

# Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report  
May 31 – June 6, 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 June 3<sup>rd</sup>, RFC Zack Hardy assisted Cherokee County kids with a kids fishing event on Stamp Creek inside the Pine Log WMA. Thirty-three kids assisted the Fisheries Management personnel stock approximately 1,500 trout into Stamp Creek. After stocking the trout, the kids then began trying to catch the trout for a fish fry they were going to have at the end of the week.



On June 4<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Byron Young and Intern Ray Kennedy responded to a call on Red Top Mt. State Park in reference to a dog running down a fawn deer and killing it. With the assistance of hikers on the trail and RFC Zack Hardy, the officers located the owners of the dog. The dog was let off leash on the Iron Hill Trail and was witnessed killing the fawn. The owner was issued a citation for violating park regulation for the dog being off a leash. The officers removed the carcass from the park.



On June 5<sup>th</sup>, RFC Zack Hardy received information that a boating incident had occurred the previous day on Allatoona Lake. RFC Hardy contacted the complainant and was advised of a boating incident involving two personal watercrafts (PWC) had occurred just before sunset on June 4 in the area of Allatoona Landing. The owner of the PWC's allowed another family to borrow his PWC's in an agreement that they were going to test drive them and possibly buy them. However, the family that borrowed the PWC's, allowed two juveniles without the proper boating safety certification to operate the vessels. The two juveniles ended up colliding with one another causing major damage to both vessels. Both operators were ejected from their PWC but only one sustained minor injuries. RFC Hardy met with the parents of the juveniles and issued the father a citation for allowing under aged persons to operate a PWC unlawfully. RFC Hardy completed the boating incident report due to the amount of damage sustained to the PWC's.

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

### **HALL COUNTY**

On June 6<sup>th</sup>, RFC Kevin Goss and Cpl. Jason Roberson observed a vessel coming out of the "No Wake Zone" at Sunset Cove above idle speed. During the stop the operator showed obvious signs of impairment due to alcohol. After conducting field sobriety exercises with the boat operator, RFC Kevin Goss placed the operator under arrest for BUI and took him to Hall County Jail.

On June 6<sup>th</sup>, Corporal Jason Roberson arrested one subject for operating a vessel under the influence of alcohol.

### **RABUN COUNTY**

On June 6<sup>th</sup>, RFC Anne Britt and Intern Holdan Kellar responded to Rabun County to assist with the rescue of an injured hiker on Blackrock State Park. The hiker was hiking on the West Fork James Edmonds trail with family when the hiker slipped and fell causing a compound fracture to the their leg. Rabun County EMS, Fire and Rescue responded with Blackrock State Park Ranger Beth Gilbert and park assistant Cassidy Gerstorff. Ranger Gilbert and Gerstorff cleared a trail for Fire/Rescue to retrieve the patient by using a Polaris Ranger. The Rabun County EMS transported the hiker to Angel Hospital in Franklin, NC.

On June 6<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Derek Dillard and Rabun County Deputy Mike Mazarky stopped a boat on Lake Burton for being on the wrong side of the lake and also having a lot of alcohol on the boat. While Corporal Dillard and Deputy Mazarky were conducting a safety inspection to make sure all of the required safety equipment was on the boat, they noticed that the operator was very unstable on his feet and had a very difficult time grabbing and holding on to things. Furthermore, he knocked over a beer on a table while he was trying to grab a cell phone. The operator refused to do any field sobriety testing and he was arrested for operating a vessel under the influence.

## **UNION COUNTY**

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, Cpl. Kevin Dyer and Union County Deputy Sheriff Andrew Hammonds patrolled the boat ramps and fishing access areas on Nottely Lake due to heavy thunderstorms in the area. Cpl. Dyer issued citations for fishing without a license. The Officers patrolled Cooper Creek Wildlife Management Area and Lake Winfield Scott for boating and fishing violations. Multiple violations were detected and citations /warnings were issued for fishing without a license and fishing without a trout license.

On June 6<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Kevin Dyer and Union County Deputy Sheriff Andrew Hammonds conducted a boat safety patrol on Nottely Lake. Cpl. Dyer and D/S Hammonds detected multiple boating violations and issued citations and warnings for operating a vessel with insufficient amount of Personal Flotation Devices, towing a skier with a Personal Water Craft without a spotter, operating a vessel with an unserviceable fire extinguisher, operating a vessel with improper navigation lights during the hours of darkness and allowing a child under the age of 13 to ride in a vessel without wearing a Personal Flotation Device.

## **STEPHENS COUNTY**

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, RFC Brandon Pierce and Sgt. Stan Elrod patrolled the counties ramps and fishing areas for any boating safety/fishing activity. As a result, numerous fishing licenses were checked. A total of three citations and warnings were issued. The violations consisted of fishing without a license.

## **MADISON COUNTY**

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, RFC Brandon Pierce and RFC Shane Sartor worked the Broad River for any illegal activity. As a result four citations were issued. The violations consisted of VGCSA (less than an ounce) and fishing without a license on person. Later that evening the officers received a call in reference to a missing juvenile kayaking on the river. The subject was last seen with family, got separated, and never seen since. The subject never took out at the take out point on the river. Several locations along the river were checked by the officers and also DNR Aviation was called in to fly the river. The subject was located approximately six miles from the take out point, still kayaking. The individual was taken off the river and transported to a safe location. The officers then waited for a family member who had also been kayaking the river. They continued behind the subject trying to location them as well. Everyone was located and returned to a safe location.

On June 6<sup>th</sup>, RFC Brandon Pierce and RFC Shane Sartor received a call at around 9:30 PM in reference to two missing kayakers on the Broad River. Of the three individuals in the group two of them were missing. With very little information to go on the officers checked several locations along the river in hopes of locating the subjects. Upon checking a location the subjects were found staged around a residence along the river. The subjects were transported to a safe location and cleared of any injuries. The search ended and all subjects made it home early the next morning.

### **HARTWELL LAKE**

On June 6<sup>th</sup>, RFC Brandon and RFC Shane Sartor patrolled the lake for any boating safety/fishing activity. Several fishing licenses and numerous boats were checked for proper safety equipment. As a result, nine citations and warnings were issued. The violations consisted of operating a vessel without CGA PFD's, operating a vessel with insufficient PFD's, operating a vessel without a throwable device, operating a vessel without a fire extinguisher, failure to obey regulatory marker, operating vessel without registration, towing skier with PWC without observer on board, and allowing underage child to ride in moving vessel without wearing a PFD.

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

### **ELBERT COUNTY**

On June 5<sup>th</sup> Sgt. Brian Carter, Cpl. Julian Wilkins, RFC Tim Butler, RFC Shane Sartor, and RFC Brandon Pierce responded to a call of a missing 15 year old on the Broad River. A helicopter from DNR Aviation also responded to the call. The juvenile had become separated from his companions while kayaking on the river along the Elbert and Madison County Line. The subject was found unharmed a considerable distance down river from the planned pick up point.

On June 6<sup>th</sup> Sgt. Brian Carter, Cpl. Julian Wilkins, and RFC Tim Butler patrolled Lake Russell by vessel. Violations addressed during the patrol included operating a vessel with expired registration, operating a vessel with improper lights and failure to obey a regulatory marker.

### **COLUMBIA COUNTY**

On June 6<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Brian Hobbins, RFC Bobby Timmerman, and RNG Micheal Madden responded to a PWC accident on the Savannah River. A 49 year old white male operating a PWC struck a tree in the river near the shoreline causing him to be ejected from the PWC. Victim sustained injuries and was taken to nearby hospital for treatment.

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

### **JONES COUNTY**

On the afternoon of June 1<sup>st</sup>, RFC Jeremy Reese responded to a complaint of an osprey having been found deceased. Evidence was taken and the incident is still under investigation.

### **PUTNAM COUNTY**

On the afternoon of June 6<sup>th</sup>, Ranger Matt Johnson, RFC Jeremy Reese, Cpl. Lynn Stanford and Sgt. Bo Kelly patrolled Lake Sinclair. Approximately 40 boats were stopped and numerous citations were issued for various boating infractions. One boating incident was worked after 2 PWC's collided resulting in only vessel damage. Three boaters were arrested for boating under the influence and were transported to the Putnam County Jail.

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

### **THOMAS COUNTY**

On June 3<sup>rd</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>, Ranger Eric White participated in the Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts of America's Twilight Summer Camp program. Ranger White discussed the importance of fishing regulations, assisted them with assembling rods and tackle, and supervised the group as they fished in a nearby pond. The activities helped scouts earn merit badges and a great time was had by all.



*Ranger Eric White with Scouts*

### **WORTH COUNTY**

On the night of June 5<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Greg Wade was patrolling a complaint area for hog hunters hunting without permission. While checking the area, Cpl. Wade located an unoccupied truck and two coon hunters nearby. Neither hunter had a hunting license or written permission to be hunting the property. Charges are pending.

### **LAKE WORTH**

On June 6<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Greg Wade worked an on-going complaint of boaters violating the "NO WAKE-IDLE ONLY" portion of the Kinchafoonee Creek. During his patrol he cited five boat operators for violating the regulated area and for PFD violations.

### **LAKE BLACKSHEAR**

On the night of June 6<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Clint Martin and Ranger Jesse Harrison were conducting a vessel patrol when they observed a vessel being operated without lights. The vessel was stopped, and after a brief investigation it was determined that the operator of the vessel was under the influence of alcohol. The operator of the vessel was placed under arrest for operating a vessel without lights during hours of darkness and operating a vessel under the influence. He was then transported to the Crisp County Jail for processing.

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

### **DODGE COUNTY**

On June 6<sup>th</sup>, Sergeant James McLaughlin and Corporal Dan Stiles assisted with a Kids Fishing Event (KFE) at the Dodge County Public Fishing Area. Approximately 170 children ages 3-16 participated in the event. Cpl. Stiles and Sgt. McLaughlin also operated the Laser Shot shooting simulator during the KFE in which 45 children participated.

### **WHEELER COUNTY**

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, at 12:30 a.m. Ranger First Class Rodney Horne was on patrol and stopped at a convenience store in Glennwood, GA. Officer Horne witnessed a male subject drive up to the store and as he approached RFC Horne, Officer Horne could smell a strong odor of alcoholic beverage coming from the subject. RFC Horne began to investigate the subject for driving under the influence and attempted to summon two other law enforcement agencies to turn the investigation over to, but no officers were available at the time. Officer Horne initiated standardized field sobriety exercises on the subject and the male fled on foot from Officer Horne. Officer Horne obtained arrest warrants for the subject for driving on a suspended license, operating a vehicle with a suspended registration, and fleeing and attempting to elude a police officer.

### **EVANS COUNTY**

On June 3rd, Ranger First Class Debbie Brannen received a complaint in reference to someone having a juvenile owl at their house. Upon investigation of the complaint one violation of possession of wildlife without a rehabilitator permit was documented.

On June 4th, Ranger First Class Debbie Brannen checked fishing and boating activity along the Canoochee River. Approximately 12 licenses were checked and one violation for fishing without a license was documented.

### **ECHOLS COUNTY**

On June 6<sup>th</sup>, Sgt. Patrick Dupree observed a plume of black smoke arising from a subdivision off Kinsey Road. A small debris fire that contained mostly plastics and other synthetics from old furniture was discovered in the yard of a residence. Sgt. Dupree spoke with the resident and explained what items could legally be burned. The resident agreed to put the fire out and transport these type items to the local landfill in the future.

### **WARE COUNTY**

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ranger Judd Sears patrolled popular fishing areas along the Suwannee River Sill. Ranger Sears encountered a number of fishermen during this patrol. While checking for license requirements and creel limits, Ranger Sears found one individual fishing without a license. One citation for fishing without a license was issued during this patrol.

On June 6<sup>th</sup>, Ranger Judd Sears and Ranger Sam Williams patrolled several boat ramps in Ware County for boating safety requirements and creel limits. During the afternoon several boaters were encountered. Violations documented were operating a vessel without life jackets, operating a vessel with insufficient life jackets, allowing underage child to ride in a moving vessel without wearing a life jacket, and operating a vessel with an unserviceable fire extinguisher.

### **CLINCH COUNTY**

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, Ranger Judd Sears was contacted by Corporal Jason Shipes in reference to a logging crew that reported a young injured bird of prey north of Fargo. Ranger Sears responded to the area and located the bird. The bird (possibly an immature swallow-tailed kite) appeared to be unharmed but being a juvenile it was unable to fly. Ranger Sears transported the bird to Valdosta to a raptor rehabilitator.



*Immature raptor discovered in Clinch County.*

### **CHARLTON COUNTY**

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, Ranger Judd Sears, Ranger Sam Williams, and Ranger First Class David Brady participated in the Jr. Sheriff's Academy held in Folkston. During the morning, Ranger Williams provided an opportunity for the cadets to use the shooting simulator to familiarize themselves with safe gun handling practices and shooting techniques, while RFC Brady and Ranger Sears discussed boating safety and gave the cadets an opportunity to look through the SAFE boat. During the afternoon session, the officers participated in the BB-gun competition with the cadets. The officers provided shooting tips and served as range officers. There were a total of 45 kids from the local area that participated in the week-long program.



### **SCREVEN COUNTY**

On May 31 and June 1 Region VI Rangers continued working a search and rescue operation, for the missing boat operator on the Savannah River near Blue Springs. The boat operator had gone missing when his boat flipped on the evening of May 30. The multi- agency response was coordinated by GA DNR Law Enforcement Division, and included Screven County Fire and Sheriff's Departments, South Carolina DNR Dive Team, GA State Patrol Dive Team, Burke County EMA Dive Team, and Region VI Rangers. The missing boater was found deceased on the morning of June 1. The incident is still being investigated.

On June 6, Corporal Shaymus McNeely conducted a vessel patrol of the Ogeechee River. Several boats and fisherman were checked. Citations were issued for operating a vessel without lifejackets and operating a vessel without a fire extinguisher.

### **EFFINGHAM COUNTY**

On June 6th 2015, Ranger Jordan Crawford and Sergeant Don Dasher patrolled the Ogeechee River looking for fishing and boating activity. Several boats were checked with one violation documented for insufficient PFDs.

### **SCREVEN COUNTY/BULLOCH COUNTY**

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015 Sergeant Don Dasher, Corporal Shaymus McNeely and Ranger Jordan Crawford conducted an area check of the Highway 301 boat ramp on the Ogeechee River. Several anglers were checked with no violations documented. However, the last boat checked had 106 redbreast bream on board and was over the daily creel limit. The poacher was charged with taking over the daily creel limit and the fish were confiscated.



*Confiscated redbreast bream*

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

### **MCINTOSH COUNTY**

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, Sgt. Damon Winters, Ranger Patrick Gibbs and Wildlife Tech III Mark Day worked a commercial shrimping detail off from Sapelo Island. At approx. 0430 Sgt. Winters and Ranger Gibbs observed a shrimp trawler traveling through the ICW and heading offshore of Sapelo Island. The Rangers followed the vessel and observed it turn and travel north just off the Sapelo beach. After traveling a couple of miles north the vessel turned due east and the crew dropped the shrimp nets one mile inside State waters. The crew then turned off the vessel lights while they were dragging. The Rangers approached the shrimp trawler and instructed the captain to pull his nets. The vessel was boarded and charges were made for dragging in closed waters.

### **WAYNE COUNTY**

On June 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Cpl. Randy Aspinwall worked a littering detail in Wayne County in response to several complaints about people throwing out trash. On the first day Cpl. Aspinwall observed a violation and upon checking the individual it was found he was wanted in Wayne County. The subject was placed under arrest and transported to the Wayne County Jail. On the second day of the detail Cpl. Aspinwall observed a violation and upon checking two individuals one was wanted and the other was found to be in possession of suspected methamphetamine. Both suspects were placed under arrest and transported to the Wayne County Jail.