcohol. A few minutes later the operator was placed under arrest for BUI, allowing underage children to ride a moving vessel without PFD's (lifejacket) and Child Endangerment. The operator was also arrested last year on 4th of July weekend for BUI and lifejacket violations.

On April 19, Cpl. Byron Young presented an information program at Shaw Industries safety day in Cartersville. Cpl. Young handed out boating handbooks and answered DNR related questions.

On April 23, Sgt. Derek Dillard, Cpl. Byron Young and RFC Zack Hardy patrolled Allatoona Lake. The officers issued 7 warnings and citations for several different boating violations.

DADE COUNTY

April 17th was an exciting day in the turkey woods for several new turkey hunters in Dade County. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division (DNR LED) sponsored a youth turkey hunt with the assistance of local professional hunter, Wes Hixon. The hunt took place on Sand Mountain on property leased by Wes Hixon and a hunting club. The whole event started with a DNR LED Facebook offer for youth to put in for a turkey hunt with Game Wardens in their area. Over 800 request were received statewide from the DNR Facebook offer. Locally, the DNR Conservation Officers met with local land owners and managers and put together a volunteer program to take the kids hunting. Many had never been turkey hunting before.

DNR LED Sgt. Mike Barr and RFC Roger McConkey started contacting several people in the area and ended up with five enthusiastic young hunters. The hunters had to also have their parent or guardian with them on the hunt. Sgt. Barr and RFC McConkey met the group at Cabela's in Ringgold, Georgia on April 16th and reviewed hunter safety, firearm safety, a short film on turkey hunting, looked at gobbler turkey mounts, made sure everyone had the proper hunting licenses or turkey harvest record, and discussed camouflage clothing and equipment. The parents also attended and all were ready for meeting before daylight on April 17th on Sand Mountain.

Local hunter, Wes Hixon, has always been a supporter of DNR LED and is especially interested in introducing new hunters to the sport of hunting. He and his hunting club members scouted for birds, set up hunting blinds, and prepared a hamburger lunch for the hunters.

All the young hunters and their parents either saw, heard, or had a close encounter with turkeys. One hunter, Landon Williams and his dad Chris, had a large gobbler come within twelve feet of their calling position. Unfortunately, the gobbler came in directly behind the hunter and spooked when he discovered the sound of the hen was actually a person. All hunters came away with a great outdoor experience and realized that hunting success is not just about the actual harvest of game, but the hunt itself. Most young hunters made comments that they will continue to learn more about turkeys and add this to the list of great days in the woods!



Chris and Landon Williams of Chickamauga, Georgia. Landon (right) is 11 years old and had a large gobbler sneak up behind him while DNR LED Sgt. Mike Barr was calling turkeys with a turkey box call.

Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

HABERSHAM COUNTY

On April 10th, RFC Joe Hill checked several fishing licenses, trout licenses, and creel limits on the Soque River. Ranger Hill issued one subject a citation for over the creel limit of eight trout and a warning for fishing after obtaining the creel limit.

On April 11th, RFC Joe Hill and RFC Chad Chambers checked the State Lands boat ramp on Duncan Bridge Road for boating and fishing activity. The Rangers found one subject to be in violation of Georgia's litter law for discarding a Styrofoam cup on the ground in the parking area. The subject was issued a citation for littering.

WHITE COUNTY

On Saturday, April 16, CPL Anne Britt checked several fishermen on the Chattahoochee River on private property and on the Chattahoochee WMA. Two adult males were warned for fishing on private property. One adult male was warned for not having a trout license. Three other adults were warned for parking/driving on a non-improved road at Jasus Creek camping area.

Later that afternoon CPL Britt was called out to assist the USFS Fire and White County Fire Department with a fire that had started above the Check Station on the Chattahoochee WMA. The fire continued to spread rapidly with high winds and ended up burning 22 acres of land. No one was injured and no one needed to evacuate the area.

UNION COUNTY

On Sunday, April 10th RFC David Webb was patrolling Union County for fishing activity. RFC Webb came across a subject from Michigan, who was trout fishing on the Nottely River. The subject had a non-resident three day fishing license, but he had not purchased a non-resident trout license. RFC Webb issued a written warning for non-resident fishing without a trout license.

On Saturday, April 16th RFC David Webb conducted a commercial license check of a taxidermist in Union County. The taxidermist had a current taxidermist license but his records were not being properly kept. RFC Webb issued a written warning for failure to maintain proper records and advised the taxidermist what he needed to do to be in compliance.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

MCDUFFIE COUNTY

On April 18-19, SGT Brian Carter, CPL Julian Wilkins, CPL Mark Patterson, RFC Tim Butler, and RFC Phillip Nelson completed the ARIDE (Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement) Training.

ELBERT COUNTY

On April 23, CPL Julian Wilkins, and CPL Mark Patterson assisted the Elbert County Corps of Engineers with their annual Kids Fishing Event.

COLUMBIA COUNTY

On April 24th, Sgt. Doyte Chaffin, Cpl. Brian Hobbins, Cpl. Ryan Swain, and Ranger Michael Madden responded to a complaint of a missing subject on Clarks Hill Lake. The subject was last seen swimming at Lake Springs Park near Center Point. After a two hour search for the subject, it was discovered that the subject had drowned. The subject's body was recovered by Columbia County Dive Team and transported to the Columbia County Coroner's Office.

JEFFERSON COUNTY

On April 24, RFC Matherly and RFC Billips checked a with permission turkey hunting complaint in Jefferson county. No one was found to be on the property. The officers patrolled the Ogeechee River later that day looking for boating and fishing violations.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

On April 17, Cpl. Adams Patrolled the Oconee River for fishing and boating violations. One subject was cited for fishing without a license.

On April 22, Cpl. Adams worked two on going hunting without permission complaints in Washington Co. No subjects were apprehended on this date. The cases are still on going.

NEWTON COUNTY

April 21, CPL Allen and Ranger Schay responded to a drowning at Lake Varner.

On April 24, Ranger Schay was checking turkey hunters in Newton County and one violation of hunting big game over bait (turkey) was documented. Rgr Schay was checking fishing licenses in Newton County and one violation of fishing without a license was documented.

Ranger Schay was part of the DNR security detail assigned to Stone Mountain Park.

BURKE COUNTY

On Saturday, April 23, Corporal Ben Payne and Ranger First Class Jeff Billips checked areas known to be baited for turkeys. No violators were poaching at these areas. The rangers checked several fishermen on Brier Creek and documented fishing without license violations. The rangers patrolled Yuchi, Alexander and Di-Lane Plantation WMA's for turkey hunters.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

LAKE SINCLAIR

On the evening of April 23rd, RFC Michael Crawley patrolled several areas of Lake Sinclair. Numerous boats were stopped and verbal and written warnings were issued.

HOUSTON COUNTY

On Saturday, April 23rd, Cpl. Robert Stillwell patrolled Oaky Woods for turkey hunting activity. Several turkey hunters were checked and no activity was detected. Cpl. Robert Stillwell also patrolled Flat Creek PFA for turkey hunting and fishing activity. No violations were detected.

MUSCOGEE COUNTY

On April 17th, Cpl. Mitch Oliver was patrolling the Chattahoochee River in Columbus when he stopped to check 2 individuals fishing. Neither subject possessed a valid Georgia fishing license and after a check for warrants on the two, it was determined that the female subject had an active warrant out of Muscogee County for felony probation violation. Cpl. Oliver took the female into custody and a Muscogee County Deputy Sheriff was called to transport the individual to the jail for booking.

WILKINSON COUNTY

On the evening of April 22nd, RFC Ronnie Beard and RFC Michael Crawley assisted the Wilkinson County Sheriff's Office with a road check along Hwy. 441. Numerous drug and DUI arrests were made.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

No activity to report.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

CHARLTON COUNTY

On April 23rd, Ranger Judd Sears patrolled the Suwannee River Sill for fishing and boating activity. Ranger Sears encountered a number of boaters and fisherman during his patrol of the area. While checking for license requirements, creel limits, and boating safety requirements, Ranger Sears found one individual fishing without a license. A violation was documented for non-resident fishing without a license.

ECHOLS COUNTY

On April 17th, Sgt. Patrick Dupree encountered two turkey hunters near Mayday. Neither hunter possessed any valid hunting licenses. Both were issued citations for non-resident hunting without a hunting license and non-resident hunting without a big game license.

DODGE COUNTY

On April 22nd, Ranger First Class Allen Mills received a complaint in reference to hunting without permission. After speaking with the complainant, RFC Mills was able to locate a suspect's residence and conduct a knock and talk. After an interview, the suspect admitted to hunting turkeys without permission. Violations for hunting without permission, hunting without a license, and hunting without a big game license were documented.

On April 23rd, Corporal Dan Stiles and Ranger First Class Allen Mills conducted a vessel patrol on the Ocmulgee River. Five vessels were checked for safety equipment and ten anglers were checked for license and regulation compliance. Violations were documented for operating a vessel without a throwable device, fishing without a license, and possession/taking of illegal size fish. Verbal guidance was given for minor violations.

BERRIEN COUNTY

On April 17th, Corporal Tommy Daughtrey documented several violations while patrolling Paradise PFA. Citations were given to one subject for operating a vessel without PFD's. Another subject was cited for fishing without a license. Several warnings and verbal guidance was given to other subjects who were violating the law.

LOWNDES COUNTY

On April 23rd, Corporal Tommy Daughtrey caught two subjects hunting turkeys over bait. Both subjects were cited for hunting big game over bait (turkey). A hunting license violation was also documented. There is an ongoing investigation on another subject that shot a turkey from the same turkey blind and baited area two weeks earlier.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

LIBERTY COUNTY

On April 19th, at approximately 1450 hours, Cpl Bill Bryson, RFC Kiel Toney and Sgt. Phillip Scott were on Joint Enforcement Agreement patrol in Sapelo Sound. They noticed a commercial trawler trawling in what appeared to be closed state waters off of St. Catherine's Island. The rangers plotted the location to be .48 nautical miles inside closed waters. CPL Bryson and RFC Toney boarded the vessel and the vessel was escorted back to its dock. 550 pounds of shrimp were seized, valued at \$2200.00 dollars. The captain was cited with trawling in closed waters.





On Wednesday, April 20th, 2016, RFC Thain talked with kids at the United Methodist Pre-School in Hinesville about wildlife as part of Earth-day awareness activities for the kids.

GLYNN COUNTY

On April 23, RFC David Brady, RFC John Evans and Cpl. Kate Hargrove responded to Paulks Pasture WMA in regards to a domestic problem between a man and woman. Glynn County Police had received information that a man was holding a woman against her will and that she was trying to escape. The Rangers and County Police worked together to locate the couple and quickly take the man into custody. Upon further investigation, the Rangers determined that during the domestic dispute a handgun was thrown into the woods on the Management Area. After an extensive foot patrol, the Ranger's located the handgun and turned it over to Glynn County Police.