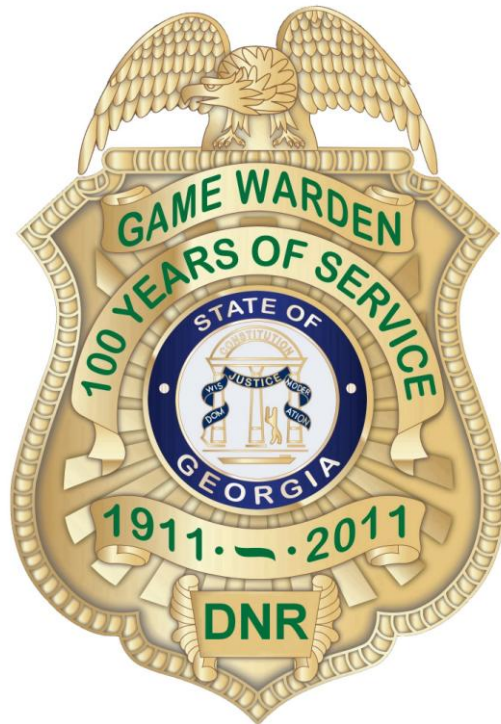


# Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Resources Division Law Enforcement Section

Field Operations

Weekly Report  
July 10-16, 2011

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 Section.



## **Region I- Calhoun (Northwest)**

### **BARTOW COUNTY**

On July 1<sup>st</sup>, Cpl. Lee Burns and RFC Bart Hendrix were patrolling Lake Allatoona in the area of Park Marine. Around 10pm, the Rangers noticed a pontoon boat coming down the lake running bright docking lights. The lights made it very hard to see, as they were bright spotlights. The Rangers also noticed that the boat's navigational lights were not displayed correctly. The Rangers stopped the boat and Cpl. Burns asked the operator about his navigational lights. The boat had the wrong color lens on the bow lights. Cpl. Burns also noticed that the operator had the odor of alcohol and slurred speech. The operator completed field sobriety exercises and was determined to be under the influence of alcohol. The Rangers arrested the operator who was charged with operating a vessel under the influence of alcohol. The operator's wife was determined to be sober and was able to get the boat and passengers safely back to their campsite.

### **CHEROKEE COUNTY**

After midnight on July 4<sup>th</sup>, Sgt. Mike Barr and RFC Brooks Varnell responded to a 911 call on Lake Allatoona of an assault at a campsite on the Allatoona WMA across from the mouth of Kellogg Creek. Two Cherokee County Deputies assisted the Rangers. The rangers and deputies found 2 guns on one of the persons involved in the incident. The ranges and deputies assisted a group of people retrieve their camping possessions at the campsite where the reported assault and fighting had occurred and sent them home to a safe location. The incident is still under investigation.

### **COBB COUNTY**

On July 3<sup>rd</sup>, Cpl. Chip Cox received a call from Cobb County 911 of a missing swimmer in a cove near Dallas Beach. Sgt. Mike Barr and RFC Byron Young also responded. The family of the swimmer stated that the man, a white male from Taylorsville, had consumed multiple beers before attempting to swim across a cove 200 to 250 yards wide. His flip-flops were found floating nearby. RFC Byron Young utilized side-scan sonar to locate the body just before dark. The Cobb County Dive Team recovered the body the following morning in 9 feet of water.

### **FANNIN COUNTY**

Throughout the Independence Day weekend, DNR Officers patrolled Lake Blue Ridge. The officers gave several verbal warnings, and issued 11 written warning, and 4 citations for boating violations.

### **FULTON COUNTY**

On July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2011 RFC James Psillis patrolled the Chattahoochee River at various points. After receiving a complaint of a man shouting random obscenities to tubers, kayakers, and fisherman. RFC Psillis as well as Roswell Parks Police located three individuals who matched the description, two of which were fishing. Upon checking the two fisherman's licenses it was then determined that they were over the legal limit of eight trout. One

angler possessed 15 trout and the other possessed 14. Each angler was consequently cited with possession of illegally taken wildlife resulting in the over the limit trout being confiscated. The man who was shouting obscenities to those on the river was warned about his conduct.



### **GILMER COUNTY**

On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, Sgt. John VanLandingham and Cpl. Casey Jones patrolled Carter's Lake. During the patrol the officers issued five citations and warnings for boating and fishing violations.

On July 3<sup>rd</sup>, Sgt. John VanLandingham was patrolling Mountaintown Creek when he came across six teenagers walking from the creek towards their vehicle. Sgt. VanLandingham had noticed an open bottle of beer in the vehicle earlier. One of the teens was carrying a two-liter bottle of Coca-Cola. Sgt. VanLandingham stopped and spoke with the teens and smelled the odor of an alcoholic beverage. After speaking with the driver and gaining consent to search the vehicle, and gaining consent to search each of teens, Sgt. VanLandingham located several glass smoking pipes in the vehicle containing marijuana. He also found the Coke bottle to contain a mixture of liquor. It was determined that three of the teens had consumed alcohol, and one of those was the owner of the vehicle where the marijuana was located. Two of the teenagers were arrested and a third, who was a juvenile, was turned over to his parents, and a juvenile complaint filed. The other three teenagers were released.

### **MURRAY COUNTY**

On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, Sgt. John VanLandingham and Cpl. Casey Jones arrested a subject on Holly Creek for Violation of the Georgia Controlled Substance Act, for possession of Methamphetamine.

On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, Sgt. John VanLandingham and Cpl. Casey Jones responded to an area along the Conasauga River where there was a group of campers trespassing on private property. The group was advised that the area where they were camping was private property.

While speaking with the group one of the campers was found to be in possession of less than one ounce of marijuana. The camper was cited.

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

### **DAWSON COUNTY**

On July 12<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Freddie Hays was contacted by the Dawson County Sheriff's Office about an incident at the Devil's Elbow on Dawson Forest WMA. Cpl. Hays was told by the Sheriff's Office that a subject was hurt and needed medical attention but didn't law enforcement notified. When Cpl. Hays arrived on the scene he made contact with a deputy and State Trooper who were on the scene. The deputy had one subject in custody and it was the subject who had requested medical attention. Apparently the subject had jumped into the Amicalola River and had his breath knocked out of him. He was arrested for underage possession of alcohol and illegal consumption of alcohol on a WMA. Cpl. Hays made contact with another subject who was also consuming alcohol on the WMA illegally. Cpl. Hays tried to issue the subject a citation for the offense but refused to take the citation. Cpl. Hays placed the subject under arrest and he was taken to the Dawson County Jail.

### **FORSYTH COUNTY**

On July 16<sup>th</sup>, Sgt. Lee Brown and RFC Mitchell Crump patrolled Lake Lanier for fishing and boating activity. The rangers issued written warnings for fishing without a license and towing a skier without an observer.

### **LUMPKIN COUNTY**

On July 15<sup>th</sup>, RFC Mitchell Crump was patrolling Dockery Lake on Chestatee WMA. He checked several fishing licenses and issued two warnings for fishing with unlawful equipment (two poles.)

### **FRANKLIN COUNTY**

On July 16<sup>th</sup>, RFC Tim Vickery and RFC Shane Sartor patrolled Lake Hartwell. During the patrol, they issued citations and warnings for fishing without licenses, operating over idle speed within 100 ft, and operating without registration.

### **HABERSHAM COUNTY**

On July 16<sup>th</sup>, Game Management Technician Brandon Walls and Cpl. Jesse Cook assisted US Forest Service personnel with wildlife road checks on Wildcat Creek and Lake Russell WMA. Officers documented several violations including possession of marijuana, possession of drug paraphernalia, and possession of open containers of alcohol and child endangerment. No wildlife violations were observed.

### **RABUN COUNTY**

On July 16<sup>th</sup>, Corporal Derek Dillard and Rabun County Sheriff's Deputy Kevin Woodard participated in the Lake Burton Civic Association's annual lake clean-up. There were over 80 volunteers that were involved. Participants from Lake Rabun also

assisted with removing some debris that was left from the devastating tornado that ravaged the county.

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

### **BURKE COUNTY**

On July 10th, RFC Jeff Billips, was contacted by Burke County Sheriff's office to assist in locating trespassers on a hunt club. RFC Billips met with the landowner and deputies and learned that a female had come out of the woods and walked back to her car that was parked behind a truck on the side of the road. A search for additional suspects was conducted on the property with the use of Richmond County Sheriff's Office K-9 Officer. A cell phone from the driver of the truck was recovered but the driver had fled the area. The female was arrested by the Sheriff's Office and her car and the truck were impounded.

On July 11th, RFC Billips assisted Burke County Sheriff's office in locating marijuana plants growing in a wooded area on Four Points Road. RFC Billips also assisted Sheriff's investigators with a search warrant at a residence. RFC Billips recovered an illegal alligator skull, bobcat carcass and several game fish.

On 7/13/11, RFC Billips executed a search warrant on the impounded truck from 7/10/11. RFC Billips discovered numerous Native American artifacts, bird feathers from protected species, a shotgun, several empty pistol holsters, loaded pistol magazines, survival gear, military flak vest, approximately 500 rounds of ammunition, and a case containing a substance that field tested positive for methamphetamine.

### **LAKE OCONEE/PUTNAM COUNTY**

On Thursday July 7th, Cpl. David Allen and Sgt. Matt Garthright responded to a boating incident with injuries on Lake Oconee. The incident involved two jet skis. The victim was transported to Athens Regional Hospital. The victim sustained a broken foot. Charges were filed in the incident.

### **GREENE COUNTY**

On Thursday July 14th, RFC Larry Mills and RFC Nikki Spencer assisted Game Management with the annual goose survey on Lake Oconee. RFC Mills and Spencer used patrol vessels to help count and band geese on Lake Oconee.

On Saturday July 16th, Cpl. Derrell Worth and Cpl. David Allen responded to a boating incident on Lake Oconee at the Lake Club. The incident involved a jet ski and a moored vessel at the docks of the Lake Club. There were no injuries in the incident. There were minor damages to each vessel.

### **RICHMOND COUNTY**

July 51-17, 2011, Cpl. Ben Payne and other Rangers from Region 3 worked the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Southern National Drag Boat Races at Riverfront Marina in Augusta, Ga. The Race was a success. Teams from all over the U.S. and Canada compete in the Liquid

Quarter-mile at speeds reaching 250 mph. There were 3 boat accidents with only minor injuries reported.

#### **COLUMBIA COUNTY**

On July 17th SGT Doyte Chaffin, CPL Ryan Swain and RFC Robert Timmerman conducted a concentrated patrol of Wildwood Park boat landings in Keg Creek.

On July 17th SGT Doyte Chaffin and RFC Robert Timmerman responded to a shooting complaint that occurred on a vessel in Keg Creek. One subject fled law enforcement by vessel and is still at large with warrants pending.

#### **ELBERT COUNTY**

Cpl. Julian Wilkins received a complaint on Sunday of a big black cat being sighted in the area of Hwy 77 South and Country Club Rd. Upon arriving Cpl. Wilkins was shown a set of tracks that was believed to been made by the big black cat. Cpl. Wilkins took pictures of the tracks and sent them to the game management office. They agreed the tracks appear to have been made by a dog. The subjects said they had set up some trail cams in hopes of catching the animal on camera. As of Friday they had not got any pictures of the animal.

#### **WALTON COUNTY**

RFC Niki Spencer, RFC Phillip Nelson and Tech III Kevin VonSeggern investigated a complaint on Monday of a subject holding a deer in a pen. Upon arriving they learned that the subject once held a deer but it had escaped from the pen. The subject was verbally warned not to hold game animals without a permit.

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

#### **BUTTS COUNTY**

On the night of July 3<sup>rd</sup>, after a local fireworks display on Lake Jackson, RFC Wil Smith and RFC Keith Page observed a boat with its lights off. The lights came back on for a minute and then went off again. The Rangers stopped the vessel in order to check the boat's navigation lights. During the stop officers observed several alcoholic beverages and detected the strong odor of alcohol on the operator. After administering field sobriety exercises officers determined that the operator was intoxicated and placed him into custody.

On July 8<sup>th</sup> RFC Wil Smith received a call from Butts County 911. The dispatcher told RFC Smith that a fox had attacked two people at the corner of Walter Moore Rd. and Hwy. 42. RFC Smith responded and found that deputies on scene had already dispatched the fox. The deputies and EMS personnel explained to RFC Smith that a gray fox came out of the woods and attacked a vehicle with a man and woman inside. The fox had jumped into the truck through a down window and bitten the woman on the face. The man was able to grab the fox and throw it out the window. The fox returned to a wooded area nearby. When EMS and the deputies arrived on scene, the fox returned and attacked

the ambulance and the patrol car. A deputy was able to dispatch the fox with his service weapon. RFC Smith took the fox to the Butts County Health Department, where it was processed and sent for testing. The fox tested positive for rabies.

### **JASPER COUNTY**

On July 2<sup>nd</sup> RFC Wil Smith and Sgt. Tim Kendrick were patrolling Jackson Lake for the 4th of July weekend. After fueling at a local marina, RFC Smith observed boat violating the marina's "no wake" zone. The Rangers stopped the vessel and spoke to the operator about the violation. While speaking with the operator, RFC Smith detected the odor of alcohol and saw open beer cans. After administering field sobriety exercises the officers determined the operator was intoxicated and arrested him for operating a vessel under the influence of alcohol.

On the night of July 16<sup>th</sup> RFC Billy Bryant was patrolling the Clybell WMA campground when he observed a vehicle pull in to the campground. Further observation revealed suspicious behavior and this led to the officer contacting the occupants of the vehicle. After a brief investigation, RFC Bryant located marijuana in the vehicle. The driver of the vehicle told Bryant he was HIV positive and homeless. The suspect stated to the Ranger that he was told by a Walton County Deputy to stay in the campground. Bryant explained to the man that was not what campgrounds on WMAs were for. Due to the subject's medical condition, Bryant chose not to arrest him. The suspect was issued a citation for Violating the Georgia Controlled Substance Act and released on scene. The suspect advised RFC Bryant he would not be back to Clybell WMA and promptly left the area.

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

### **EARLY COUNTY**

On July 16<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Steve Robinson and RFC Bob Holley were patrolling boat ramps along the Chattahoochee River when they encountered an individual with an expired boat registration. As the registration problem was being discussed, the officers noticed an illegal fish shocking device onboard the vessel. The operator was issued a citation for unlawful devices or substances and the fish shocking device was confiscated.



### **CRISP COUNTY**

On July 16<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Tommy Lawrence and RFC Clint Martin assisted a female motorist and her two small children when they became stranded during a storm. The woman's vehicle ran out of gas as she was crossing the 280 bridge on Lake Blackshear. The officers discovered that not only was the vehicle out of gas, but the battery was also dead. The officers retrieved gas for the car and eventually got it started.

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

### **ECHOLS COUNTY**

On July 16<sup>th</sup>, Sgt. Patrick Dupree & RFC Jason Shipes assisted Echols Sheriff's deputies with an attempted suicide call. Earlier, an individual had left his residence with a knife and a length of rope and stated he was going to hang himself in a nearby wooded area. After a brief search, the individual was located walking down a public road about two miles from the residence. He was taken into custody after EMS treated him for minor injuries to his neck.

### **WARE COUNTY**

On July 11<sup>th</sup>, RFC Jason Shipes responded to the Millwood area to assist the Ware County Sheriff's Department with locating and pulling 80 marijuana plants. The marijuana had a street value of approximately \$240,000 dollars.



### **BULLOCH COUNTY**

On July 16th, Cpl. Eddie Akins responded to a complaint of fishing without permission in north Bulloch County. Investigation of the complaint resulted in two violations for fishing without permission being documented.

On July 16th, Cpl. Eddie Akins responded to a complaint of spearing fish in the area of Rocky Ford landing. Cpl. Akins located a juvenile with a gig attempting to gig fish. Verbal guidance was given to the juvenile about this type of activity.



## **EFFINGHAM COUNTY**

On July 15th, RFC Brandon Pierce and Cpl. Eddie Akins worked a night hunting detail in the northern end of the county. Around ten o'clock a vehicle was spotted shining a field nearby. The vehicle containing three subjects was stopped. A total of three violations consisting of violation of crop damage permit were documented.

On July 16th, RFC Brandon Pierce, along with a deputy from the Effingham County Sheriff's Office responded to a stranded vessel on the Savannah River below Houlihan Landing. The three subjects were stranded for approximately five hours due to motor problems. The subjects and vessel were transported to Houlihan Landing.

On July 17th, RFC Brandon Pierce, along with a deputy from the Effingham County Sheriff's Office responded to a 911 call in reference to two overdue boaters. Two subjects who put on the Savannah River the evening before on inner tubes at Tuckasseeking Landing and taking out at Ebenezer landing had not showed up. The subjects expected to make the trip the same day but were unable to due to darkness. A homeowner along the river put them up for the night and told them not to put back on the river the following day because of safety reasons. The subjects snuck out the following day and put on the river again. The subjects were picked up, with only life jackets and cooler and transported to Ebenezer Landing where worried parents were waiting. The subjects were safe and released to the parents with no violations being documented. Later that evening RFC Pierce, Cpl. Eddie Akins, and intern Jason Burgess patrolled the Savannah River for boating safety/fishing activity. A total of eight boats and six fishing licenses were inspected. A total of one violation of allowing underage child to ride in moving vessel without wearing life jacket was documented.

## **EVANS COUNTY**

On July 12th, RFC Debbie Brannen received a complaint in reference to someone burning illegally. Upon further investigation, a violation of unlawful burning of egregious litter (less than 500 lbs.) was written.

## **ATKINSON COUNTY**

On July 18<sup>th</sup>, RFC Tim Hutto finished an ongoing complaint based night hunting investigation. On July 18<sup>th</sup> RFC Hutto served six warrants on an individual in the town of Broxton(Coffee County) for hunting deer at night, hunting without permission, hunting from a vehicle, hunting big game from a public road, possession of illegally taken wildlife and interference with the performance of a rangers duties. Officer Hutto also performed a search of the residence and found two doe deer carcasses in a cooler. On July 18<sup>th</sup>, RFC Hutto returned to the residence and issued citations and warnings to a female accomplice for hunting deer at night, hunting without permission and interference with the performance of a rangers duties. Later that evening RFC Hutto and RFC Joe Hilton returned to the residence. The officers entered the residence and located another suspect who was also involved in the case. The suspect gave RFC Hutto a false name. The suspect was transported to the Atkinson County Jail and charged with hunting deer at night, hunting without permission, hunting from a vehicle, hunting big game from a public road, giving a false name to an officer, possession of illegally taken wildlife,

interference with the performance of a rangers duties and felony possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. The case is still under investigation with additional charges pending.

#### **BERRIEN COUNTY**

On July 10<sup>th</sup>, while patrolling Paradise PFA, Cpl. Tommy Daughtrey cited several subjects for fishing without a license and fishing on a PFA without a WMA license. One subject was also warned for not having enough life jackets aboard his boat.

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

#### **BRYAN COUNTY**

On July 10<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Phillip Scott cited two persons for hunting hogs on the Richmond Hill WMA during a closed season.

On July 10<sup>th</sup>, RFC Jack Thain, Cpl. Phillip Scott, and Cpl. Jay Morgan patrolled the St. Catherine's Sound area citing one boater for not having a fire extinguisher on board.

#### **LONG COUNTY**

On July 11, RFC Randy Aspinwall received information that a subject had killed an alligator in Long County. RFC Aspinwall met with the suspect and got a confession from him. The suspect and another individual had spotted the alligator while riding near the Townsend Tract WMA. The 5 foot alligator was then killed and cleaned. A citation was written for the illegal killing of an alligator. The other suspect is still being sought at this time.