

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
December 11 – December 17, 2016

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)

FANNIN COUNTY

On December 11th, RFC Cody Jones investigated an illegal burn on Murphy Hwy. The suspect was charged with unlawful burning of egregious litter.

CHEROKEE COUNTY

On December 11th, Cpl. Brooks Varnell and RFC Mark Puig were patrolling Cobb County and were dispatched to a location in Woodstock in reference to a man in camouflage tracking a blood trail through a subdivision. When the rangers arrived on scene they initially could not locate the man. However, the Rangers were also able to track the blood trail and connect the dots to a residence nearby. The Rangers located the hunter outside his house, he denied any knowledge of a deer being shot in the area. After a thorough investigation, the Rangers were able to conclude that the man had killed two deer over bait and was hunting without the required hunter orange. The hunter was issued several citations and warnings for the violations.

On December 14th, RFC Bart Hendrix and RFC Mark Puig responded to a call about a dead deer found on a horse farm off Gantt Rd. The Rangers were shown the area where the deer was found. Several tree stands were located near the property line. While checking the area RFC Puig located a marijuana joint in one of the tree stands. The area was also baited with whole corn and a mineral block. The Rangers located the property owner where the tree stands were found and interviewed him at his residence. While talking with the property owner RFC Hendrix smelled the odor marijuana coming from the property owner/suspected hunter. The man admitted to the Rangers that he had been smoking marijuana and admitted to having 2 to 3 ounces in his house. RFC Hendrix placed the man under arrest and contacted the Cherokee County narcotics unit. The man took RFC Puig to his basement, under consent, and they returned with several mason jars of marijuana. The marijuana case was turned over to narcotics agents (approximately 13 ounces of marijuana). The Rangers also charged the hunter with hunting big game over bait and warned him for hunting without permission.



Marijuana seized by GA DNR and CMANS Officers

On December 16th, RFC Hendrix went to Cabela's in Acworth to pick up a donation. RFC Hendrix was contacted by staff at Mill Creek Middle School in Woodstock to help out with providing Christmas gifts for one of their students. RFC Hendrix contacted a recent DNR LED new hire, Frank Pucci that works at Cabela's for assistance. Soon to be Ranger Pucci provided RFC Hendrix with J'Aliya Jones contact information. Ms. Jones and general manager, Earl Johnson, were able to outfit the young man with Cabela's clothing from head to toe-Cabela's Lookout Jacket and Pants in Mossy Oak, Cabela's Fleece glove and hat combo, Cabela's Outfitter Classic Cap, Cabela's crew length wool hiking socks (4 pack), and Cabela's All Leather Iron Ridge hunting boots. This was a huge donation at the last minute for Cabela's to make for this young outdoorsman. The staff at Mill Creek Middle School and the GA DNR-Law Enforcement Division are very thankful for the huge donation to make this Christmas dream complete.



L to R: J'Aliya Jones (Marketing Manager), Earl Jones (General Manager), and RFC Hendrix at Cabela's in Acworth

MURRAY COUNTY

On December 17th, Cpl. James Keener was patrolling the area of Ballground Road near Coosawattee WMA when he observed a horse in the roadway. After catching the animal and securing it to his truck out of the roadway, he attempted to locate the animal's owner. A short time later, the owner was located walking down the road looking for the horse. Cpl. Keener then entered the owner's name and date of birth into his mobile computer to be added to a "citizen's assist" and there was an active warrant for the subject. The subject was arrested and turned over to a Murray County Sheriff's Deputy. Cpl. Keener then walked the horse down the roadway a short distance and returned it to the owner's mother.

Cpl. Keener was working a night deer hunting detail in the same area later that evening when he observed three subjects in a vehicle spotlighting. A traffic stop was made and the three subjects were subsequently charged with hunting from a public road, hunting from a vehicle, hunting deer at night, open container of alcohol, and possession of alcohol by person under 21.

PICKENS COUNTY

On December 17th, Cpl. James Keener made contact with an 18 year old subject in reference to a hunting without permission investigation from late November. After an interview, the subject was issued written warnings for hunting without permission and unlawful enticement of game.

POLK COUNTY

On the morning of December 16th, Cpl. Chad Cox was checking an area that he had found previous that was baited with whole corn. Cpl. Cox located one hunter in a built tower stand that was near the baited area. The hunter was cited with hunting big game over bait and warned for hunting without a fluorescent orange vest.

FULTON COUNTY

On December 17th, Cpl. Chad Cox responded to a complaint of someone hunting without permission in the City of Milton. Cpl. Cox located one subject hunting deer from a climbing stand on land that he didn't have permission to be on. Cpl. Cox issued the hunter a citation for hunting without permission.

HARALSON COUNTY

On December 11th RFC Daniel Gray completed an investigation where someone had shot a deer from the public road on Thanksgiving morning. After conducting several interviews one individual was cited for hunting from a public road and hunting from a motor vehicle.

On December 12th, RFC Daniel Gray conducted an area check of a hunting club. One individual was cited for hunting deer w/o orange and hunting big game over bait.

On December 17th, RFC Daniel Gray checked a stand on a hunting club ref: hunting w/o permission and hunting deer over bait. RFC Gray issued a two citations to the same individual he caught on December 12th for hunting over bait and hunting w/o permission. RFC Gray also issued cited an individual on this day for hunting w/o big game license.

CARROLL COUNTY

On December 16th RFC Daniel Gray responded to a complaint reference to possible illegal duck hunting. RFC Gray checked 5 men duck hunting. The following violations were detected: hunting w/o hunting license, hunting w/o Georgia waterfowl license and hunting w/o Federal waterfowl stamp. One warning and two citations were issued.

CATOOSA COUNTY

On December 16th, Cpl. Shawn Elmore responded to Catoosa County in reference to a duck hunting complaint. Upon his arrival he located five hunters in the swamp. He asked for their hunting license and two of them said they had left them at home. Cpl. Elmore sent them to their truck while he went to his truck. When Cpl. Elmore arrived at the location the hunters were parked, one of the hunters who said he left his license at home approached Cpl. Elmore and said he had the receipt where he purchased his Federal Duck Stamp. Cpl. Elmore looked at the receipt on the hunter's phone and noticed the stamp had been purchased within the last two minutes. Cpl. Elmore confronted the hunter about the time on the receipt and he admitted that he did not have it while he was hunting. Cpl. Elmore issued citations for hunting without a federal duck stamp.

FLOYD COUNTY

On December 11th, RFC Ben Cunningham was patrolling Floyd County for duck hunters off Old River Road at King Creek. He located three people on private property who had used a canoe to access to a swamp where ducks used as a roost. After legal hours, he heard multiple shots. When he made contact with the three hunters, he discovered they had also hunted that morning on private property off Foster's Bend and had killed 6 mallards. RFC Cunningham was familiar with the second property and the property owner did not allow duck hunting without permission. He was able to reach the landowner who verified they did not have permission and had seen

evidence of the area being illegally hunted. RFC Cunningham checked all of the hunter's licenses and safety equipment and discovered several violations. The illegally taken mallards were confiscated as illegal wildlife.

GORDON COUNTY

On December 15th, Cpl. Shawn Elmore received a call from the Gordon County Sheriff's Office about a possible hunting incident and one person involved was at Gordon Hospital. By the time Cpl. Elmore arrived at the hospital, the victim had already been discharged and was being taken to Birmingham Alabama for further medical treatment. Over the next few days Cpl. Elmore was able to determine that the victim was hunting squirrels and he got on his ATV to leave the hunting area. While he was seated on his ATV, he put the shotgun on his lap and began to secure the shotgun to himself with a bungee cord. While securing the shotgun, he placed one hook in the trigger guard and tied the other end around the barrel. He had his hand holding the muzzle and when he laid the firearm down in his lap it discharged, taking off his left index finger.

A lesson learned, ALWAYS unload your firearm before leaving your hunting area. ALWAYS make sure the safety is in the ON position. NEVER put anything in the trigger guard, except your finger when you are ready to shoot. PLEASE remember firearms safety rules.

Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

JACKSON COUNTY

On December 11th, RFC Eric Isom responded to a complaint for hunting without permission off near Hoschton. RFC Isom and his K9 partner, Colt, located a subject hunting deer without permission. Later that day RFC Isom was checking on a complaint near Maysville. RFC Isom and Colt located two subjects hunting deer over bait, hunting without a big game license, and without wearing fluorescent orange. The other subject also was hunting without a license and hunter safety certificate.

BARROW COUNTY

On the evening of December 18th, Ranger Chris Kernahan conducted an area check on private property for illegal hunting activity in Barrow County. While on the area check, Ranger Kernahan made contact with a subject who was found to be hunting without permission, and hunting big game over bait. The violations were documented.

HABERSHAM COUNTY

On December 17th, RFC Joe Hill checked a complaint in reference to illegal hunting in Habersham County. The Ranger did not find the suspect's vehicle, but did encounter two hunters that were not wearing the required fluorescent orange vest while hunting deer. RFC Hill issued both subjects a citation for hunting deer without fluorescent orange.

On December 17th, RFC Joe Hill, RFC Chad Chambers, and Ranger Tommy Crabb interviewed a subject in reference to hunting without permission in Habersham County. This complaint started during the 2016 turkey season. The Rangers had photographic evidence of the subject hunting. The Rangers were unable to identify the subject that had been hunting without permission during turkey season until White County Sheriff's Office Deputies and Cpl. Anne Britt arrested this subject and another male in White County while they were hunting deer at night, hunting from a public road, and hunting from a vehicle in November 2016. The Rangers issued the subject citations for hunting without permission and hunting without a big game license during turkey season. The Rangers also issued citations for hunting without permission and hunting without a big game license during the 2016-17 deer season. The subject told the Rangers of three specific dates he had hunted on the property during deer season thus far. The subject received a criminal trespass warning for driving his vehicle onto the property and a warning for littering for leaving beer cans on the ground on the same property. The investigation is ongoing and may result in more charges on other subjects involved.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

GREENE COUNTY

On December 9, Ranger Schay was patrolling Redlands WMA for hunting activity. A violation of hunting on a closed WMA was documented.

On December 11, Ranger Schay was patrolling Redlands WMA for hunting activity. A violation of hunting on a closed WMA was documented.

On December 7, Cpl. David Allen patrolled Redlands WMA for hunting activity. A violation of hunting deer on a closed WMA was documented.

On December 7, Cpl. Derrell Worth cited two subjects for hunting on a closed WMA; one subject for hunting ducks without a federal duck stamp; two subjects for operating a vessel without navigational lights; two subjects for operating a vessel without any personal flotation devices.

On December 16, Cpl. Derrell Worth completed a four week investigation that pertained to a recovered stolen pontoon boat on Lake Oconee. During the investigation, it was revealed that the subject riveted a hull ID plate from a 1998 Tracker Pontoon to the transom of a 2004 Crest Pontoon boat to circumvent the registration process through the state of Georgia. Both original HIN plates along with the hidden HIN plates were removed and the subject had been registering the stolen vessel through Georgia for the past four years. The serial number plates on the Johnson 90 HP motor along with the numbers on the Master Marine tandem trailer had also been removed. Cpl. Worth was able to locate and run the hidden numbers on the outboard motor, and it was determined the boat, motor, and trailer were stolen from a mini storage parking lot in 2012 in Anderson County South Carolina. Cpl. Worth located the hidden numbers on the trailer. With assistance from Sgt. Chad Welch, they were able to retrieve the hidden numbers on the trailer by sanding on the frame of the trailer. Cpl. Worth secured six felony warrants on the subject: 3 for theft by receiving stolen property and 3 for tampering, removing, and falsifying hull ID and serial numbers.

On December 17, Cpl. Derrell Worth received a call in reference to a night hunting complaint. The complainants advised that on the previous night, they made contact with a female subject in a gray/silver Dodge Dakota pick-up truck after a shot was heard in their field. The complainants informed that the pick-up had a handicap card hanging the rearview mirror and partial tag number. Cpl. Worth contacted Keesha Norman with Georgia Bureau of Investigation Criminal Intelligence Analyst III and provided the above information on the suspect vehicle. 1700 identifications to the above vehicle were made in the state of Georgia, so the search was narrowed/limited to a 6 county radius resulting in 96 identifications. Cpl. Worth worked off of the list of 96 and found 3 possibilities out of the partial tag that was given. Cpl. Worth proceeded to one of the addresses and made contact a Dodge Dakota that matched the above description. As Cpl. Worth approached the vehicle, he observed blood and deer hair in the pick-up. Through the investigation, Cpl. Worth identified two males and one female involved in the incident. Cpl. Worth was able to secure confessions and written statements from all three subjects. The subjects were cited for three counts of hunting deer at night, two counts hunting from public road, two counts hunting from a motor vehicle, and counts for driving without a license.

NEWTON COUNTY

On December 17, Ranger Schay and Ranger Harrison were patrolling Newton County for hunting activity. While checking duck hunters, violations for hunting ducks over bait, hunting without a GA waterfowl license, hunting without a federal duck stamp, hunting waterfowl with lead shot, and operating a vessel without Coastguard approved PFDs were documented.

On December 17, Ranger Schay was patrolling Newton County for hunting activity and violations for hunting without a license, hunting without a big game license, failure to obtain a deer harvest record, and hunting deer without fluorescent orange were documented.

HANCOCK COUNTY

While patrolling for deer hunting activity on December 10, Sgt. Matt Garthright located a vehicle parked just inside a hunting club gate. Further investigation of the truck revealed that there was several pieces of whole kernel corn on the bumper of the truck. Sgt. Garthright looked around the club and located one baited stand but, did not locate anyone hunting. He left the club and returned that afternoon, locating two individuals hunting deer over bait and one of them without wearing fluorescent orange clothing. The two individuals were charged with hunting big game over bait and the one was warned for not wearing fluorescent orange.

On 12-11, Cpl. David Allen and Sgt. Matt Garthright patrolled for deer hunting activity. The Rangers came in contact with two individuals on an ATV. Further investigation revealed the male subject was a convicted felon and was charged for possession of a firearm. Four bullets were also found in his pocket along with drug paraphernalia. The subject was arrested and transported to the Hancock County Sheriff's Office.

On 12-17, Cpl. David Allen checked a baited deer stand in Hancock County. The hunter was cited for hunting big game over bait, hunting deer without fluorescent orange, and hunting without a license.

WALTON COUNTY

On 12-17, Ranger Harrison was patrolling Walton County for hunting activity. While checking a deer hunter, violations for hunting without Big Game License and Hunting without Hunting License were documented.

MORGAN COUNTY

On 12-17, RFC Ricky Boles cited an individual for hunting big game over bait, no fluorescent orange vest while hunting deer and confiscated a nine point buck that was killed illegally.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

While listening for duck roost shooting activity on December 11, Sgt. Matt Garthright heard a roost shoot start up. Sgt. Garthright was able to determine where the shooting was coming from and made contact with three hunters that were shooting ducks after legal hours for hunting waterfowl. Sgt. Garthright cited each of the individuals for Hunting Waterfowl after Hours. He also confiscated 5 wood ducks and donated them to a family.

WARREN COUNTY

While off duty, Sgt. Matt Garthright located two individuals hunting on his own private hunting lease without permission. He determined one of the hunters did not have any hunting license and was hunting without fluorescent orange clothing. Sgt. Garthright followed up with the two hunters on December 15. He gave both a warning for hunting without permission and charged the one for hunting without a license and for hunting deer without wearing fluorescent orange.

RICHMOND COUNTY

On December 17, Cpl. Payne worked duck hunting activity at Phinizy WMA. Several hunters were checked with no violations documented. Later in the morning he checked a baited deer stand in South Richmond County. One hunter was located hunting deer over bait. He was cited for the violation.

Later in the afternoon, Cpl. Payne worked Spirit Creek WMA and checked 1 hunter and 2 fishermen. He also wrote one citation for a vehicle parked on a closed road. At dark, he assisted a hunter with locating a deer that was shot.

CLARKE COUNTY

On December 17th RFC Tim Butler cited one person for hunting big game over bait and hunting deer without wearing fluorescent orange.

TALIAFERRO COUNTY

On December 16th SGT Chaffin and RFC Timmerman apprehended one subject for hunting big game over bait. The subject took a piebald buck. An investigation by the Rangers found that was the subject's third buck taken this season. The subject was also charged with taking over the limit of antlered deer. Rangers seized the deer and gave it to a needy family.

COLUMBIA COUNTY

On December 18th SGT Chaffin and RFC Timmerman responded to a call for assistance from Columbia County SO about a missing biker on Bartram Trail in Appling. Officers found the missing subject approximately one mile from Wildwood Park. The subject crashed his bicycle, injured his hip and was in need of medical attention. The subject was carried by Officers and EMS out of the woods to the shoreline. The subject was transported by vessel to the Wildwood Park boat ramp where he was turned over to EMS units. The subject was taken to Doctors Hospital in Augusta for further treatment.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

TALBOT COUNTY

On December 17th, Cpl. Jeremy Bolen concluded an investigation from the previous weekend regarding hunting without permission. A neighboring hunting club had a picture of an individual on their property with a rifle and wearing fluorescent orange. Cpl. Bolen was able to locate the hunter on an adjacent hunting club. The hunter was issued a written warning for hunting without permission. During the license check on the club, another hunter was issued a written warning for hunting without big game license.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

EARLY COUNTY

On December 17th, Cpl. Scott Carroll, RFC Quinn Fogle, Sergeants Jim Atchley and Rick Sellars located a duck shoot that was found to be baited. The hunters were cited for taking over the daily limit of wood ducks, hunting with lead shot and numerous license violations. Thirty-six ducks were seized and delivered to charitable institutions.

BAKER COUNTY

On December 17th, Cpl. Scott Carroll and RFC Quinn Fogle checked a dove hunt and found it baited. Eleven hunters were issued citations for hunting over bait and eighty-seven doves were seized and delivered to a charitable institution.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

APPLING COUNTY

On December 17th Corporal Chase Altman responded to two illegal dumping complaints in the county. An old vehicle tag was found in one of the locations, and an investigation is ongoing at this time to find the suspect involved in the dumping.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

On December 17, 2016 RFC Bobby Sanders was patrolling for waterfowl hunting activity around the Altamaha River when two boats with four hunters were encountered. One of the hunters had an expired resident hunting license, the proper violation was documented.

CLINCH COUNTY

On December 11th, Corporal Jason Shipes was notified to contact an officer with the Homerville Police Department. Cpl. Shipes learned that during a traffic stop the police officer observed a freshly killed deer in the bed of the vehicle. The traffic stop was conducted around 4:30 AM. Cpl. Shipes responded to the stop location and, after a brief interview, the driver admitted to shooting the deer around 2:30 AM south of Homerville along Hwy 187. The deer was donated to a family for consumption and the driver of the vehicle was issued citations for hunting deer at night, hunting big game from a public road, and hunting from a motor vehicle.

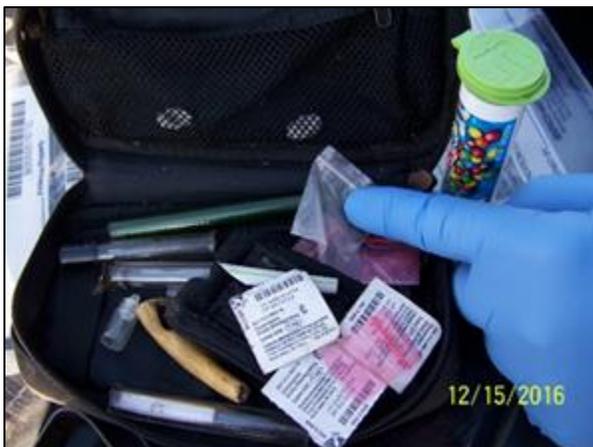


Deer killed by night poacher in Clinch County.

On December 17th, Corporal Jason Shipes observed several hunters along Hwy 187 hunting deer with dogs. While checking for the required licenses, Cpl. Shipes observed two subjects standing in the roadway with loaded firearms. During this patrol, Cpl. Shipes issued citations for hunting without a license, hunting without a big game license, hunting without a deer dogging license, and hunting big game from a public road.

PIERCE COUNTY

On December 15th, Corporal Mark Pool responded to a call about after hours duck hunting. Once on scene with the complainant Cpl. Mark Pool was shown the location the hunters were shooting. The hunters had already quit shooting by the time Cpl. Pool had arrived at the creek. Cpl. Pool encountered two trucks leaving the area. Both trucks stopped to talk with Cpl. Pool. After speaking with the subjects, Cpl. Pool determined that they were the shooters and there were four juveniles and one adult male. They all had the correct license for hunting waterfowl and all had the correct ammo and weapons. All subjects were educated on the correct times to hunt waterfowl. The adult was issued a warning for hunting after hours. Three drake wood ducks and one hen wood duck were seized and given to a family in need.



Illegal drugs and related objects seized in Charlton County.

CHARLTON COUNTY

On Thursday, December 15th, Ranger First Class Sam Williams assisted the Charlton County Sheriff's Office in locating a subject that had been reported living in a wooded area along Spanish Creek near Folkston. After conducting a foot patrol of the area, the subject was located. While the officers were talking with the subject, a small bag was observed open near him that contained several drug related objects. He was subsequently arrested and charged with possession of marijuana less than an ounce, possession of drug related objects, and criminal trespass. Other drug charges are pending on the outcome of additional tests.

ECHOLS COUNTY

On December 17th, Sergeant Patrick Dupree encountered a dog-deer hunter involved in a hunt northeast of Statenville. The hunter did not possess any hunting licenses. He was cited for hunting without a license, hunting without a big game license, hunting without a dog-deer license, and hunting without obtaining a deer harvest record.

On December 17th, Sergeant Patrick Dupree encountered a dog-deer hunter involved in a hunt north of Howell. The non-resident hunter did not possess any hunting licenses. He was cited for non-resident hunting without a license, non-resident hunting without a big game license, hunting without a dog-deer license, and hunting without obtaining a deer harvest record.

IRWIN COUNTY

On December 16th, Corporal Dan Stiles patrolled the Alapaha River Wildlife Management Area in the early morning hours for waterfowl and small game hunting activity. No violations were documented.

TELFAIR COUNTY

On December 15TH, Ranger Lamar Burns patrolled Horse Creek Wildlife Management Area. Twelve hunters were checked. No violations were documented.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

CHATHAM COUNTY

On Saturday December 17, 2016, Ranger Morris and Sgt. Scott conducted a water patrol on the Ogeechee River. The two Rangers found a vessel that appeared to be hiding in the marsh. The Rangers talked with the occupant and found that there were others in the group that were out on the land just target practicing. The Rangers met with the others and discovered that they were hunting hogs. The men told the Rangers that they thought they could hunt hogs almost anywhere on the river because it was state land. The Rangers told them that they were on private property and there was no state owned property anywhere close by. The two men, who had taken kids with them, were cited for hunting hogs without permission and without fluorescent orange. This was a dangerous act. No one that had hunting rights to the property knew that anyone was in the area hunting. The men and the two small boys walking around in a hunting club that is known for hog hunting activity without orange is very dangerous.



BRANTLEY COUNTY

On December 11th, Ranger Judd Sears responded to a night hunting complaint from Brantley County Sheriff's Office near Hoboken. Ranger Sears arrived on scene and a Brantley County deputy had observed a subject shoot from a vehicle at a deer from GA 520/ Hwy 82. Ranger Sears located a 20 gauge shotgun in the vehicle along with a spent 20 gauge shell. Multiple flashlights were located throughout the vehicle. These subjects were in possession of one illegally killed deer from prior to this traffic stop. The driver admitted to killing the first deer at night at another location and the passenger admitted to shooting at this deer. Violations were documented for hunting deer at night, hunting big game from a public road, and hunting from a motor vehicle.

GLYNN COUNTY

On December 11th, while patrolling Clayhole WMA, Cpl. John Evans observed a suspicious vehicle parked in the camping area. While interviewing the two subjects it was learned that the passenger had multiple warrants out of Lee County and the driver had a suspended license. While waiting for a transport, Cpl. Evans attempted to find a licensed driver to come get the vehicle. The female began getting agitated and the male subject attempted to get back in the vehicle. As Cpl. Evans was dealing with the male subject, the female jumped in the vehicle and fled. Cpl. Evans notified GSP and a Trooper was able to locate the vehicle on Hwy 341. After a short pursuit the female subject was stopped and arrested for driving on a suspended license, failure to stop and fleeing and attempting to elude.

On December 17th, Cpl. John Evans responded to a night deer hunting complaint off US Hwy 341 in Sterling. Evans arrived in the area and quickly found two suspects coming back to the field to look for the deer. Cpl Evans stopped the car and interviewed both occupants. After a thorough investigation both subjects admitted to shooting at an 8 point buck in the field. Both subjects were charged with hunting deer at night and hunting from a vehicle.