

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
December 6 – December 12, 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 6th, Cpl. Byron Young responded with Bartow County Deputy Cpl. Matthew Beal to a hunting without permission call on Cobb Legion hunting Club. The officers located 3 hunters on the property. One of the hunters was found to be hunting without a license and a big game license. The 3 hunters were issued citations for hunting without permission and issued warnings for hunting without proper licenses.

On December 7th, Cpl. Byron Young received a call from the land manager of the Atlanta Steeplechase Property off Rome Hwy 411. The manager of the property heard a gunshot on the property and located a 10 point buck covered with leaves and branches. Cpl. Young responded to the area and contacted Sgt. Derek Dillard and RFC Zack Hardy for assistance. The three officers set up surveillance in the area. Approximately 3 ½ hours later an ATV with two male subjects returned to the area and attempted to retrieve the buck. The three officers apprehended the males and placed them into custody. Charges were made for hunting without permission.

On December 12th, Sgt. Derek Dillard, Cpl. Brooks Varnell and RFC Bart Hendrix responded to a hunting complaint on Old Tennessee Hwy near White. The officers' located hunters both duck hunting and deer hunting. The hunters were found to have several license violations. Warnings were issued for the violations.

On December 12th, Sgt. Derek Dillard and RFC Bart Hendrix checked a hunter off Bells Ferry Rd. The hunter was found to have no valid license. The hunter was charged for hunting without a license and warned for hunting without a big game license.

Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

JACKSON COUNTY

On December 12th, RFC Eric Isom responded to a hunting complaint near the Jackson County and Hall County line. The complainant stated that he saw a hunter enter the woods carrying a rifle and no fluorescent orange. RFC Isom and Colt located the subject hunting deer without wearing orange. At the subjects residence RFC Isom found evidence of two bucks that were killed this year. The following violations were documented, hunting deer without wearing fluorescent orange and failure to record animal harvest.

HART COUNTY

On December 10th, RFC Brandon Pierce was working a night hunting detail when a vehicle was noticed using its headlights to shine a field. The officer later heard a shot from the location the vehicle went. The vehicle was stopped a short while later and contained two subjects, a loaded firearm, and a dead buck deer inside. RFC Pierce contacted Sgt. Stan Elrod for assistance on the case. Two subjects were interviewed and charged with multiple violations. A total of six citations were issued to the subjects. The violations consisted of hunting deer at night, hunting from a public road, and hunting from a vehicle. RFC Pierce confiscated the buck and gave it to a family in need.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

LINCOLN COUNTY

On December 12th, Sgt. Doyte Chaffin and Cpl. Ryan Swain apprehended two subjects who were hunting deer over bait. The subjects were warned for hunting deer without wearing orange clothing. The two subjects were cited and released.

On December 12th, Sgt. Doyte Chaffin and Cpl. Ryan Swain conducted a concentrated patrol of McDuffie PFA. During the patrol, two subjects were warned for fishing without a license.

On December 12th, Sgt. Doyte Chaffin and Cpl. Ryan Swain apprehended five subjects for hunting ducks after legal hours. Eleven violations were detected during the check of the hunters. They were cited and released.

OCONEE COUNTY

On December 11th RFC Tim Butler completed an investigation involving a hunting incident where a juvenile suffered a self-inflicted gunshot wound. An arrest warrant was issued to a member of the hunting party for a convicted felon who was in possession of a firearm at the time of the incident. The felon was placed into custody later in the day.

WILKES COUNTY

On the morning of December 12th Sgt. Brian Carter and Cpl. Mark Patterson conducted a patrol of the Clarks Hill WMA along the Little River. Violations addressed during this patrol were hunting ducks over bait, placing bait on a WMA, hunting without a license, hunting without a Georgia waterfowl license, hunting without a big game license, hunting without a WMA license, operating a vessel with insufficient personal flotation devices, operating a vessel without navigation lights, and hunting with buckshot on a WMA. During the evening patrol the Rangers also documented violations of hunting without a big game license, hunting without a license, and hunting deer without fluorescent orange.

On December 13th Cpl. Patterson patrolled the Fishing Creek WMA where he encountered violations of hunting on a closed waterfowl area and hunting without a Georgia waterfowl license.

OGLETHORPE COUNTY

On December 13th Cpl. Mark Patterson responded to hunting without permission complaint where an individual had shot a deer across a property line. One subject was charged with hunting without permission.

NEWTON COUNTY

Ranger Dan Schay and RFC Boles finished up an unlawful dumping investigation. One citation for unlawful dumping egregious litter less than 500 lbs. was issued. The subject was arrested for a warrant out of Newton County.

Ranger Dan Schay was patrolling a property due to a without permission complaint. Two subjects were found hunting without permission. Citations for hunting without permission and failure to record deer harvest were issued.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

HARRIS COUNTY

On December 9th, Corporal Mitch Oliver received a complaint from a lease holder about 2 subjects he caught hunting rabbits on his lease without permission. The complainant was familiar with the 2 men and talked as if it was common practice for them to hunt and run their dogs when and where they wanted. Cpl. Oliver interviewed both the subjects and learned that one of the men was actually from Alabama, but possessed a resident hunting license. Both men were charged with hunting without permission and the Alabama resident was also charged with non-resident hunting with a resident license.

On December 10th, Corporal Mitch Oliver spoke with a complainant that had information in regards to a subject that was believed to be hunting deer at night. Cpl. Oliver met with the complainant and was shown the area where the violation was supposedly taking place. The property in question was only an acre in size and bordered a busy highway. There was a feeder with corn, but no deer stand. Cpl. Oliver located a chair behind an outbuilding facing the feeder with fresh cigarette butts on the ground. That evening around 1930 hours, the complainant called back and told Cpl. Oliver there was a truck at the property. Cpl. Oliver responded and requested the assistance of Cpl. Jeremy Bolen. The officers arrived and instead of locating the subject in the chair, he was found standing on the steps of the old house. The suspect was dressed in all black and had a loaded 30.06 rifle in his possession along with a flashlight. When asked what he was doing, the suspect originally said he was just walking around and then changed his story to hunting raccoons. He eventually confessed to hunting deer. The chair had been moved from behind the building to up against the house during the evening sometime. The subject had also placed about 50 lbs. of corn and a tarsal gland from a deer approximately 10 to 15 yards in front of him. He was issued a citation for hunting deer at night.

HOUSTON COUNTY

On December 12th, the fifth year of the Central Georgia One Day Bear Season, Corporal Stillwell, RFC Beard, RFC Fisher, Sergeant Kelly, Captain Hodge, Corporal Bolen, and Game Management Tech IV Randy Wood entered a property on foot before daylight where several stands had been previously located and documented as baited for bears. Five individuals were caught and charged with unlawful use of bear bait, hunting bears without fluorescent orange, as well as license violations.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

GRADY COUNTY

On December 6th, Cpl. Tony Cox and Sgt. Rick Sellars checked a citizen's complaint of a possible convicted felon deer hunting with a firearm. The hunter was located as he exited the woods and admitted that he was indeed a convicted felon, which was confirmed through a records check. The subject was arrested and charged for possession of a firearm by a convicted felon.

THOMAS COUNTY

On December 12th, RFC Penuel responded to River Creek WMA to assist WRD Technician John Adams locate several subjects seen hunting illegally on the area. While checking access areas, Penuel located a truck and empty boat trailer parked under a bridge over the Ochlocknee River. The officers eventually located and charged the subjects for hunting ducks on the closed WMA.

While patrolling for duck activity on the same morning, Cpl. Greg Wade tracked down a duck shoot in a small lake. During a check of the hunters it was determined that the lake had been baited with grain sorghum. The subjects were charged for hunting ducks over bait and their ducks confiscated and donated to a needy family.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

LAURENS COUNTY

On December 8th, at approximately 3:00 a.m. Corporal Dan Stiles assisted Laurens County deputies with a suspicious vehicle parked on private property. One female was detained and an unknown male escaped on foot from the area. Evidence of illegal collecting of artifacts and illegal hunting was collected at the scene. The case is under investigation with charges pending.

On December 8th, at 10:30 p.m. Corporal Dan Stiles received a report of a missing 12 year old male in Telfair County. Cpl. Stiles responded to the scene along with a Georgia State Patrol (GSP) Trooper, GSP Aviation, Telfair County Sheriff's office personnel, and local Fire and Rescue. The family of the child informed searchers that the child had a history of running away from home. The ground and air search was unsuccessful. The child was located walking along a roadway near the original search area the following morning at 7:00 a.m.

On December 12th, Corporal Dan Stiles patrolled the River Bend Wildlife Management Area (WMA) during a sign-in big game hunt. Four Juveniles and five adults were encountered hunting waterfowl. Small game hunting is closed during big game hunting dates on WMA's. Five violations for hunting on a closed WMA were documented.

DODGE COUNTY

On December 6th, Ranger First Class Allen Mills conducted a patrol at the Dodge County Public Fishing Area. Nine anglers and four vessels were checked for license and regulation compliance. Verbal guidance was given for minor violations.



Angler with two nice crappie from Dodge County PFA.

On December 7th, RFC Mills received a complaint in reference to bags of trash being dumped on a complainant's property. RFC Mills was able to locate multiple items with a subject's name and address. RFC Mills contacted the subject and conducted an interview. It was determined that two juveniles were responsible for throwing out the trash bags. After speaking with the complainant and parents of the juveniles, it was decided that the two juveniles would return to the scene and remove all trash in the area. No further action was taken.



Location where trash bags were discarded.

On December 11th, RFC Mills was contacted by a complainant in reference to hunting without permission. RFC Mills met with the landowner and located two ladder stands and two pipe feeders. Later that evening, RFC Mills returned to the area to recheck the stands. While conducting a foot patrol, RFC Mills encountered a hunter heading toward one of the ladder stands. RFC Mills attempted to check the hunter's license and identification, but the hunter did not have anything with him. After extensive interviews with all parties involved, it was determined that an adjacent land owner was leasing his land as well as the complainant's land to five non-resident hunters, and had done so for over the past five years totaling over \$12,500 in revenue. The complainant decided not to press charges against the hunters, but would pursue legal action against the neighbor. One violation for hunting without license on person was documented.



Deer stand located on complainant's property.

TELFAIR COUNTY

On December 12th, Sergeant James McLaughlin, Corporal Kevin Joyce, and Ranger First Class Rodney Horne conducted a River Patrol on the Ocmulgee River and Horse Creek Wildlife Management Area. Six poachers were apprehended and six violations were documented for hunting small game (waterfowl) on a closed Wildlife Management Area.

LOWNDES

On December 12th, Ranger First Class Keith McDonald checked two groups of duck hunters on the Withlacoochee River. Citations were issued for operating a vessel without personal flotation devices. While patrolling Grand Bay WMA on December 13, RFC Keith McDonald observed a truck stuck near the boat ramp. RFC McDonald also observed fresh shotgun shells on the ground and a shotgun in the bed of the truck. RFC McDonald called a wrecker to tow the truck. On December 14th, RFC McDonald met with the owner of the truck. The owner stated he and another individual had been on Grand Bay Saturday night. Citations were issued to both individuals for illegal target practicing on a WMA and driving in an unauthorized area of a WMA.

LANIER COUNTY

On December 12th, Corporal Tim Hutto located three adults hunting ducks in a private pond outside of Lakeland. After talking with the hunters and checking the area, it was determined that the pond was baited with wheat seed and cracked corn. Citations were issued for hunting ducks over bait and hunting with an unplugged shotgun.

ECHOLS COUNTY

On December 12th, Sergeant Patrick Dupree, Ranger First Class Sam Williams, and Ranger Daniel North conducted an ATV patrol of the central and eastern portions of the county. Due to the unseasonably warm weather, the officers covered approximately 75 miles during the 7-hour patrol. The three officers encountered more than 40 hunters and issued one written warning for hunting deer without fluorescent orange.



RFC Williams and Ranger North on the banks of the Suwannee River near the Florida line during ATV patrol.

APPLING COUNTY

On December 6th, Ranger First Class Debbie Brannen and Sergeant Jon Barnard worked an illegal dumping complaint. Through investigation, one violation of illegal dumping was documented.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

On the evening of December 12, Corporal Kevin Joyce was patrolled for waterfowl hunting violations. After hearing multiple gun shots Joyce traveled to the location of the shots and located two subjects poaching waterfowl. Violations were documented for hunting waterfowl after hours and hunting waterfowl over bait. Five Canada Geese were confiscated and donated to a local needy family.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

BRYAN COUNTY

On December 6th, 2015 Cpl. Morgan and RFC Toney were watching an area in Bryan County to detect night hunting violations. During those night hours Cpl. Morgan stopped a truck for shining a light and shooting. The vehicle was detained while the incident was investigated by RFC Toney and the Bryan County Sheriff's Office. The Rangers found that the driver and the occupant that were shining the light were both juveniles. The juveniles told the rangers that they shot at a fox from the roadway but did not hit the fox. The juvenile's parents were called to the scene and turned over to them.