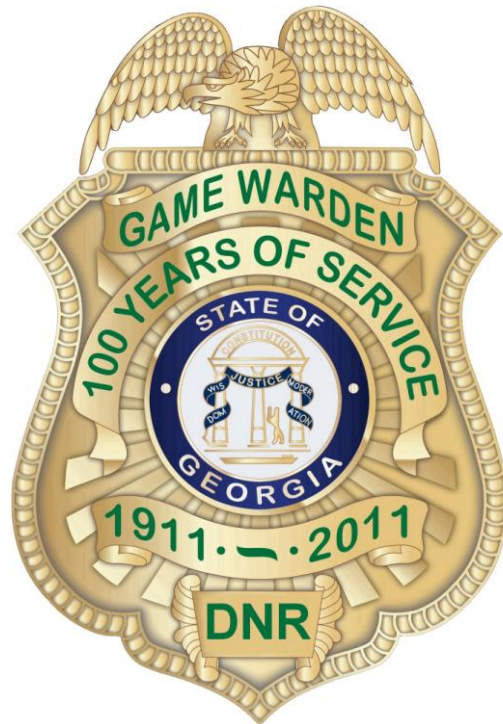


Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Resources Division Law Enforcement Section

Field Operations

Weekly Report
July 17-23, 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 21st, Sgt. Mike Barr received a call from Bartow 911 about a missing 12-year-old girl off East Valley Road in Rydal. She had left the house at 9:30 PM to let her horse out of a barn and put it into a pasture adjacent to her house. Forty-five minutes later, her parents became worried and could not find her. Sgt. Barr contacted DNR rangers: RFC Byron Young, RFC Bart Hendrix, and DNR Game Management Tech Mike Cline. Sgt. Barr also contacted the state aviation unit and GSP responded with a helicopter with a heat seeking FLIR unit. The rangers worked with investigators and deputies from the Bartow County Sheriff's Office in conducting a search. They worked through the night but were not able to locate the missing girl. At daylight, more DNR personnel arrived including Cpl. Lee Burns, Cpl. Eric Brown, Ronnie Holcomb, David Gregory, and Mitch Yeargin. A command center was set up by Bartow County EMA. A citizen had stopped at the entrance to the Pine Log WMA and seen a small foot track. Sgt. Barr obtained a sample of the type shoes the girl was wearing and went to the area. He met Cpl. Lee Burns there. The tracks were of the same size and shoe style the girl was last seen wearing. Cpl. Burns and Sgt. Barr tracked the prints out to the main paved road and conducted a search of the immediate area. They did not find her but thought these were her tracks. They secured the area. Cpl. Lee Burns then backtracked the prints onto the Pine Log WMA using man-tracking techniques that the DNR rangers are trained to utilize in the field. He found the girl hidden in a field adjacent to the road. The girl had a backpack she had filled for a trip away and had run away from home. She was reunited with her worried family members.



CHEROKEE COUNTY

On July 24th, Sgt. Mike Barr and Cpl. Lee Burns responded to a report of a large quantity of fish that had been dumped along the roadside on Highway 108 about 2 miles north of Highway 20 in Cherokee County. The rangers arrived to find 30 plus hybrids that had been filleted and dumped in the turning lane of a subdivision. The incident is currently under investigation. The fish were apparently dumped between the hours of 12:00 PM and 6:30 PM on July 16th. If anyone saw the dumping violation or has information regarding the event, please report the information to the Turn-In-Poachers hotline at 1-800-241-4113. All information will be kept confidential.



COBB COUNTY

On July 24th, Sgt. Mike Barr and Cpl. Lee Burns patrolled the Chattahoochee River at the Paces Mill Boat Ramp. The rangers concentrated on checking people in rafts, tubes, kayaks, and canoes for life jackets. This year has seen an increase in boating incidents on the Chattahoochee River and the rangers gave verbal guidance on not just having, but using the proper size and type life jacket in the cold-water river. Attached is a photo showing the large number of people using the Chattahoochee during a Sunday float and boating trip.



Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

WHITE COUNTY

On July 20th, RFC Anne Alexander assisted the Governors Drug Task Force with marijuana eradication. Over 2100 plants were located on USFS lands in White County. On July 21st, the DEA eradicated the plants and the plants were destroyed.

RABUN COUNTY

On July 23rd, RFC Anne Alexander and Cpl. Jesse Cook observed a boat traveling on Lake Rabun violating the rules of the road by operating a pontoon boat on the wrong side of the lake heading towards a blind point. The Rangers' stopped the boat and proceeded to check the boat for the required safety equipment. The operator of the vessel did not possess a fire extinguisher, was in need of replacing the type IV PFD, and was operating

with expired registration. The Rangers' observed several empty beer cans on board along with an open container. None of the three male subjects were of the legal drinking age. The operator was screened for boating under the influence and was later arrested and charged for the violation. One passenger was charged possession of alcohol by a minor. The other passenger on board did not consume any alcohol and was able to take control and operate the vessel. The operator was also charged for violation of rules of the road, and warned for operating vessel with expired registration.

STEPHENS COUNTY

On July 23rd, RFC Shane Sartor and Cpl. Bill Bunch patrolled Lake Hartwell. They issued citations for operating a vessel without personal floatation devices, operating a personal watercraft after hours and operating a personal watercraft without a personal floatation device.

On July 17th, RFC Shane Sartor and RFC Tim Vickery patrolled Lake Hartwell. They issued citations for operating over idle speed within 100ft of a fixed object. These citations were issued in a complaint area.

DAWSON COUNTY

On July 22nd, Sgt. Lee Brown, Cpl. Freddie Hays, RFC Mitchell Crump, RFC Ann Alexander, RFC Mark Stephens, Wildlife Technician IV Scott Bardenwerper, Wildlife Technician III David Shattuck and Wildlife Technician II Brandon Walls conducted two different details on Dawson Forest WMA simultaneously. The rangers were split up into two teams. The details were conducted at the Devil's Elbow and at Hwy 53 on the Amicalola River. The rangers issued citations and warnings for littering, unlawful consumption of alcohol on a WMA and fishing without a license. Also, one subject was arrested on an outstanding warrant.

FORSYTH COUNTY

On July 17th, RFC Mitchell Crump patrolled the Chattahoochee River for fishing and boating violations and to educate the public on the need to wear a PFD while in a boat on the river and what to do when the water starts to rise. He checked numerous boats and fishing license throughout the day. He issued citations and warnings for fishing without a license, fishing without a trout license and fishing with unlawful bait in the artificial only zone. He also issued a written warning to a subject for fishing for trout with minnows in designated trout waters.

On July 17th, Sgt. Lee Brown and Cpl. Eric Sanders patrolled Lake Lanier for boating and fishing violations. The rangers issued a written warning to a non-resident for fishing without a license. Citations and warnings were issued for towing a skier on a PWC without an observer, failure to obey a regulatory marker (skiing in a no ski zone) and allowing a child under 10 to ride in a moving vessel without wearing a PFD.

HALL COUNTY

On July 23rd, RFC Mark Stephens and RFC Mitchell Crump were patrolling Lake Lanier. The rangers arrested one subject for boating under the influence and issued citations and warnings for operating a vessel with improper lights and operating a vessel without a fire extinguisher.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

CLARKE COUNTY

On Friday and Saturday July 22nd and 23rd, RFC Eddie Tompkins, RFC Niki Spencer, and Cpl. Greg Colson attended the first annual Athens Hunting and Fishing Expo. The Rangers set up the fishing simulator and the laser shot hunting simulator for participants of the expo. The Rangers also distributed educational and informational materials to participants.

ELBERT COUNTY

On Friday July 22, Cpl. Greg Colson responded to Hwy 172 at the Broad River in reference to a missing boater. The subject had gotten separated from his group and later the group found his kayak floating down the river. Ranger Colson responded along with Elbert County Emergency Response personnel. The subject was safely located approximately an hour later.

MCDUFFIE COUNTY

On July 24th, RFC Brian Adams was patrolling Clarks Hill WMA. During his patrol of the Raysville Area, he cited three subjects for removing a WMA gate and driving down a closed road to access Clarks Hill Lake shoreline.

LINCOLN COUNTY

On July 23rd, Cpl Ryan Swain and RFC Brian Adams conducted a concentrated boating safety patrol of the Savannah River. No violations were detected.

GREENE COUNTY

On Sunday July 17, Cpl David Allen patrolled Lake Oconee and assisted three stranded boaters. The boaters were taken to the nearest boat ramps. All three assists involved mechanical breakdowns. Eighteen people were safely returned to the shore.

MORGAN COUNTY

On Wednesday July 20, Capt. Thomas Barnard, RFCs Nikki Spencer, Brian Adams, Larry Mills, Wildlife Tech Mark Patterson, and WL Tech Kevin VonSeggern assisted Morgan County with a missing person. The subject was thought to have entered the woods with a .22 caliber weapon and was going to commit suicide. After hours of searching, the subject was located without incident and was turned over to the Morgan County Sheriff's Office.

On Thursday July 21, Capt. Thomas Barnard, Sgt. Matt Garthright, RFCs Brian Adams and Larry Mills assisted Morgan County with a drowning on Lake Oconee. Once the Ranger's arrived at the scene, clothes were found near the waterline. During a foot search of the shoreline, the body was found floating a few hundred yards from the clothing. The body was recovered and sent to the crime lab to determine the cause of death.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

BUTTS COUNTY

At approximately midnight on July 18th RFC Wil Smith was off duty at his residence when he heard a gunshot. He immediately responded and heard two more gunshots that sounded very close to his residence. He went to a field where he suspected the shots took place and observed a gray pickup truck coming down the road. He stopped the vehicle, occupied by five males, and asked them about the shooting. The subjects told RFC Smith that they did not shoot but two other male subjects had shot at a deer in the field. They told RFC Smith that the two subjects were still in the field looking for the deer. RFC Smith arranged a plan to have the five subjects return and pick up the shooters. RFC Smith rode in the rear of the truck with two of the subjects. When the driver hit the brakes, RFC Smith saw the two shooters emerge from the wood line with a rifle and spotlight. RFC Smith jumped up from the bed of the truck and announced that he was the Game Warden. The shooters dropped their weapons and were placed under arrest. The shooters were charged with hunting at night, hunting from a public road, hunting out of season, and other charges. The other five subjects were issued warnings due to their cooperation.

JASPER COUNTY

On July 20th RFC Billy Bryant and K-9 Drake taught a Man-Tracking class and performed a K-9 demonstration for a group of scouts at Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center.

On the night of July 22nd RFC Billy Bryant received a call from a citizen in Jasper County advising him of two overdue tubers on the Ocmulgee River. RFC Bryant responded to Wise Creek Landing, where the missing tubers' vehicle was left. Bryant spent the night in the area searching for the individuals along the areas of the river he could access and standing by at the river landing in case they returned. The next morning Bryant spotted the tubers walking up a creek near where their vehicle was left. The two missing subjects advised Bryant that they had popped both of their tubes and decided to sleep on a tree across the river once it got dark.

On July 23rd while patrolling Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center RFC Billy Bryant and Keith Page noticed several car loads of teenagers in the campground. After watching them for a brief period of time the Rangers observed them drinking alcohol. The Rangers issued citations for underage consumption and released a one juvenile to the custody of a parent.

MUSCOGEE COUNTY

On July 19th RFC Mitch Oliver participated in a free PFD give-a-way in conjunction with Columbus Safe Kids at Lake Oliver Marina. The children and parents not only learned about the importance of wearing their PFD's when on a boat, but also learned about water

safety around swimming pools as well. There were approximately 85 life jackets given away during the 2 hour program.

On July 23rd RFC Mitch Oliver and RFC Jeremy Bolen presented a boating safety program during a boat show at Lake Oliver marina. The officers answered questions about boating laws and passed out information pertaining to boating regulations.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

TIFT COUNTY

On July 18th, members of Region V CAT team were deployed to search for a missing person along the Tift- Irwin County line. RFC Al Greer, RFC Tony Cox, Cpl. Steve Robinson, Cpl BJ Foster, Cpl Tommy Lawrence, and Cpl. Robbie Griner conducted ATV and foot patrols in a wooded area. The person was found deceased, and the officers assisted the GBI in securing the scene.

THOMAS COUNTY

On July 17th, RFC Jon Penuel and Sgt. David Ruddell responded to an in-progress complaint of fishing without permission when a plantation manager witnessed a subject leaving a pond. The suspect jumped over a fence and fled on foot but not before hiding his fishing tackle and bucket of fish under some brush. But with the high heat and humidity, fleeing on foot quickly lost its appeal. The suspect returned to the car he'd left behind and was detained long enough for the officers to arrive. The uncooperative suspect was cuffed and transported to the air-conditioned Thomas Co. Jail. It was later determined that this suspect had fled from the same pond some months before. He was charged with fishing without permission and possession of illegally taken wildlife.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

ECHOLS COUNTY

On July 23rd, Sgt. Patrick Dupree encountered an individual near Mayday that was training raccoon hunting dogs. The hunter possessed a loaded high-powered rifle. The hunter stated that he had the rifle in his truck because he was an assistant on a deer control permit in a nearby county. Sgt. Dupree advised the hunter that it was illegal to possess the weapon while training dogs and to secure the rifle at the hunting camp or his home before continuing training his dogs on raccoons.

EVANS COUNTY

On July 23rd, RFC Debbie Brannen patrolled the Evans Public Fishing Area for late afternoon activity. Licenses and vessels were checked resulting in violations for fishing without a WMA license on a PFA and illegal consumption of alcohol on a PFA.

JEFF DAVIS COUNTY

On Sunday, July 24th RFC Barry Britt, RFC Rodney Horne, Tech. III Allen Mills, Cpl. Dan Stiles and Cpl. Johnny Ashe worked a landing detail at Rocky Hammock landing along the Ocmulgee River in Jeff Davis County. Three male subjects were warned for

operating ATVs on Rocky Hammock Hunt Club without written permission. One of the men was “wanted” in Virginia for probation violations stemming from a robbery conviction, another had a suspended driver’s license. Other charges made during the detail included: two littering cases, two driving under the influences cases and two cases for violating Georgia’s open container law. There was also a suspected substance found in one of the vehicles known as “K2 Spice”. This substance is known to be a synthetic drug and is sometimes sold as incense. This is a schedule 1 drug and a felony to possess. Charges for this are pending the test results from the GBI Crime lab.

DODGE COUNTY

On Friday the 22nd, Cpl. Johnny Ashe completed a complaint of fishing without permission off Highway 165 on the O’Barr Property. The landowner discovered the trespassers and contacted the Dodge County 911, who sent a deputy to the scene. The deputy collected the information, advised them to leave and that the Conservation Ranger would be in contact. After locating the subjects and a brief interview, they were found to be in violation and were charged for the offenses.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)