

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
December 13 – December 19, 2015

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 December 18th, RFC Zack Hardy responded to Griffin Road in regards to a deer being shot from the road. The complainant advised that she saw a small black truck slow down and shoot a doe from the road. The suspect then left the scene without retrieving the deer. RFC Hardy set up surveillance in the area to apprehend the suspect if he came back to get the deer. RFC Hardy was able to obtain a license plate number of a suspect vehicle that returned to the area but did not stop to get the deer. The next day, RFC Hardy and RFC Michael Crawley went to the residence that the tag number came back to. The officers interviewed the suspect and he confessed to shooting the deer from his vehicle from a public road. The suspect was charged with hunting from a public road, hunting from a vehicle, and hunting without permission and given warnings for license infractions.

On December 19th, RFC Zack Hardy and RFC Michael Crawley assisted several other agencies with 7th annual Shop with a Hero program in Cartersville. The program is for less fortunate families and their children to shop for clothes and toys and be assisted by a local hero. There were nearly 300 children that got to spend \$150 each on clothes and toys at the local WalMart.

CHEROKEE COUNTY

On December 17th, RFC Hendrix responded to a complaint of dumping off Yacht Club Drive in Acworth. The elderly homeowner did not know what to do with the tires that had been dumped in his front yard. There was no evidence found for further investigation so RFC Hendrix removed the tires for the elderly man.

On December 18th, RFC Hendrix responded to a complaint of a deer being dumped by a lake in the Harmony on the Lakes subdivision in Holly Springs. Upon arrival RFC Hendrix was shown a Snap Chat video of 3 subjects dragging the buck deer to the bank of the lake. The complainant was able to identify 3 of the 4 subjects in the video. RFC Hendrix was given the phone number of one of the suspects. A phone call was made and all 4 persons agreed to meet RFC Hendrix at the scene to discuss the dumping issues. Citations and warnings were issued for the illegal dumping of the deer.

On December 19th, RFC Hendrix was patrolling East Cherokee County for duck hunting activity near the Fulton County line. RFC Hendrix noticed a truck parked behind a barn off Arnold Mill Rd that seemed out of place. RFC Hendrix investigated and found a man sitting in a tree stand near the truck with no fluorescent orange. While talking with the hunter, RFC Hendrix noticed very strong odor of alcohol coming from the hunter. The hunter submitted to field sobriety exercises and was found to be hunting under the influence of alcohol. The hunter was arrested for hunting under the influence and hunting deer without wearing fluorescent orange and taken to the Cherokee County Jail.

On December 19th, RFC Hendrix and Puig were checking harvest records for an ongoing investigation at Neese's Deer Processing in Woodstock. While there a pair of hunters came to drop off 2 bucks that they had taken in Gwinnett County earlier that morning. It was discovered that one of the hunters did not possess any hunting licenses. Citations and warnings were issued for the violations.

CATOOSA COUNTY

On December 10th, RFC Roger McConkey began an investigation into a potential record sized deer being taken illegally in Catoosa County. Multiple complaints were received about the deer being taken on property belonging to a county utility company, in which no hunting is allowed. After investigating the incident, one subject was charged with hunting without permission and a 10 point buck deer was confiscated. This deer was believed to be the 4th biggest buck ever taken in Catoosa County.



Photo of buck illegally taken on county utility property.

On December 19th, RFC Roger McConkey patrolled a complaint property in Catoosa County for hunting without permission issues. During this patrol a stolen ATV from Tennessee was located and one hunter was found. The hunter was charged with hunting without permission, hunting deer without the required fluorescent orange, and hunting deer without big game license. He was issued warnings for hunting without license and hunting before obtaining a deer harvest record. The stolen ATV is still under investigation.

POLK COUNTY

On December 17th, RFC Chad Cox answered a complaint about someone possible hunting without permission in the Aragon Community of the county. RFC Cox located a vehicle and began walking in the area to locate the possible hunter. RFC Cox located a dead yearling buck that had been freshly field dressed. He then was able to locate a male subject carrying a rifle that admitted to killing the deer. The hunter did not have a hunting license, big game license and was not wearing a fluorescent orange vest. RFC Cox called a Polk County PD Officer to the location and the officer transported the hunter to the jail. The hunter was arrested for his multiple violations and verbally warn for hunting without permission.

FULTON COUNTY

On December 17th, Ranger Mark Puig and Sandy Springs Police Officer Tim Sheffield conducted a Hunter Education at the Sandy Springs Police Department. 11 students were certified in the two day course covering a number of topics to include; firearm safety, hunting strategies, regulations and laws, ethical hunting decisions, habitats, tree stand safety, and wilderness survival.

Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

UNION COUNTY

On December 11th, just before 8:00 PM, a hunter came to the Cooper's Creek WMA check in station to report his 72 year old father had not returned to their vehicle after hunting. Wildlife Tech Casey Jones reported the incident and Sgt. Steve Seitz responded to the WMA. The 72 year old hunter and his son went hunting on the managed WMA deer hunt at 2:00 PM, but he did not take any flashlights with him. Sgt. Seitz and Jones assisted the Union County EMA search for the hunter. Union County SO had a K-9 officer respond to attempt to track the hunter since the weather would not permit any aviation support. Everyone searched the remote area off Duncan Ridge Road all night long but were not able to locate the lost hunter. RFC David Webb, Wildlife Tech Frank Manning, and RFC Anne Britt relieved Sgt. Seitz to search at daylight the next day to assist with the search. After it became daylight, the lost hunter was able to walk to a spot on the mountain where he got cell phone service. The searchers were then able to get a location for the lost hunter and directed him out to the nearest road. The lost hunter was picked up on the road by the searchers at approximately 9:30 AM the next day. He was uninjured and in good spirits after spending the night in the woods.

WHITE COUNTY

On December 13th, RFC Anne Britt checked a hunter coming out of the woods from deer hunting and he was not wearing any fluorescent orange. As she checked his license, RFC Britt noticed that he did not have his deer harvest record on his person. RFC Britt cited the hunter for hunting without fluorescent orange and warned him for not having his harvest record.

On December 19th, RFC Anne Britt patrolled Smith Creek on Unicoi State Park and located a fisherman who had a fishing license, but did not have a trout license. The fisherman accessed the online license system and purchased a trout license. RFC Britt wrote the fisherman a warning for not having his trout license. The fisherman was able to continue to fish on this date since he obtained all the licenses he needed.

RABUN COUNTY

On December 13th, RFC Joe Hill was checking for fishing licenses at Tallulah Falls Lake. The Ranger encountered one person fishing without a license and issued a citation for the violation.

JACKSON COUNTY

On December 13th, RFC Eric Isom concluded an investigation that began on November 7th from a hunting without permission complaint. At the end of the investigation, RFC Isom located three subjects who were hunting the property without permission. The three subject's violations were documented as hunting without permission, hunting without a license, hunting without a big game license, and hunting antlered deer after obtaining bag limit. Three buck racks were located at a taxidermist. A spike, 6 point, and 7 point were confiscated as evidence. The subject who leases the property for hunting found a fourth buck later that was shot by one of the suspects.



HALL COUNTY

On December 17th, RFC Kevin Goss & Sgt. Mike Burgamy responded to a complaint in Flowery Branch. When they arrived they found a man in camo being questioned by police. The man admitted to hunting a patch of woods nearby without gaining any permission of the land owner, killing a buck earlier in the season, and to hunting without orange. When the man produced his hunting license there was no deer tagged on the harvest record. RFC Goss had the man fill out his record, then RFC Goss wrote a citation for the orange violation and a warning for the permission violation.

HART COUNTY

On December 19th, Cpl. Craig Fulghum and RFC Brandon Pierce patrolled Hart County and the Lake Hartwell area for waterfowl and deer hunting violations. During their patrol four violations were documented. The violations consisted of Hunting deer without fluorescent orange vest, failure to record deer harvest, failure to sign federal duck stamp, and operating a vessel with insufficient PFD's.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

CLARKE COUNTY

On the morning of December 13th RFC Tim Butler checked properties known to have baited deer stands. Violations documented were hunting big game over bait, hunting without permission, hunting deer without wearing fluorescent orange, and accompanying a deer hunter without wearing fluorescent orange.

During the evening of December 13th SGT Brian Carter and RFC Tim Butler documented violations of hunting big game over bait, hunting without permission, and hunting deer without wearing fluorescent orange.

ELBERT COUNTY

On Saturday December 19th, SGT. Brian Carter and CPL. Julian Wilkins patrolled Elbert County. Violations documented were hunting without fluorescent orange, hunting big game over bait and operating vessel with expired registration.

OGLETHORPE COUNTY

On Saturday December 19 RFC Phillip Nelson patrolled Oglethorpe County for areas known to be baited. Violations documented were hunting big game over bait.

BURKE COUNTY

On December 19, RFC Billips patrolled Burke County and checked duck hunters. Two hunters were visiting from Alabama and were cited for non-resident hunting without license, non-resident hunting waterfowl without Georgia waterfowl license, and hunting waterfowl without federal duck stamp.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

On December 18, Cpl. Brian Adams worked several hunting without permission complaints with no activity to report.

On December 20, Cpl. Adams checked a group of duck hunters on County Line Rd. No violations were detected.

LINCOLN COUNTY

On December 13th, Cpl. Ryan Swain investigated a boating incident on Clarks Hill Lake. Two subjects were in the act of chasing waterfowl with a vessel. The vessel struck its own wake and became airborne. The two subjects were ejected from the vessel. The vessel sank and was a total loss. The subjects were rescued by Cpl. Ryan Swain. Both subjects were treated at the scene by Lincoln County EMS and released.

On December 19th, Cpl. Ryan Swain and Ranger Michael Madden conducted a concentrated patrol of Clarks Hill Lake. Several Waterfowl Hunters were checked. Six waterfowl license violations were detected.

COLUMBIA COUNTY

On December 19th, RFC Robert Timmerman apprehended two subjects hunting deer over bait. The case was made off of a complaint. The subjects were cited and released.

MORGAN COUNTY

On December 20th, Ranger Jason Harrison and RFC Tim Butler checked 3 duck hunters in Morgan County. Violations documented were Hunting w/o Federal Duck Stamp, Hunting waterfowl with lead shot, and hunting with an unplugged shotgun.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

TALBOT COUNTY

On December 19th, Cpl. Mitch Oliver was working Talbot County for waterfowl hunting activity when he located 2 hunters in close proximity to each other. After checking the hunters in the initial swamp, Cpl. Oliver made his way around to a second swamp and located 4 hunters at a truck. Cpl. Oliver observed several wood ducks on the tailgate of the truck along with 2 full 50-lb bags of corn. The hunters were asked about the corn and if there had been any put in the swamp prior to them hunting. One subject said that he had placed 2 bags of corn in the swamp in mid to late October, but felt it was all gone by now. Cpl. Oliver checked the swamp and determined that the swamp was indeed still baited with corn. All 4 hunters were charged with hunting ducks over bait and the 7 wood ducks were seized and donated to a local community home.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

WORTH COUNTY

On the morning of December 13th, Cpl. Greg Wade investigated shots he had heard and located four subjects hunting ducks. While speaking with the hunters Cpl. Wade noticed that there was corn on the ground around their layout blinds, which lead to his searching the pond and locating more bait in the water. The subjects were charged with hunting over bait and several license infractions.

BROOKS COUNTY

On December 13th, RFC Jon Penuel heard shots coming from a slough on the Withlacoochee River that he had previously discovered baited with corn. RFC Penuel set up surveillance of the area and watched as one of the hunters motored down river in a boat, shooting at ducks as they flushed from the water. The Ranger made contact with the subjects and charged them for hunting ducks over bait. The subject operating the boat was charged for rallying ducks and hunting from a vessel.

THOMAS COUNTY

On December 18th, Sgt. David Ruddell was conducting surveillance for night deer hunting and stopped two subjects for shining handheld lights from their truck. The subjects were found to be hunting raccoons. Violations of hunting from a vehicle, hunting from a public road, and hunting without permission were addressed.

COLQUITT COUNTY

On the evening of December 19th, Ranger Eric White heard a volley of shotgun blasts coming from a nearby area. While investigating the shots, the officer located two subjects exiting a duck pond. After a brief investigation, the subjects were cited for hunting waterfowl after hours.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

EFFINGHAM COUNTY

On December 19th 2015, Sergeant Don Dasher, Corporal Shaymus McNeely, Ranger Jordan Crawford and Ranger Randell Meeks worked a deer dogging detail in Effingham County. During the detail several hunters were checked with a total of four violations documented. The violations included hunting from a public road, hunting deer with dogs on unpermitted property, failure to keep deer dogs on permitted property and failure to obtain a deer harvest record.

LAURENS COUNTY

On December 18th, Corporal Dan Stiles patrolled the Beaverdam Wildlife Management Area during a sign-in big game hunt. No violations were detected.

On December 19th, Corporal Dan Stiles patrolled the Hugh M. Gillis Public Fishing Area. Two vessels were checked for registration and boating safety equipment compliance and six anglers were checked for creel and license compliance. One violation for operating a vessel with insufficient personal floatation devices was documented.

CLINCH COUNTY

On December 19th, Sergeant Patrick Dupree and Ranger Judd Sears patrolled hunting clubs north of Fargo for hunting activity. Sgt. Dupree and Ranger Sears observed a hunter sitting in a deer stand near a hunting club road. The hunter was not wearing the required fluorescent orange. Contact was made with this individual and a violation of hunting deer without fluorescent orange was documented.

BULLOCH COUNTY

On December 8th 2015, Ranger Jordan Crawford and Sergeant Don Dasher concluded a two day long investigation the stemmed from a night hunting incident that took place on December 6th 2015. A total of eight charges were brought against two suspected poachers. The charges included, hunting deer at night, hunting without permission, hunting big game from a public road, and hunting from a motor vehicle.



Buck that was killed by night hunters

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

LIBERTY COUNTY

On December 13th, RFC Thain stopped a suspicious truck in Liberty County. While checking the driver's license, the driver jumped back in the truck and sped off. RFC Thain began after the man but the man wrecked into a light pole about 100-200 yards away. The man then ran on foot but was caught by RFC Thain about 200-300 yards from the wreck. RFC Thain then brought the man back to the scene where RFC Miller and a Georgia State Patrol Trooper were arriving. Georgia State Patrol documented the wreck and assisted with the investigation. The driver of the truck did not have a valid driver's license or insurance due to previous traffic offenses. The driver was charged with driving under the influence of alcohol, and other related traffic offenses.

GLYNN COUNTY

On December 13th, Cpl. Chris Ridley was patrolling Southern Glynn County for illegal waterfowl activity. Cpl. Ridley heard an after-hours shoot and was able to locate the area. Five individuals were caught on the pond. The individuals were cited for Hunting Waterfowl after hours, hunting with illegal ammunition and hunting with unplugged shotguns. Six wood ducks were confiscated.

BRANTLEY COUNTY

On December 14, RFC David Brady and Cpl. Craig Smith received the Governors Public Safety award at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center. The two Rangers were recognized by Governor Deal for their life saving efforts for an individual on the Satilla River in March.

On December 19th, Ranger Colte Shaske was working a night hunting complaint area when he observed a light being shined from a vehicle into a clear cut and the thinned pines on the opposite side of the road. Ranger Shaske attempted to initiate a traffic stop and a chase ensued. CPL Craig Smith was working in another location and was able to get in front of the suspects and block the road. Inside the vehicle the Rangers found 2 suspects and a juvenile. 4 weapons were found, 2 Spotlights and a large bottle of alcohol. The suspects were cited for Hunting Deer at Night, Hunting from a Vehicle, and Hunting from a Public Road, additionally the driver was cited for Driving Under the Influence, Hunting Under the Influence, Reckless Driving, Failure to Obey Traffic Control Device, and Fleeing/Attempting to Elude a Police Officer.

BRYAN COUNTY

On December 13th, 2015, RFC Thain and Sgt. Scott conducted a Joint Enforcement Agreement (JEA) patrol in Bryan and Liberty Counties. In addition to enforcing state laws the Rangers also focused on making boaters aware of marine mammal protection and the enforcement of federally regulated fish species. Several boaters were checked with no violations being noted.

LIBERTY COUNTY

On Sunday, December 13th, 2015, RFC Miller and RFC Thain began an investigation into a stolen vessel near Luke Road in Liberty County. The vessel was dumped in a hunting area on private property. The Rangers checked the vessel for evidence and interviewed persons of interest in the case in conjunction with the Liberty County Sheriff's Office.