

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
March 8 - 14, 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)

WHITFIELD COUNTY

On March 8th, Cpl. Casey Jones completed a lengthy investigation involving two suspects in Whitfield County. In October 2014, Cpl. Casey Jones and Cpl. James Keener responded to a complaint of hunting on property without landowner permission. Two suspects were apprehended hunting on the property and were also found to be hunting deer over bait. Evidence was seized from the scene. After interviewing suspects and witnesses, and executing multiple search warrants, more than 40 hunting violations were uncovered in Georgia and Tennessee dating back to 2012. Thirteen buck deer, two doe deer, three turkeys, and one coyote were found to have been killed illegally. All of the wildlife pictured has been seized by DNR Rangers. Two suspects face multiple charges including killing deer out of season, killing turkey out of season, hunting on lands of another without permission, and hunting big game over bait.



Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

HALL COUNTY

On March 10th, RFC Eric Isom and K9 Colt with assistance from Ranger Chris Kernahan spoke to Etiquette and Lake Lanier Youth Leadership group. RFC Isom spoke about the DNR Law Enforcement K9 Unit history and functions. In addition, Colt preformed K9 demonstrations for the group.

On March 12th, Cpl. Jason Roberson caught two subjects who were cast netting gamefish in Squirrel Creek on Lake Lanier. The subjects had a total of 59 bream, 23 crappie, 2 bass, and 1 yellow perch. The fish were confiscated and both individuals received citations for the violations.

HART COUNTY

On March 8th, Cpl. Craig Fulghum responded to a call on Lake Hartwell about a possible body floating in the Shoal Creek area of Lake Hartwell. The location was in the area of where a Mr. Brady Hamby of West Union, South Carolina went missing on Feb. 11th. Cpl. Fulghum responded along with the Sheriff and Coroner of Hart County. After arriving at the scene it was confirmed that an adult male was floating near the shoreline. The body was recovered and sent to the GBI crime lab in Atlanta for positive identification and cause of death. A few days later it was confirmed that it was the body of Mr. Hamby from West Union, South Carolina. The cause of death was determined to be accidental drowning according to the GBI crime lab report.

On March 9th, Cpl. Craig Fulghum received a call from a landowner in Hart County about two subjects hunting wild pigs on his property without permission. The landowner had a picture of the subjects on a trail camera on his property. Cpl. Fulghum took the picture and identified both subjects during his investigation. Both individuals were interviewed and admitted to hunting without permission on the date in question. Citations were issued for hunting without permission to both subjects and one warning was issued for hunting without a license.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

CLARKE COUNTY

On March 8th Sgt. Brian Carter, Cpl. Mark Patterson, and RFC Tim Butler patrolled municipal lakes and public fishing areas. During the course of the patrol a number of violations were documented including operating a vessel without personal flotation devices, operating a vessel without registration, and fishing without a license. Also two subjects were cited for fishing without permission.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Corporal Micheal Crawley and K9 Storm were patrolling for turkey hunting activity near Linton in Washington County. Corporal Crawley found a vehicle parked on the edge of the road. Crawley suspected the driver of the vehicle was turkey hunting out of season. After several hours of surveillance Crawley approached the suspect who was in camo pants and t-shirt. Crawley questioned the subject about turkey hunting. The subject denied having a gun or any hunting equipment. Crawley took the subjects information down and told the subject he was free to leave. The subject left as Crawley deployed K9 Storm to assist Crawley with finding the gun. Within a few minutes the subject returned to the scene and admitted to Crawley he had been hunting. He admitted he had saw a vehicle parked several hundred yards down the road and got scared so he hid his gun and turkey vest. Crawley, K9 Storm and the subject returned to the woods to find the vest and gun buried in a pile of brush. The subject was charged with hunting out of season.

NEWTON COUNTY

On March 14, Cpl. David Allen taught a hunter education class in Newton County. Eleven hunters were certified.

LAKE OCONEE

On March 14, Sgt. John Harwell and Ranger Jason Harrison patrolled Greene and Putnam counties for boating activity. While patrolling, fifteen vessels were checked and several violations were cited. Among the violations were no fire extinguishers, underage child riding in moving vessel without a PFD on and operating vessel with insufficient PFD's.

RICHMOND COUNTY

On March 8, Cpl. Payne patrolled Richmond County checking fishing without permission complaints. At one location off Doug Barnard parkway, Cpl. Payne observed two individuals fishing from a boat in the middle of a pond. As he approached the two individuals they began to paddle to the opposite side of the pond. Cpl. Payne drove around the pond and apprehended the individuals. The adult was issued a citation for fishing without permission and the juvenile was given verbal guidance.

On March 9, Cpl. Payne patrolled Richmond County checking private properties for turkey bait. While checking a hunt club off Story Mill Rd. he observed a fox in a leg hold trap. He then found additional traps located on the property. None of the traps had tags showing who they belonged to. As Cpl. Payne attempted to set up surveillance a truck pulled into the property. He questioned the subject in the vehicle and learned that he put the traps out. Cpl. Payne checked his license but the subject had no trapping license. He did not have a catch pole either. The subject stated he was only coyote hunting and did not know about the fox, but had killed a possum in another trap yesterday. Cpl. Payne assisted with getting the fox out of the trap and taking up all traps on the property. Citations were written for trapping without a license and failure to carry a choke stick. Warnings were issued for trapping out of season and failure to put tags on traps.

TALIAFERRO COUNTY

On March 15th, RFC Robert Timmerman apprehended two adults and two juveniles who were hunting turkeys over a baited area. The action was a result from an original complaint of hunting out of season. The adults were cited and released.

WARREN COUNTY

On March 14th, Cpl. Ryan Swain, RFC Robert Timmerman and Ranger Michael Madden participated in an anthrax drill at Warren County High School. The Rangers provided traffic control to role players who were being treated for anthrax exposure.

LINCOLN COUNTY

On March 15th, Cpl. Ryan Swain and Ranger Michael Madden conducted a concentrated fishing patrol of Northern Lincoln County. Three subjects were apprehended and cited for fishing without a fishing license.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

MUSCOGEE COUNTY

On March 8th, Cpl. Mitch Oliver and Cpl. Jeremy Bolen patrolled the Chattahoochee River in Columbus by ATV along the river walk. Several fishermen were checked and 2 warnings were issued for fishing without a license.

On March 14th, Cpl. Mitch Oliver checked fishermen at the Rotary Park boat ramp along the Chattahoochee River in Columbus. Cpl. Oliver was focusing on the White Bass and Stripe Bass creel limits. Cpl. Oliver checked 3 fishermen that were over their daily limit and confiscated a total of 20 fish. The 3 fishermen were issued citations for possession of over the daily creel limit and the fish were donated to the local Valley Rescue Mission. Two other fishermen were issued warnings for non-resident fishing without a license.

PIKE COUNTY

On Monday, March 9th, at about 1530 hours Sgt. Wanda Roberts received a call about a boat on Still Branch Reservoir that was against the bank, its motor running with no one around it. Sgt. Roberts contacted Cpl. Keith Waddell and RFC Kevin Godbee who responded to the scene. Cpl. Waddell arrived and spoke with the complainants. They got into the complainant's boat and soon found a deceased 3 year old child floating in the water. The child did not have on a life vest. RFC Godbee had arrived during this time and assisted with the recovery of the child. They determined that at least one adult was also missing. Multiple rangers came to the scene for the next day and a half to search for the adult. At about 1230 hours on Tuesday, March 10th, using side scan sonar the child's father's body was found several hundred yards from where the child was recovered. Also assisting in the recovery efforts were the Pike County Emergency Services, Pike County Sheriff's Office, Pike County EMA, Upson County EMA and Fire and other state and local agencies.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

MACON COUNTY

On March 11th, Ranger Jesse Harrison received a complaint of someone dumping household trash along the side of the roadway. After a brief investigation Ranger Harrison located and cited the individual for unlawful dumping.

CRISP COUNTY

On March 15th, Ranger Jesse Harrison was patrolling Georgia Veterans State Park for boating and fishing activity when he encountered and cited four fishermen for fishing without licenses.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

LAURENS COUNTY

On March 14 and 17, Corporal Dan Stiles patrolled the Beaverdam Wildlife Management Area (WMA). Fourteen subjects were checked at the shooting range for license compliance and firing range rule compliance. Two violations were documented for entering a designated fee area without Georgia Outdoor Recreation Pass (GORP). Four other subjects were given verbal guidance for failing to wear eye protection on the shooting range and departed the WMA.

On March 14, Corporal Dan Stiles patrolled the Hugh M. Gillis Public Fishing Area. One angler was checked for license compliance. No violations were documented.

DODGE COUNTY

On March 8, Ranger First Class Allen Mills held a Hunter Education class at Dodge County Public Fishing Area. Four students received their certifications.

WHEELER COUNTY

On March 10, Ranger First Class Allen Mills held a Hunter Education Class at Little Ocmulgee State Park. Two students received their certifications.

On March 9, Ranger First Class Rodney Horne attended and successfully completed a week long boating incident reconstruction course administered by the Florida Wildlife Commission and the National Association of State Boating Law Administrator's (NASBLA Level I) training at the Florida Public Safety Training Institute.

BEN HILL COUNTY

On March 14, Corporal John A Stokes patrolled creeks and Paulks Park for fishing activity. One violation was documented for a non-resident fishing without a license.

BULLOCH COUNTY

Around midnight on the morning of March 12th, Bulloch County Sheriff's Office stopped a vehicle off the Nevils-Denmark Road with a recently killed deer. Dispatch contacted Cpl. Eddie Akins who met up with the deputy and two suspects. After questioning the suspects and investigating the incident, it was determined that the deer had been hit by a vehicle and the two subjects dispatched the deer and was carrying it home with them. No charges were made. Verbal guidance was given on how to handle this type of situation in the future in an effort to eliminate problems and confusion.

SCREVEN COUNTY

On March 9, Cpl. Shaymus McNeely and Sgt. Don Dasher attended a meeting at Tuckahoe WMA with Game Management personnel and representatives from the State Archaeologists office. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss a security plan for the Revolutionary War battlefield site located on the property. After the meeting, officers apprehended a subject operating a metal detector on the WMA. A citation was issued for using an electronic device on state property.

EFFINGHAM COUNTY

On March 14, Cpl. Shaymus McNeely and Sgt. Don Dasher visited with a group of youth hunters participating in a youth turkey hunt on Mclaws bay Conservation Area. Officers answered questions about turkey hunting and GA DNR Law Enforcement Division.

TATTNALL COUNTY

On March 14, RFC Clint Jarriel traveled to an area near Collins where he previously located possible turkey bait (cracked corn). After a brief foot patrol of the property two adults and two youth were located hunting from ground blinds in the bait area. Both adults were charged for hunting big game over bait.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

BRYAN COUNTY

On March 14th, RFC Jack Thain and Cpl. Jay Morgan conducted a Joint Enforcement Agreement (JEA) patrol from St. Catherine's Sound to Ossabaw Sound checking for snapper/grouper fishermen returning from the offshore reefs. Later that day, Cpl. Morgan checked King's Ferry boat ramp on the Ogeechee River, checking several boaters and fishermen. One boater, who was 20 years old, was arrested for operating a vessel under the influence after giving a breath test with a reading of 0.060. The legal limit for persons under 21 years of age is 0.020. The operator was also cited for possession of alcoholic beverages by an underage person.

On the evening of March 14th, Ranger Jason Miller observed a boat without any lights heading out onto the Ogeechee River from the public boat ramp at Ft. McAllister. RFC Jack Thain arrived to assist as the two rangers waited for the boat to return. They later saw the boat return to the ramp without any navigation lights on and cited the operator for operating a vessel without any lights during hours of darkness.

LIBERTY COUNTY

On March 12th, RFC Jack Thain, Cpl. Bill Bryson, and Sgt. Phillip Scott conducted a Marine Mammal patrol from St. Catherine's Sound to Sapelo Sound, checking for violations and advising boaters/fishermen about the dangers of illegally feeding bottlenose dolphins.

OFFSHORE/FEDERAL WATERS

On March 9th, Ranger Jason Miller and RFC Jack Thain conducted a Joint Enforcement Agreement (JEA) patrol out to the CAT reef offshore of Ossabaw Island, checking for federal fishing violations. Upon returning to the DNR dock at Demeries Creek, they cited a boater for operating above idle speed within 100 feet of a dock.

WAYNE COUNTY

On March 8, 2015 Cpl. Randy Aspinwall was patrolling the Sandsavilla WMA for illegal activity. He checked a couple of hog hunters. One of the hunters did not have a hunting license or WMA stamp. Neither hunter had fluorescent orange on as required. Citations were written for the violations.

On March 8, 2015 Cpl. Randy Aspinwall was patrolling the Pennholloway WMA for illegal activity. He checked a group of four hog hunters. None of the hunters were wearing the required fluorescent orange vest. Citations were written to the group. Aspinwall then gave the hunters fluorescent orange vests so they could continue hunting.