

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
July 13-19, 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)

FANNIN COUNTY

On January 12th, 2014 a juvenile Bald Eagle was found with its wing tangled in some fishing line on Blue Ridge Lake. RFC Cody Jones removed the fishing line but the Eagle suffered too much damage to its wing to fly. The Eagle was transported to Auburn University to be rehabilitated. On July 18th the Eagle was returned to Blue Ridge Lake and was released back into the wild.



GORDON COUNTY

On July 13th, Cpl. Shawn Elmore and Cpl. James Keener patrolled the Coosawattee River from Hwy 225 to Old Hwy 411. During this patrol the officers encountered several subjects floating on tubes and in kayaks between Pine Chapel Rd and Owens Gin Rd. The officers located a quantity of marijuana and methamphetamine belonging to a Sugar Valley man. He was arrested, taken to the Gordon jail and subsequently charged with possession of marijuana and possession of methamphetamine.



Methamphetamine and Marijuana taken from a Sugar Valley man on the Coosawattee River.

Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

RICHMOND COUNTY

On July 19, Sgt. Matt Garthright, Cpl. Ben Payne, Cpl. Micheal Crawley and RFC Jeff Billips worked a booth at the 3rd Annual Outdoor Expo in Augusta. Region 3 Secretary Stephanie Taylor assisted as well with license sales and boat registration questions. Hunter Education Volunteer Instructor Col. Jack Bradford assisted children utilizing the Laser Shot. Rangers answered questions from the public and handed out regulation guides. The Laser Shot was a hit with guests lining up all day to try their hand at shooting an array of game animals and skeet. Approximately 6000 people were in attendance at the event. At noon, Cpl.'s Payne and Crawley performed a breakout session answering questions about hunting, boating and fishing regulations. New laws

passed this year were presented as well. At the end of the session Cpl. Crawley gave a demonstration with K-9 Storm on bite techniques. David Blanton from Realtree Outdoors was the guest speaker concluding the event.

During July 17-19, Sgt. Matt Garthright, Cpl. Micheal Crawley, Cpl. Ben Payne, RFC Grant Matherly, and RFC Jeff Billips worked the 28th Annual Augusta Southern Nationals Drag Boat Races on the Savannah River in Augusta. RFC Billips received an Award for Merit from the Coast Guard for his patrols on the Savannah River at the beginning of Saturday's racing. Thousands attended the drag boat races. The event is the largest drag boat race in the world with the highest payouts. Top fuel hydro drag boats run the liquid quarter mile at 250+ miles an hour.

BURKE COUNTY

On July 18, RFC Jeff Billips and his son Paul gave their annual presentation on alligators and reptiles at the Burke County libraries in Waynesboro and Midville.

RFC Billips assisted the Waynesboro Police Department in the apprehension of a fleeing felon. RFC Billips captured the suspect after he had fled from officers on foot and hid in a restaurant.

On July 19, RFC Billips stopped a vehicle being driven at 25 miles over the posted speed limit. The driver was arrested and turned over to the Burke County Sheriff's office for speeding, driving without license on person and for an outstanding warrant in Richmond County.

COLUMBIA COUNTY

On July 19th, Cpl. Brian Hobbins worked a marine event on Clarks Hill Lake. The event was a triathlon sponsored by Georgia State Parks and was held at Mistletoe State Park off of Little River. Cpl. Hobbins worked water containment and security for the swimming portion of the event.

MCDUFFIE COUNTY

On July 19th, Cpl. Ryan Swain and RFC Grant Matherly performed HIN inspections at the Region Three Office in Thomson. Twenty four vessels were inspected for proper registration information.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

BALDWIN COUNTY

On the evenings of July 14th and 15th, Ranger Matt Johnson, RFC Jeremy Reese and Sgt. Bo Kelly taught a boating education class at Sinclair Marina. A total of 4 students were certified.

PUTNAM COUNTY

On the evening of July 18th, Ranger Matt Johnson, Cpl. Bubba Stanford and Sgt. Bo Kelly assisted the Eatonton Police Department with a Governor's Office of Highway Safety license check on the bypass in Eatonton. Hundreds of motorists were checked and over 30 citations were issued, 4 DUI arrests, 2 felony drug arrests and 4 fraud arrests.



TROUP COUNTY

On July 18th, Sgt. Jim Bradfield and Cpl. Jeremy Bolen presented an information and education program about swimming/water safety to the Troup County Sheriff's Office Youth Academy. The kids were taught how to properly fit and wear a life jacket as well as were shown various types of life jackets. A K-9 information and education program was also presented to the group, about the Department's K-9 program and abilities. An apprehension demonstration was performed by K-9 Ruger.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

LEE COUNTY

On July 18th, Cpl. Robbie Griner responded to an illegal hunting complaint on New York Road. When the officer arrived on scene, he located a dead deer on the property and determined that the deer had not been shot, but died of other causes.

DOUGHERTY COUNTY

On July 19th, Cpl. Robbie Griner and Cpl. Greg Wade conducted a boating safety patrol on Lake Chehaw, citing vessel operators for operating vessels without lifejackets, operating without lights during the hours of darkness, operating a PWC without wearing a lifejacket and failure to obey regulatory markers.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

LAURENS COUNTY

On July 18th, RFC Allen Mills conducted area checks at Hugh Gillis PFA and Beaver Dam WMA. One violation for fishing w/o a WMA license on a PFA was documented.

DODGE COUNTY

On July 19th, RFC Allen Mills assisted Dodge County Sheriff's office and Eastman PD with a drug interdiction detail. Two subjects were charged with violation of the Georgia control substance act and transported to the Dodge County detention center.



CHARLTON COUNTY

On July 19th, Ranger Daniel North and Cpl. Jason Shipes assisted state nuisance alligator trapper Jackie Carter and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service officers with locating and capturing a ten-foot long alligator at Stephen Foster State Park. Numerous complaints from visitors and fishermen about the alligator becoming aggressive were received by employees at the park. Alligators naturally have a fear of humans and will attempt to hide when approached, however when fishermen feed the alligators that fear diminishes and they begin to associate humans with food. Due to the fact that this alligator had clearly lost its fear of humans, he was captured and removed from the area to ensure the safety of visitors to the Okefenokee Swamp and Stephen Foster State Park.



Alligator Trapper Jackie Carter, his assistant, and Ranger Daniel North work to secure the alligator.

SCREVEN COUNTY

On July 13th, Cpl. Shaymus McNeely and Sgt. Don Dasher conducted a patrol of Eastern Screven County, checking affidavit properties and the upper Savannah River landings. Citations were issued for; fishing without a license, taking illegal sized fish, and fishing without permission.

JENKINS COUNTY

On July 19th, Cpl. Mike Wilcox and Sgt. Don Dasher patrolled landings on the Ogeechee River in Jenkins County. During the patrol, the officers checked four boats and eight fishing license at various landings. Violations that were documented were fishing without license, operating a vessel w/insufficient PFDs, and operating a vessel w/out CGA PFDs.

BERRIEN COUNTY

On July 19th, RFC Tim Hutto and intern Johnathan Day checked the Alapaha River on highway 135 for boating and fishing activity. The patrol resulted in three documented violations for fishing without a license and littering. The littering violations came after RFC Hutto observed two individuals sinking a liquor bottle into the river.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

GLYNN COUNTY

On July 13th, Corporal Craig Smith, Corporal Chris Ridley, and Ranger Colte Shaske patrolled St. Simons Sound as part of the JEA agreement for NOAA. Several boats were checked and 1 was cited for undersized Black Sea Bass.

On July 17th, Cpl. Chris Ridley was checking the Sidney Lanier boat ramp when he encountered a commercial bait shrimper returning to the ramp. The bait shrimper's tank was checked to see if he was in compliance of the 50 qt. limit. The fisherman was cited for over the limit of bait shrimp and 15 quarts of live shrimp were seized.

On July 19, RFC David Brady and RFC John Evans worked a dockside JEA detail at the McKay River Boat Ramp. Several boats were checked and fish were checked. Two subjects were cited for Fishing Without a License.

On July 19th, RFC John Evans responded to an alligator complaint at the GA Port Authority. Upon arrival, he found a 6 foot alligator in the middle of the large parking lot they use for unloading new cars. RFC Evans caught the alligator and turned it over to the nuisance trapper later that evening.

On July 19th, Corporal Craig Smith was checking a complaint on Terry Creek. While doing so he saw several subjects catching Blue Crabs from the bank. Cpl. Smith checked the subjects and found undersized crabs in the bucket they were using. Two of the subjects were cited for Non Resident fishing Without a License and Possession of Undersized Blue Crabs.

CAMDEN COUNTY

On July 17th, Ranger Shaske checked St. Mary's boat ramp for fishing and boating violations. Multiple boats were checked. One subject was cited for Operating vessel above idle within 100 feet of the dock.

CHATHAM COUNTY

July 18, Corporal Chris Moore and Sergeant Cindy Miller seized a live alligator that was illegally being held in captivity from a Savannah residence. A complaint of illegal commercial fishing was, and still is being investigated. Vessels returning from offshore were inspected. Fish species observed were cobia, red snapper, trigger fish, black sea bass, porgy, and vermillion snapper. No violations were documented from the fishing vessels.

July 19, Corporal Chris Moore and Corporal Danny Walker from Savannah Chatham Metro Police Department Marine Patrol taught a boating education class certifying 31 students. Sergeant Cindy Miller conducted a hull identification inspection. Sgt. Miller and Corporal Jay Morgan conducted a patrol and inspected offshore fishing vessels. Fishermen returned from the Snapper Banks with good success on Red Snapper and Vermillion Snapper.