

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
November 1 – November 7, 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 November 6th, Cpl. Byron Young, RFC's Zack Hardy, Bart Hendrix and Micheal Crawley responded to a call of a body floating in Allatoona Lake. A fishermen located a male victim floating near Bethany Bridge. Bartow County Fire / Rescue and Sheriff's Deputies assisted with the call. The cause of death has not been determined at this time.

On November 7th, Sgt. Derek Dillard, Cpl. Brooks Varnell and RFC Zack Hardy set up on known night deer hunting locations in Bartow County. Just after 11:00 p.m. a red SUV came by Sgt. Dillard's location and shined a light out the window. Sgt. Dillard stopped the SUV with 2 males inside and located 2 loaded rifles and 1 loaded shotgun. After a further investigation, the officers discovered that the 2 men had killed 3 deer at night earlier this month in Bartow County. The two men were placed under arrest and charged with hunting deer at night, hunting from a public road and hunting from a vehicle.

Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

UNION COUNTY

On November 6th, RFC David Webb was patrolling Cooper's Creek Wildlife Management area during the primitive weapons hunt. RFC Webb met with Wildlife Tech III Frank Manning at the Check-In Station and was advised that he had heard several shots coming from a campsite located just up the road. While talking about the incident, the officers heard another shot which came from the same area. RFC Webb and Wildlife Tech Manning drove to the campsite and confronted five men at the site. One of which was putting a muzzle loader on the tailgate of a truck. After interviewing the subjects, four of the five men admitted to discharging muzzle loading firearms in the campsite area to make sure the powder was dry. The four men were issued written warnings for target practicing in an unauthorized area on a WMA.

WHITE COUNTY

On November 7th, RFC Joe Hill was patrolling for hunting activity in White County. While on patrol, the Ranger checked one hunter not wearing fluorescent orange while hunting deer. The subject was issued a citation for the violation.

JACKSON COUNTY

On November 7th, RFC Eric Isom, Ranger Chris Kernahan, and K-9 Colt responded to a night hunting complaint. They made contact with a subject who was found to be hunting at night, hunting from a vehicle, and hunting from a roadway. The subject was issued citations for the violations.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

TALIAFERRO COUNTY

On November 7th, Cpl. Brian Hobbins apprehended two subjects hunting deer over bait. The subjects were cited for baiting violations and license violations and released.

LINCOLN COUNTY

On November 4th, Cpl. Ryan Swain apprehended one Non-Resident hunting without a license. The subject was cited and released.

NEWTON COUNTY

On Monday, November 2, Sgt. John Harwell and RFC Richard Tanner participated in a career day at Georgia Piedmont Technical College. The Rangers spent the day speaking with interested job seekers on what it is like being a Conservation Officer and how the hiring process works.

GREENE COUNTY

On Friday, November 6, Sgt. John Harwell, Cpl. David Allen, Cpl. Derrell Worth, and RFC Richard Tanner participated in a gun safety program for Hunting for the Cure at Reid Plantation. The rangers spent time with nine children teaching parts of their guns and reviewing the Ten Commandments for firearms safety. The rangers spent time with the children and their families after the program.

NEWTON COUNTY

On Saturday, November 7, Ranger Dan Schay and Cpl. Derrell Worth cited two individuals for hunting big game over bait and hunting without permission. They also issued citations for license violations and hunting without fluorescent orange.

BURKE COUNTY

On November 5, RFC Jeff Billips responded to a night hunting complaint. The poacher had killed a buck in the road next to a residence. The residents gave chase but the poacher escaped. Evidence was collected at the scene. The case remains under investigation.

On November 6, RFC Billips responded to an ongoing complaint of hunting without permission. RFC Billips patrolled on foot in an attempt to locate any poachers. RFC Billips met with an adjoining landowner to determine if he had given anyone permission to hunt. The complaint remains under investigation. RFC Billips and Corporal Ben Payne were conducting night hunting surveillance when Georgia State Patrol (GSP) Troopers requested assistance at an armed robbery attempt at a local business. The robber was shot by the store owner and fled the scene with a bullet in the buttocks. The robber was later found at a hospital in Augusta.

On November 7, RFC Billips completed an investigation of hunting without permission. RFC Billips and Burke County Sheriff's deputies served arrest warrants on the suspect. The suspect attempted to hide under his residence but was quickly apprehended without incident. The suspect was arrested for convicted felon in possession of firearm, hunting without permission, hunting without license, and hunting without big game license. It should be noted that the suspect had killed a spike on the morning of the incident.

Later that day, RFC Billips was conducting night hunting surveillance when he received a complaint of night hunting in another part of the county. While on the way to the complaint, RFC Billips was contacted by GSP dispatch for a complaint of night hunting at another location. RFC Billips assisted the Sardis Police Department when a large fight erupted with gunfire. GSP troopers and Burke County deputies arrived to restore order. RFC Billips then received another night hunting complaint and located a man and woman on an ATV in the area. Despite being in the immediate area of the complaint, they did not have a firearm or light. RFC Billips determined the man was under the influence and contacted a GSP trooper. The man was arrested for DUI and the night hunting complaint remains under investigation.

OGLETHORPE COUNTY

On November 8th RFC Phillip Nelson checked several areas for baited deer stands. During his patrol violations of hunting deer over bait and hunting without wearing fluorescent orange were documented.

WILKES COUNTY

On November 8th SGT. Brian Carter and CPL. Mark Patterson checked several hunting without permission complaints and areas known to have baited stands. A patrol of the Clarks Hill WMA was also conducted.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

BALDWIN COUNTY

During the evening of November 4th, RFC Jeremy Reese responded to Lake Sinclair in reference to missing boaters. RFC Reese located the boaters at approximately 1:00 a.m. and returned them to safety.

JONES COUNTY

On November 5th, RFC Jeremy Reese responded to a hunting without permission complaint. RFC Reese located a deer stand on a property line and also located a kill site on the adjacent property. RFC Reese met with the suspect and received a confession and citations were issued.

PUTNAM COUNTY

From November 5th - 7th RFC Jeremy Reese, RFC Ronnie Beard, Cpl. Bubba Stanford and Sgt. Bo Kelly patrolled BF Grant WMA during a quality buck managed hunt. Several complaints were worked and 2 deer was seized for not meeting quality buck requirements for the WMA.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

STEWART COUNTY

On November 7th, Cpl. Steve Robinson encountered a father and his 16 year old son hunting. The pair were deer hunting without wearing fluorescent orange and neither had a hunting license. Citations and warnings were issued for non-resident hunting without license, non-resident hunting big game without big game license and hunting deer without wearing fluorescent orange.

TIFT COUNTY

On the afternoon of November 1st, Cpl. Greg Wade received information that two individuals had shot an 8 point buck, at night, the previous evening. Cpl. Wade and Ranger Eric White made contact with the suspects and after a lengthy investigation it was determined that the suspects had in fact shot the deer at night. Both suspects were charged with hunting deer at night, hunting from a motor vehicle, hunting from a public road and hunting without permission.

MITCHELL COUNTY

On November 6th, Ranger Eric White responded to a landowner complaint regarding a subject hunting without permission. When Ranger White arrived, the landowner guided him to a ground blind that had been recently placed on his property. Ranger White returned to the area the next day and encountered two subjects hunting on the complainant's property. Both subjects were charged with hunting deer without fluorescent orange, hunting without a license, hunting without a big game license, and hunting without permission.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

LAURENS COUNTY

On November 4th, Sergeant James McLaughlin, Corporal Dan Stiles, Corporal Kevin Joyce, Corporal Shaymus McNeely, and Ranger First Class Randall Meeks responded to Laurens County to assist with the containment and apprehension of an escapee. Captain Scott Klingel and Sergeant Chris Moore also arrived to assist later in the search. The inmate escaped from a Treutlen County transport vehicle while being transported to the Laurens County detention center.

DODGE COUNTY

On November 6th and 7th, Ranger First Class Allen Mills patrolled the Dodge County Public Fishing Area during a deer archery hunt. Hunters were checked for licenses and proper boating safety equipment. Verbal guidance was given for minor violations.

On November 7th, Ranger First Class Allen Mills responded to a missing juvenile call from Dodge 911 that a 10 year old juvenile was target practicing with a BB gun on pine cones and stumps at a hunting club. The child wandered too far from camp and became lost. The child was discovered walking down a dirt road by a “Good Samaritan” not far from camp and was reunited with family and friends.

TELFAIR COUNTY

On November 6th and 7th, Corporal John Stokes and Ranger First Class Allen Mills patrolled the Horse Creek Wildlife Management Area during a buck only sign in hunt. Several hunters were checked for licenses and regulation compliance. No violations were detected.

CLINCH COUNTY

On November 7th Ranger Daniel North was conducting an investigation concerning some deer dog hunters who had been caught on a trail camera on neighboring hunting club. Upon arrival to the complaint area, one of the suspected club members were catching one of their dogs from somebody else’s property. Ranger North was able to speak with the members of the club and the perpetrator was identified. Violations of failure to keep dogs on permitted property were documented on the identified individual seen on camera.

On November 7th, Ranger Daniel North was conducting an investigation where deer dogs had been allowed to get off of permitted property. A truck was seen leaving the still hunting club where the dogs had just run through. One of the suspects from the other case who were trying to catch their dog advised that he had seen deer legs and blood in the back of the truck when it left. Cpl. Jason Shipes was contacted and was then able to determine the identity of the person who had just left, where he lived, and the fact that he had no hunting licenses. Cpl. Shipes and Ranger North located the suspect and his truck with blood in the back of the truck. After speaking with the suspect, it was found that he was hunting when the dogs from the neighboring club chased a small buck by him. The suspect shot the deer and then hid it behind a shed at his house. Violations of hunting without a big game license and hunting license were documented.



Illegally-killed deer in Clinch County

On November 6th, Corporal Jason Shipes contacted Ranger Judd Sears about a deer dogging complaint he received. Ranger Sears made contact with a complainant that had caught a deer dog on his still hunting club that had come over from a dog hunting club next to their property. Ranger Sears advised him to return the dog to the owner and he would make contact with him the next day. On November 7th, Ranger Sears tracked down the owner of the dog and spoke with him about the violations that had occurred with his dog being off the permitted property for their hunting club. Violations were documented for failure to keep hunting dogs on permitted property.

On November 7th, Corporal Jason Shipes, Corporal Mark Pool, Ranger Daniel North, and Ranger Judd Sears attended the first ever Veteran's SOAR children's hunt at Bear Run Lodge in Council. Veteran's SOAR is a foundation that introduces children to the outdoors that have lost a parent serving in the military. Bear Run Lodge took these four children on a weekend wild hog hunt. The rangers in attendance helped with skeet shooting, sighting in rifles, and spoke with the children about the job of a conservation ranger and interaction between the public and law enforcement.



Veteran's Kid's hunt in Clinch County

WARE COUNTY

On November 1st, Corporal Jason Shipes, Corporal Mark Pool and Ranger Judd Sears conducted surveillance for night deer hunting activity in the northern part of the county. A vehicle passed the officer's location and the occupants began to shine a light out of their vehicle into the fields on both sides of the highway. A traffic stop was initiated on this vehicle and a loaded .270 rifle was located by the front seat passenger along with the light that was being shined. A spent .270 casing was in the driver's side floorboard that matched the rifle in the vehicle. A loaded 12 gauge shotgun was also located in the back seat. Both of these subjects were charged with hunting deer at night, hunting big game from a public road, and hunting from a vehicle.



Poacher's tools in Ware County

On November 7th, Corporal Jason Shipes and Corporal Mark Pool were conducting surveillance on a freshly harvested peanut field in an attempt to catch poachers hunting deer at night. As a vehicle approached their location, a high-powered light was shined from the vehicle. The light continued to sweep the field edges as it passed the officer's location. Officers were able to stop the vehicle a short distance from the field and found that the driver was in possession of a loaded high-powered rifle and a shotgun loaded with buckshot. After talking with the driver and passenger, citations were issued to both for hunting deer at night, hunting big game from a public road, and hunting from a motor vehicle.



More poaching tools from Ware County

COFFEE COUNTY

On November 6th, Ranger Daniel North observed a truck stop on a dirt road and a light was shined across a field several times and into nearby trees. The occupants were observed getting out of the truck with a dog. Upon confronting the individuals, it was discovered that they were looking for raccoons and tracks to see if their dog would trail it. No firearms were found in the truck and a violation of hunting without a license was documented.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

BRANTLEY COUNTY

On November 6, RFC David Brady was patrolling Brantley County when he heard two shots ring out from a field not far from his location. Brady investigated further and located a subject deer hunting the nearby field. After a short investigation Brady determined that the man was hunting without fluorescent orange, hunting without a license and hunting without a big game license. The man was cited for the three violations.

On November 6th, RFC John Evans was on patrol when he passed a vehicle sitting at an intersection. Evans returned to the area about 15 minutes later only to find the vehicle still sitting in the same location. The driver appeared to be slumped over the steering wheel so RFC Evans turned around to investigate. He found the driver passed out behind the wheel with the vehicle still in gear. The driver's foot was on the brake and Evans had to make several attempts to wake the driver up. When the man awoke, he moved his foot off of the brake and the vehicle began moving forward. RFC Evans was able to get the man back to his senses and put the vehicle in park. RFC Evans removed the driver from the vehicle, conducted Field Sobriety Exercises and the driver was subsequently arrested for Driving under the Influence.