

# Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

**Weekly Report**  
**December 28, 2014 – January 3, 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.

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

### **CARROLL COUNTY**

On December 31<sup>st</sup>, RFC Daniel Gray was assisted by the Georgia Department of Corrections and Carroll County Sheriff's Office in reference to a night deer hunting investigation. 4 individuals were arrested and 17 charges were taken out for the individuals after a lengthy investigation. The individuals were charged with possession of firearm by convicted felon, hunting deer at night, hunting from a public road, hunting from a motor vehicle, hunting w/o a license, hunting w/o big game license, possession of a controlled substance, and several probation violations.

On January 2<sup>nd</sup>, Corporal Eric Brown was patrolling Carroll County for waterfowl activity. North of Bowdon, two groups of hunters were located. One group was cited for hunting waterfowl without a federal stamp. The second group was cited for hunting without completing the Hunter Education program and hunting without a federal waterfowl stamp.

On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, Corporal Eric Brown was patrolling Carroll County for waterfowl activity. West of Carrollton, a group of hunters was located. One subject was cited for hunting waterfowl without a state waterfowl license.

### **FULTON COUNTY**

On January 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ranger First Class Chad Cox and Ranger Mark Puig issued citations for hunting without a license, hunting without a big game license, and hunting over bait to a man that was apprehended by Fulton County Police the previous morning. An officer with Fulton Police was conducting a routine patrol in an abandoned subdivision and noticed a man coming out of the woods with a bow. From the road the officer observed a large amount of corn where the man was walking from. The officer took numerous pictures of the scene, wrote an outstanding case report detailing all information, and notified dispatch to contact DNR. Once again cooperation with local agencies resulted in successful enforcement of the state's natural resources laws.

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

### **UNION COUNTY**

On January 1<sup>st</sup>, Sgt. Steve Seitz and RFC David Webb patrolled Towns and Union County for hunting activity on the last day of deer season. While checking a hunting-without-permission complaint in Union County, the officers checked an old vacant subdivision near the complaint area and located one hunter sitting in the woods on a log who was not wearing any orange. The officers issued the hunter a citation for hunting deer without orange.

### **JACKSON COUNTY**

On December 30<sup>th</sup>, RFC Eric Isom conducted an area check on landowner's property near Talmo. RFC Isom and Colt located two subjects fishing on the property. Both subjects received warnings for fishing without permission.

On December 31<sup>st</sup>, RFC Eric Isom responded to a hunting-from-the-road complaint near the Barrow County line. At the scene, RFC Isom deployed his K9 "Colt" to locate any possible evidence at the scene. A hunter was located at the scene. He was known to be a convicted felon and had a rifle in his possession. The subject was placed under arrest for possession of firearm by convicted felon and violation of Georgia's controlled substance act.

Later that day Cpl. Adam Loudermilk and RFC Eric Isom utilized Colt to find a hunter in the Jefferson area. Colt picked up a track near the hunter's vehicle. The track led to an empty ladder stand near the vehicles. Fresh mud was observed on the ladder rungs. RFC Isom gave Colt the command to continue to track. The track led into the woods and to a fresh pile of corn. The hunter was located in a camouflaged ladder stand approximately 35 yards from the corn pile. He received citations for hunting big game over bait and hunting deer without wearing fluorescent orange.

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

### **CLARKE COUNTY**

On January 3, Cpl. Mark Patterson and RFC Tim Butler cited three subjects for hunting ducks over bait. Additionally, one of the individuals was cited for hunting without a license. Three ducks were confiscated.

### **WILKES COUNTY**

On December 30<sup>th</sup> Cpl. Mark Patterson was notified by Wilkes County 911 of an incident on the Wilkes County parcel of the Broad River WMA. A father and son had been deer hunting and were making their way back to their vehicle through the woods when the father suffered an apparent heart attack. Responders from Wilkes County and Lincoln County EMA as well as Sgt. Brian Carter and Cpl. Mark Patterson responded to the scene. After locating the subjects in rough terrain, first responders carried the victim out to a road for transport to a local hospital.

### **RICHMOND COUNTY**

On January 1, Cpl. Ben Payne patrolled Richmond and Burke County checking duck and deer hunters. Late in the afternoon he observed a vehicle parked on the side of the road near Brier Creek. After running the tag it was determined that the individual had not purchased a hunting license. A food plot was located next to the road and an individual was in a stand. Cpl. Payne checked the hunter and noticed an odor of beer coming from his person. The hunter admitted to drinking beer and stated that he had 3. Cpl. Payne then retrieved the weapon and a cooler of beer from the stand. After conducting field sobriety exercises it was determined that the hunter was not less safe under the influence per state law. Citations were written for hunting without license and hunting without big game license. The hunter was given guidance on hunting while consuming alcohol.

### **WASHINGTON COUNTY**

Corporal Michael Crawley and K9 Storm patrolled for duck activity in Washington County on Saturday January 4. Crawley checked several duck hunters in different areas. All hunters looked to be in compliance and no citations were written.

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

No activity to report.

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

### **WORTH COUNTY**

On the evening of January 2<sup>nd</sup>, Cpl.'s Greg Wade and Robbie Griner were checking a complaint area and located a truck parked in the back of a field. The two Rangers made contact with a hunter who had no hunting license or identification on him. Upon checking the subject through DNR's licensing system and verifying his identity, it was determined that he was a convicted felon. He was then placed under arrest for felon in possession of a firearm and transported to jail.

## **BROOKS COUNTY**

On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, RFC Jon Penuel listened for morning duck hunting activity in an area where he had previously located a pond baited with corn. At daybreak, RFC Penuel heard shots coming from the area of the baited pond. RFC Penuel checked eight hunters as they exited the pond, charging each subject with hunting ducks over bait. Other violations encountered were, hunting without a license, hunting without federal duck stamp, hunting without Georgia waterfowl conservation stamp and hunting with lead shot.

## **MILLER COUNTY**

On December 28<sup>th</sup>, Ranger Steve Thomas checked several subjects hunting ducks on private property. One of the hunters was in possession of 6 wood ducks and was cited for taking over the daily limit, and his ducks were confiscated.

## **DECATUR COUNTY**

On January 1<sup>st</sup>, Sgt. Rick Sellars responded to a complaint of subjects hunting deer on Silver Lake WMA. Two hunters were located and cited for hunting on a closed WMA. The area was only open for small game hunting at the time.

## **GRADY COUNTY**

On January 2<sup>nd</sup>, Sgt. Rick Sellars conducted a patrol on an area where he had received two separate complaints of night hunting activity. Shortly before midnight, a vehicle was observed illuminating fields with headlights, and was stopped. The driver of the vehicle admitted to seeing a big buck in the area earlier, and stated that they went home to get a rifle and shoot him. Both occupants of the vehicle were arrested for hunting deer at night, hunting big game from a public road, and hunting from a vehicle.

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

### **BACON COUNTY**

On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, Sgt. Patrick Dupree and Cpl. Mark Pool were patrolling for duck hunting activity in the northeast portion of the county when they encountered four hunters as they exited a creek swamp from duck hunting. All four hunters were in compliance with all waterfowl regulations. The successful hunters had harvested six wood ducks and two hooded mergansers.

### **PIERCE COUNTY**

On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, Sgt. Patrick Dupree and Cpl. Mark Pool were patrolling for deer dogging activity in eastern portion of the county. The officers encountered more than twenty hunters and verbal guidance was given to several for operating a motor vehicle without deer dog permit number displayed, hunting deer with unmarked dogs, hunting deer without fluorescent orange, and failure to obtain deer harvest record.

### **EMANUEL COUNTY**

On January 1<sup>st</sup>, Cpl. Eddie Akins responded to a complaint of illegal deer dogging off Lambs Bridge Road near Swainsboro. Investigation of the incident resulted in three hunters being checked and three violations being documented. The violations were for hunting without a deer dog license, hunting without a big game license and operating vehicle without deer dog permit displayed.

### **CLINCH COUNTY**

On January 1st, Ranger Daniel North was patrolling GA Hwy 177 for hunting activity when he stopped with a group of hunters parked alongside the roadway. While talking with the hunters he learned they were hunting deer with dogs and had just released some hounds from the road. No deer-dog permit was displayed on the vehicle and a loaded .243 rifle was observed sitting on top of the dog box in the back of the truck near where one of the individuals was standing. Violations of hunting from public road and operating a motor vehicle without deer-dog permit displayed were documented.

## **WARE COUNTY**

On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, Cpl. Mark Pool met with a complainant about a hunting without permission issue. While Cpl. Mark Pool was being shown the property in question five hunters were observed releasing hunting dogs. The hunters stated that they had permission to hunt the property they were hunting on. Further field investigation revealed the hunters did have permission to hunt the property but one hunter was issued one citation for hunting without a license.

On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, Cpl. Mark Pool and Ranger Sam Williams responded to a report of a missing boater on the Satilla River north of Waycross. A 52-year old man had embarked from Jamestown landing earlier in the morning. When he did not return at the agreed time, family members conducted a search by boat and could not locate the man. Ware County 911 was contacted just before dark. Due to the flooded stage of the river and the dangers involved in a nighttime search under high-water conditions, a vessel search was postponed until first light on January 4<sup>th</sup>. Sgt. Patrick Dupree, Cpl. Jason Shipes, Cpl. Mark Pool, and Ranger Sam Williams quickly located the swamped vessel a few miles upstream, but the boater was not located. Officers are continuing the search.

## **LOWNDES COUNTY**

On December 28<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Tommy Daughtrey located an early morning duck shoot near Hahira. Violations of hunting w/o a license, hunting w/o a GA waterfowl license and hunting w/o a federal duck stamp were documented.

On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, while patrolling Grand Bay WMA, Cpl. Tommy Daughtrey checked several duck hunters. Violations of hunting w/o a license and hunting w/o a GA waterfowl stamp were documented. Also, the same morning several deer hunters were checked. One violation of hunting w/o a big game license was documented.

## **ATKINSON COUNTY**

On December 30<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Tim Hutto checked a group of duck hunters in the Kirkland area. Violations for hunting without a federal duck stamp, failure to sign federal duck stamp, and hunting with an unplugged shotgun were addressed.

## **BERRIEN COUNTY**

On Tuesday December 30<sup>th</sup>, Sergeant Morty Wood followed up on a report of a large quantity of cow manure that had been illegally dumped on private property and into a creek on Country Road in Berrien County. A deputy had responded to the call the previous day, taken pictures, and forwarded them to Sergeant Wood. Sergeant Wood located the dump site which measured approximately 520 yards in length along the side of the road, in the ditch, in the creek and on the complainant's property. It was determined that another load had also been dumped in the same site earlier that day. Sergeant Wood located another illegal dump site on Lankford Road and determined that the manure was coming from a nearby dairy farm operation. After interviewing the owner of the dairy farming operation it was determined that one of his workers had conducted the illegal activities without the owner's knowledge. The Georgia Department of Agriculture and DNR's Environmental Protection Division was contacted and is assisting in the investigation.



On January 1<sup>st</sup>, Cpl. Tim Hutto patrolled Paradise Public Fishing Area. During the patrol Cpl. Hutto observed a subject consuming alcohol and throwing his beer cans into a wooded area behind him. The subject was questioned and charged with littering and illegal consumption of alcohol on a PFA. Violations for fishing without a license and fishing without a WMA license were also addressed on other parts of the PFA.

On Wednesday December 31<sup>st</sup>, Sergeant Morty Wood was patrolling Paradise Public Fishing Area when he received a call from the Berrien County 911 dispatch concerning rifles being shot near the area. The rounds were hitting near where persons were actively engaged in fishing activities on the public fishing area. Sergeant Wood met with the complainants and determined an approximate area where the shots were coming from. Sergeant Wood located 3 male and 2 female subjects that were shooting shotguns into a privately owned pond. There were also spent rifle cartridges there and they admitted to shooting rifles into the pond also. When told of the results of their carelessness, the subjects immediately agreed to cease shooting and put all of the firearms away.

On Saturday January 3, 2015 Sergeant Morty Wood received a call from the Nashville Police Department requesting his assistance. After arriving on scene it was determined that a woman had beat and severely injured a Gopher Tortoise with a wooden shovel handle for no apparent reason. The tortoise was still alive but its plastron (underside) was cracked with some shell missing and the tortoise was bleeding from those wounds. Sergeant Wood charged the woman with cruelty to animals. The injured tortoise was transported to a rehabilitation facility for treatment.



## **WILCOX COUNTY**

On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, Corporal Dan Stiles and Corporal John A. Stokes conducted a Hull Identification Number inspection site at the Bowen's Mill Fish Hatchery. One vessel was inspected and the owner was assisted with registration issues.

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

### **LIBERTY COUNTY**

On Jan. 3<sup>rd</sup>, Cpl. Jay Morgan and RFC Kiel Toney investigated a hunting incident that occurred off Shell Rd. on Riceboro Sportsman Hunting Club. The shooter shot at two deer that was being chased by hunting dogs that ran between the two hunters. The victim was approximately 110 yards away and out of sight of the shooter due to thick underbrush. The victim was holding his shotgun with both hands when he was struck by a single 00 buckshot pellet in his right hand between his pinkie and ring fingers. The shotgun pellet then struck the stock of his shotgun preventing it from entering his body. The victim was driven to Liberty Regional Memorial Hospital where he was treated and then transferred to a Savannah hospital to have surgery on his hand since the pellet struck part of a bone in his hand. He returned home that night. After leaving the scene, Cpl. Morgan found a deer-dogging hunter standing in the bed of his truck holding a loaded shotgun as he was parked on the shoulder of a paved roadway. The hunter was cited for hunting big game from a public road.

### **CHATHAM COUNTY**

On December 31<sup>st</sup> Cpl. Buster Cooper received a call from the Port Wentworth Police Department regarding three individuals entering a wooded area behind a subdivision. Cpl. Cooper responded and encountered three individuals, one adult and two juveniles. The adult was cited for hunting without permission, hunting without a license and big license, and for not wearing his fluorescent orange vest.

On January 2<sup>nd</sup> Sgt. Cindy Miller was patrolling Chatham County when she noticed a small boat with two individuals loaded with what appeared to be shellfish. When she checked them at the boat ramp they had seven bushels of oysters which were illegally harvested. Sgt. Miller cited the two individuals for possession of over the limit of oysters and picking in an unauthorized area.



### **WAYNE COUNTY**

On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, RFC John Evans was on patrol when he encountered a vehicle shining a clear cut with its headlights and a handheld light. RFC Evans stopped the vehicle which had 5 occupants and 2 rifles. Three of them were drinking and underage. One of the men had warrants for Larceny and Theft by Taking. All 5 subjects were cited for hunting deer at night, hunting from a vehicle, and hunting from a public road.

On December 27<sup>th</sup>, RFC Evans was patrolling the Sansavilla WMA when he encountered 4 men riding ATVs illegally. RFC Evans noticed two of the ATVs had been hotwired. Two of the men had no identification and one of them seemed to be lying about his name and date of birth. After further investigation, RFC Evans found at least 3 of the ATVs had missing or altered VIN numbers. The Wayne County Sherriff's Office was called and they were able to determine the subject's true identity and that he had warrants for his arrest. The Wayne County Investigator had arrested three of the four men previously for ATV theft. All four ATVs were towed and impounded. The subjects were cited with illegal ATV use on public roads and one suspect was arrested. More charges are pending further investigation of the ATVs.