

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
December 18 – December 24, 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)

POLK COUNTY

On December 18th, Cpl. Chad Cox was investigating a complaint of eleven raccoons dumped on side of a road in eastern part of the county. During the investigation Cpl. Chad Cox and RFC Daniel Gray located a subject that had been raccoon hunting the night before. The hunter did not have a hunting license and was issued a citation for hunting without a license.



BARTOW COUNTY

On December 19th, RFC Bart Hendrix and RFC Mark Puig were travelling together to a region meeting when they encountered an overturned 18 wheeler across the opposite lane on I-75. The 18 wheeler had just minutes before lost its load and overturned blocking all lanes of traffic. The driver was rescued from the cab by several witnesses and luckily no one was injured. The Rangers provided first responder on-scene assistance and traffic control.



On December 20th, RFC Zack Hardy was on patrol in western Bartow County checking private property off Iron Hill Rd. RFC Hardy located a hunter on the property without any orange. The hunter did not have permission to be on the property and was caught on the same property in 2012 also without orange. For a second time the hunter was issued citations for hunting without permission and hunting deer without orange.

On December 20th, Cpl. Byron Young and RFC Zack Hardy were patrolling western Bartow County for waterfowl activity. The officers set up in the area of a large swamp. Just before dark the officers heard several shots coming from the swamp. The officers located 3 hunters actively shooting ducks after hours. The hunters were found to have the proper license and permission. The 3 hunters were issued citations for hunting waterfowl after legal hours.

On December 22nd, before sunrise RFC Zack Hardy received a call about a subject spotlighting from an ATV off Macedonia Rd. The subject attempted to cut across a resident's yard and became stuck on a stump. The subject left the ATV, Remington 700 rifle and spotlight and fled on foot. At this time the subject has not been located. The Bartow County Sheriff's Office took possession of the ATV and rifle.

On December 22nd, RFC Zack Hardy located 5 waterfowl hunters hunting a small pond baited with whole corn. Several of the hunters did not have the proper licenses. One hunter was also hunting with an unplugged shotgun. Citations and warnings were issued for hunting waterfowl over bait, hunting without a federal duck stamp, hunting without a Georgia duck license and hunting with an unplugged shotgun.

On December 24, RFC Zack Hardy checked baited deer stands off Miller Farm Rd and located 2 hunters. RFC Hardy had checked the stands several times in December, each time locating fresh whole corn on the ground. The hunters were not wearing the required hunter orange and neither hunter had the proper license. RFC Hardy issued citations and warnings for hunting big game over bait, hunting deer without orange, hunting without a license, hunting without a big game license and hunting without hunter education.

CHEROKEE COUNTY

On December 19th, while on the way to a region meeting, RFC Bart Hendrix and RFC Mark Puig encountered a driver who had ran out of fuel. The Rangers assisted the driver by going to the nearest gas station and used their own money to purchase the driver a few gallons of fuel so that she could continue Christmas shopping with her children.



COBB COUNTY

On December 23rd Cpl. Brooks Varnell and RFC Mark Puig responded to a complaint of illegal duck hunting in Powder Springs. Four hunters were found hunting within city limits and on land that they did not have permission to hunt on. All received citations for hunting without permission and several violations of not signing their federal ducks stamp and unplugged shotguns were addressed as well.

MURRAY COUNTY

On December 22nd 2016 Cpl. Casey Jones responded to a call for assistance from the Murray County Sheriff's Office. The call was regarding possible illegal hunting and possible drug possession. Cpl. Jones made contact with two hunters who were found to be hunting deer without orange, without license and without big game license. The men were also found to be in possession of marijuana, methamphetamine, moonshine, and drug paraphernalia.

Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

RABUN COUNTY

RFC Chambers was patrolling Rabun County on December 20th when he encountered an individual hunting near the John Houck Road area. The subject possessed a senior lifetime hunting license and had permission to be on the property, but was not wearing the required 500 square inches of fluorescent orange above the waistline. RFC Chambers issued the subject a warning for the violation.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

ELBERT COUNTY

On December 24th Cpl. Julian Wilkins documented one violation of blocking a WMA gate at Broad River WMA.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

No activity to report.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

BROOKS COUNTY

On the evening December 22nd, RFC Jon Penuel was patrolling along the Okapilco Creek for waterfowl activity when he heard a volley of shots after legal hunting hours. RFC Penuel located a roost pond where the shots were coming from and waited for approximately an hour before the hunters finally exited the pond, with 24 wood ducks in hand. The four subjects were charged for hunting ducks after hours and taking over the bag limit. One of the subjects received additional charges for hunting without a license or a federal duck stamp.

THOMAS COUNTY

On December 23rd, RFC Jon Penuel checked an area where landowners had complained of subjects hunting deer without permission. RFC Penuel entered the property on foot and located two subjects hunting, neither of which had permission to be there. Both were charged for hunting without permission and one subject received an additional charge for hunting deer without fluorescent orange.

TIFT COUNTY

On the afternoon of December 24th, Cpl. Greg Wade located a group of subjects participating in a dove shoot. While checking the hunters and the area Cpl. Wade noticed peanuts had been recently added to the field. The five hunters were charged for hunting dove over bait.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

CHARLTON COUNTY

On Dec. 19th, Ranger First Class Sam Williams assisted Florida Fish & Wildlife Commission (FWC) Officer Joey Burnsed with an investigation he had been conducting on a poacher who lived near Macclenny, Florida. Officer Burnsed had received an anonymous tip from a concerned citizen that the poacher had killed a deer illegally. As the officer gathered information, he realized that the deer most likely was killed in Georgia. The two officers met with the poacher for an interview, at which time he admitted to killing a doe deer on October 23rd in Charlton County, near St. George. At the conclusion of the interview, RFC Williams charged the poacher with non-resident hunting without a license, non-resident hunting without a big game license, hunting without obtaining a harvest record, recording and reporting requirements for game animals, and killing of antlerless deer.

WARE COUNTY

On Friday, December 23rd, Ranger First Class Sam Williams received a call about an in- progress night-hunting complaint near Dixie Union. When the officer arrived, he met the complainant and the two night deer hunters at the entrance of the field. RFC Williams interviewed the poachers and determined that while riding around the field, they were using a cab-mounted light bar and a hand-held light to attempt to locate deer. They also had a loaded .30-06 rifle in the front seat. Violations for hunting deer at night and hunting from a vehicle were documented on both violators.

IRWIN COUNTY

On December 19th, Corporal Dan Stiles was working at a location of a previous night hunting complaint. At approximately 9:30 p.m. Cpl. Stiles witnessed a light beam shining various directions in a field near his location. Cpl. Stiles proceeded to the location of the light and stopped an individual with a rifle and a hand held light leaving the field on foot. After questioning the individual a citation was issued for hunting deer at night.

LAURENS COUNTY

On December 23rd, Corporal Dan Stiles and Ranger Lamar Burns were patrolling for waterfowl hunting activity. Two subjects were located hunting waterfowl and checked for license and possession limit compliance. After further investigation of the hunting location it was determined the two individuals were hunting waterfowl (ducks) over bait. Two citations were issued to the individuals for hunting ducks over bait.

On December 23rd, Corporal Dan Stiles and Ranger Lamar Burns patrolled the Beaverdam Wildlife Management Area (WMA) during a sign-in big game hunt. Five hunters were encountered on the WMA. Two violations for hunting deer without fluorescent orange and one violation for hunting within 50 yards of a road on a WMA were documented.

APPLING COUNTY

On December 18th, Corporal Chase Altman encountered two people using the shooting range at Bullard Creek WMA. Both were given warnings for not having the required GORP licenses.

SCREVEN COUNTY

On December 23rd, Corporal Shaymus McNeely and Ranger First Class Jason Miller responded to a road hunting complaint on Ford Road. The complainant reported that he was sitting in a tree stand when he observed a person shoot out of the window of a vehicle. Cpl. McNeely and RFC Miller located the vehicle described in the incident and the suspects at a nearby residence. The suspects turned out to be two juveniles under 15 years of age. Cpl. McNeely discussed the violations of state law involved and the dangers of shooting from the roadway. Both juveniles were turned over to their parents.

On December 24th, Corporal Shaymus McNeely was flagged down by a motorist on Pine Grove Inn Road. The motorist asked Cpl. McNeely if he could help him get to Lugoff, South Carolina. After speaking with the motorist Cpl. McNeely noticed that the man seemed to be confused and was unable to confirm his address or phone number. Concerned for the safety of the man, Cpl. McNeely was able to track down and contact a member of the man's family. The family members confirmed that the man had dementia and that he should not be traveling alone. Cpl. McNeely arranged for the man to wait for his family at the Sheriff's Department.

EMANUEL COUNTY

On December 20th, Ranger Randell Meeks was patrolling Emanuel County when he noticed smoke coming from the rear axles of a semi-truck trailer on Hwy 46. As Ranger Meeks was stopping the truck to advise the driver, he spotted flames coming from the trailer axles. The driver and Ranger Meeks used fire extinguishers to put out the fire. Emanuel County 911 dispatched two Fire Department units to the scene. Ranger Meeks directed traffic around the scene until the truck was removed from the highway.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

BRANTLEY COUNTY

On December 23rd, RFC Colte Shaske was working an active night hunting complaint. Complainant stated that he has heard multiple shots in the area at night around his home. At approximately 11:00 p.m. RFC Shaske saw what appeared to be a spotlight shining thru the woods on a neighboring road. RFC Shaske then heard a single shot from the same area as the light. Shaske approached the area and quickly found a pickup traveling at a high rate of speed away from the area. RFC Shaske initiated a traffic stop on the vehicle and found 2 individuals in the truck with a spotlight and a loaded lever action rifle. RFC Shaske interviewed the suspects and upon investigation found that the suspects had shot at a deer in the field and attempted to flee the scene. Both suspects were cited for hunting deer at night, hunting from a public road, and hunting from a vehicle.

On December 24th, RFC Colte Shaske and RFC Judd Sears were patrolling Brantley County for hunting activity. RFC Shaske found a vehicle exiting a hunting club. RFC Shaske stopped and talked to the individuals in the truck to see if they had killed anything that morning. The suspects in the truck stated that they had killed a few ducks. RFC Shaske proceeded to inspect the ducks and check the individuals hunting licenses. Upon investigation RFC Shaske found 7 wood ducks and a dead otter. RFC Shaske and RFC Sears had the individuals take them back to the area where they killed the animals. The driver stated that he killed the otter in a small pond where he was duck hunting. The individuals were cited for hunting without federal waterfowl stamp, hunting without Georgia waterfowl license, and possessing otter killed by firearm.