

# Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

**Weekly Report**  
**December 25 – December 31, 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)**

### **CHEROKEE COUNTY**

On December 30<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Byron Young responded to a call of a sinking vessel on Allatoona Lake. The 911 call advised that 3 duck hunters were in a duck boat that was swamped and taking on water. Cherokee County Fire/Rescue units were able to locate the hunters standing in chest deep water. Luckily the hunters all had on waders and were not exposed to the cold water. High winds and large waves played a role in the vessel taking on water and becoming swamped.

### **COBB COUNTY**

On December 26<sup>th</sup>, Ranger First Class Mark Puig responded to another complaint of illegal duck hunting in Powder Springs. Six hunters were located and citations for hunting without permission were written. Several violations were addressed involving failure to sign their federal duck stamp were addressed. One hunter was also arrested due to having a warrant for failure to appear in Atlanta on a previous seat belt ticket.

On December 27<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Brooks Varnell completed an investigation and made charges on a Cobb County hunter that harvested a large 10 point buck. The hunter was found to be hunting without permission, hunting over bait, hunting without a license and big game license.



*Trail camera picture of illegally killed Cobb County Buck*

### **CHATTOOGA COUNTY**

On December 31st, RFC Roger McConkey responded to a hunting without permission complaint in Chattooga County. While investigating the complaint, three adult hunters and one juvenile hunter were located. Two of the adults and the juvenile had been invited to hunt that morning by the third adult hunter. After investigating the incident, it was found the hunter did not have permission from his distant relatives to hunt the area or to invite others to hunt with him. The landowner did not want to charge the hunters due to being distant family, but did want the hunters to leave the area. A warning was issued to the family member and he was advised he was not to hunt the area again.

On December 31st, RFC Roger McConkey responded to a complaint of hunting deer with dogs in Chattooga County. The Ranger was advised multiple trucks, hunters, and dogs had been seen and heard on the complaint property. These hunters were thought to be running deer with dogs. The subjects were located and found to be two separate groups of rabbit hunters. No illegal activity was found.

## **FLOYD COUNTY**

On December 30<sup>th</sup>, RFC Ben Cunningham and RFC Roger McConkey were patrolling Floyd County off Melson Road. They encountered two hunters hunting deer over bait using corn and peanut butter. One subject was charged with hunting big game over bait and hunting deer without fluorescent orange. The other subject was charged with hunting without a big game license, hunting without the required hunter education, and hunting deer without the required fluorescent orange. The second hunter was issued written warnings for hunting big game over bait as he could not see the bait and said he did not know the bait was there. He was also issued a warning for hunting without a hunting license. The rangers discovered while talking with one of the subjects that his wife had killed a spike the evening before in the same area. She admitted that it was also taken over the bait and she had assisted in placing the bait for deer. The wife was written a warning for hunting big game over bait. The spike was confiscated and donated to a needy family.

On December 31<sup>st</sup>, RFC Ben Cunningham caught four subjects hunting ducks without permission around Burns Bottoms off the Coosa River. The subjects had used a bass boat to get to the area. The subjects were out of the boat hunting from the bank on private property. The subjects were written warnings for hunting w/o permission after RFC Cunningham checked with the landowner to verify permission.

On December 31<sup>st</sup>, RFC Ben Cunningham assisted Rome PD with a homeless subject that was camping on private property. The subject was found to be a convicted felon who was in possession of a firearm. He was arrested and transported to the Floyd County jail.

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

### **MADISON COUNTY**

On December 26<sup>th</sup>, RFC Shane Sartor and Sgt. Derek Dillard checked an area baited for deer. One subject was located and was issued citations for hunting big game over bait and not wearing fluorescent orange. The subject was also issued warnings for hunting without a license and hunting without a big game license.

### **UNION COUNTY**

On December 26<sup>th</sup>, RFC David Webb received a complaint from GSP Gainesville in reference to possible illegally hunting activity on Wolfpen Gap Road in Union County. RFC Webb contacted the complainant and was advised that her son observed several Hispanic males hunting and one of which was dragging out a deer only wearing an orange hat. RFC Webb arrived at the address provided and observed three Hispanic males approximately fifty yards into the woods behind a trailer, skinning a deer. RFC Webb confronted the suspects, who were all wearing orange at the time. Two of the suspects could speak some English. RFC Webb also observed three high powered rifles laying on the ground and after further investigation it was determined that all three had been hunting. One suspect was issued a citation for failure to record harvest because of a deer that he had killed on November 19, 2016. Another Hispanic male was issued a citation for failure to record harvest on the deer that had been killed on this day, because he had a paper license and had not recorded the date or county of kill. The third Hispanic male was issued citations for hunting without a license and hunting without a big game license and was issued a warning for hunting without deer harvest.

### **TOWNS COUNTY**

On December 30<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Kevin Dyer received a complaint from the Towns County Health Department in reference to an illegal dump in Towns County. The illegal dump was located behind a commercial business and contained waste material from that business. Cpl. Dyer obtained statements and evidence from the Health Department. Cpl. Dyer documented the violation and contacted the Georgia Environmental Protection Division to assist in the investigation. Cpl. Dyer interviewed the owner of the commercial business and issued documentation from the EPD. Cpl. Dyer will revisit the business at the set dead line to ensure the clean-up was completed.

## **BARROW COUNTY**

On the evening of December 28<sup>rd</sup>, Ranger Chris Kernahan conducted an area check on private property in Barrow County. While on the area check, Ranger Kernahan made contact with a subject who was found to be hunting deer over bait, hunting deer without fluorescent orange, and hunting deer without obtaining a harvest record. Upon further investigation, Ranger Kernahan found that the subject had taken one doe over bait the previous week, and failed to record the harvest. The violations were documented.

## **BANKS COUNTY**

On December 31<sup>st</sup>, Cpl. Adam Loudermilk patrolled Banks County for waterfowl hunters. He issued one citation for a hunter hunting with lead shot.

## **STEPHENS COUNTY**

On December 31<sup>st</sup>, Cpl. Adam Loudermilk responded to a complaint of fishing without permission. Upon arrival Cpl. Loudermilk located 5 individuals fishing without permission. The individuals were cited for the violation and advised not to return without permission.

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

### **WARREN COUNTY**

On December 31, CPL Brian Adams and RFC Michael Crawley received a call in reference to hunting without permission. Upon arrival on the scene Crawley and Adams were able to locate the suspect at a residence on the adjacent property. Upon interviewing the suspect, the rangers found that the suspect did in fact go onto the adjacent landowner's property without permission. The suspect was also found to not have a big game license or a hunting license. The suspect had also killed a deer and had transported it to the processor without recording. The suspect was written 4 citations by RFC Crawley.

### **MCDUFFIE COUNTY**

On December 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> Cpl. Adams patrolled the McDuffie Co PFA with no violations detected. On December 29<sup>th</sup> Cpl. Adams checked duck hunters at Clark's Hill with no violations detected.

### **RICHMOND COUNTY**

On December 28, Cpl. Payne patrolled Phinizy WMA checking duck hunters for license and waterfowl violations. 42 hunting licenses were checked at the Gravel Pit Rd. entrance to the WMA. While checking several hunters Cpl. Payne observed one hunter hide his gun in a bush. While checking the hunter he asked the hunter why he hid his gun and he stated that he was not hunting. After investigating further it was determined that the hunter was actually hunting, but had forgotten his licenses at his residence. He was issued citations for the violations. In total 4 citations and 6 warnings were issued.

At approximately 9:55 a.m., Cpl. Payne responded to Di-lane WMA on H Berol Rd to assist wildlife technicians with a body found on the road. Burke County S.O. and GBI were contacted and an investigation ensued. The investigation is ongoing and is being treated as a murder.

### **WILKES COUNTY**

On December 29<sup>th</sup> Sgt. Brian Carter and Cpl. Mark Patterson patrolled portions of the county for hunting activity. Violations documented during the patrol included hunting big game over bait, hunting deer without fluorescent orange, and allowing a juvenile to hunt without hunter safety. Verbal guidance was given in the matter of a non-resident juvenile hunting without a license.

### **WALTON COUNTY**

On December 30<sup>th</sup> RFC Tim Butler and Ranger Dan Schay documented six violations of hunting ducks over bait.

## **OGLETHORPE COUNTY**

On Friday December 30, RFC Phillip Nelson investigated a hunting without permission complaint in Oglethorpe Co. Violations documented were hunting without permission and hunting without orange vest.

On Saturday December 31, RFC Phillip Nelson patrolled Oglethorpe Co. for areas known to be baited. Violations documented were hunting big game over bait and hunting without orange vest.

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

### **PUTNAM COUNTY**

On the afternoon of December 26<sup>th</sup>, Corporal Bubba Stanford met with a suspect in a recent mud bogging investigation on BF Grant WMA. Cpl. Stanford received a confession and the subject was cited for driving on a road closed area.

On the evening of December 30<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Stanford and Sergeant Bo Kelly assisted Putnam County Sheriff's Office in a road check. Numerous citations were issued 6 arrests were made for DUI, possession of methamphetamine and driving without a license.

On the morning of December 31<sup>st</sup>, Cpl. Stanford located a truck with out of state registration parked in a hunting camp. Through a DNR database it was determined the registered owner did not have a valid non- resident hunting license. Cpl. Stanford located the two hunters and issued citations for the offense.

### **TAYLOR COUNTY**

On December 31<sup>st</sup>, Cpl. Mitch Oliver was patrolling for hunting activity when he located a truck parked at a piece of property. Cpl. Oliver used his MDT in his truck to get the owner's information and check to see if he had a valid hunting license. The results from the license check showed that the Florida resident had not had a valid hunting license since 2013. Eventually, 3 hunters came out of the woods and Cpl. Oliver asked the hunters for their hunting license. All 3 hunters were from Florida, but only one of the hunters had a valid Georgia non-resident hunting license. The 2 hunters that were not licensed were issued citations for non-resident hunting without a non-resident license and were issued warnings for non-resident hunting without a non-resident big game license.

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

### **THOMAS COUNTY**

On December 26<sup>th</sup>, RFC Eric White encountered and cited three subjects hunting ducks over bait in a creek.

On December 27<sup>th</sup>, RFC Eric White charged three subjects for hunting without permission in reference to a complaint of a tree stand, game cameras, and corn that had been illegally placed on the landowner's property. The three subjects admitted to hunting the stand, several times, throughout the season.

On the morning of Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>, Sgt. David Ruddell located four subjects hunting ducks in a small pond that had been baited with corn. Three of the four hunters were adults and were charged for the violation. The fourth hunter was a child who had killed his first duck, a drake wood duck, which was left in the young man's possession.

### **WORTH COUNTY**

On the afternoon of December 30<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Greg Wade was patrolling North Worth County when he encountered five subjects hunting dove on an old peanut field. While checking licenses and plugs, Cpl. Wade observed areas where corn and additional peanuts had been scattered on the field. The five subjects were issued citations for hunting dove over bait.

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

### **EMANUEL COUNTY**

On December 26, Ranger Randell Meeks received a complaint about hunting dogs being off of permitted property. After meeting with the complainant Ranger Meeks took possession of two collared deer dogs. Ranger Meeks met with a local deer dog hunting club and two violations of keeping hunting dogs on permitted property were documented.

On December 30<sup>th</sup>, Corporal Mike Wilcox responded to a complaint on Coleman Wadley Road about possible deer dog hunting violations. Cpl. Wilcox made contact with members from a local deer dog hunting club. Cpl. Wilcox addressed violations for hunting without a license, hunting without a big game license, and hunting deer with dogs without a deer dog hunting license.

### **EFFINGHAM COUNTY**

On the morning of December 31, Sgt. Brian Hobbins was patrolling the northern part of the county for duck and dove hunting activity. He checked a large dove shoot south of Oliver. Sgt. Hobbins documented a violation of hunting without a license and three violations of hunting without a HIP permit. After checking the dove hunters Sgt. Hobbins patrolled a high complaint area near Kildare for deer dogging violations. One subject was cited for failure to keep dogs on permitted property.

### **JENKINS COUNTY**

On December 30<sup>th</sup>, Corporal Mike Wilcox was working night deer hunting. At approximately 11:00 p.m. Cpl. Wilcox watched a car pass in front of his location. A few seconds after the vehicle passed he heard the car crash. Cpl. Wilcox left his location and found the vehicle sitting on its side in a field. Cpl. Wilcox could hear someone screaming when he approached the vehicle. The vehicle was occupied by one female driver. When her car left the road, it flipped over and landed on its side in the field. Cpl. Wilcox was able to help the driver out of the vehicle through the back window and get her to the road so she could be treated by paramedics. The driver suffered from cuts to her face.

### **PIERCE COUNTY**

On December 27<sup>th</sup>, Corporal Jason Shipes located a vehicle parked in the middle of the roadway with only its parking lights. Cpl. Shipes made contact with the driver thinking that he was about to assist a motorist with engine problems. While speaking with the driver, Cpl. Shipes noticed that the subject was very nervous and he could smell a strong odor of alcoholic beverage coming from the vehicle. After further investigation, Cpl. Shipes learned the vehicle was not insured and that the driver was wanted in Bacon County on seven active warrants. Cpl. Shipes contacted the Georgia State Patrol, who conducted field sobriety tests on the driver and arrested him for DUI.

On December 28<sup>th</sup>, Corporal Jason Shipes observed a vehicle pull along the field he was watching for possible night deer hunting activity. The vehicle slowed as a high-powered light was shined from the back of the vehicle. As Cpl. Shipes was watching the vehicle, he heard what sounded like a high-powered rifle shot. Cpl. Shipes waited until the vehicle passed his location then exited the field and conducted a traffic stop. He learned that the subjects were obviously shining fields in the area, however the loud shot heard was in fact firecrackers being thrown from the vehicle. The subject who was actually shining the light from the vehicle was identified and issued a citation for blinding wildlife.



On December 30<sup>th</sup>, Sgt. Patrick Dupree, Corporal Jason Shipes, Corporal Mark Pool, Ranger First Class Sam Williams, Sgt. Morty Wood, Sgt. Jon Barnard, Ranger First Class Bobby Sanders, and Ranger First Class Daniel North conducted an intensive night deer hunting surveillance detail over most of the county. Two individuals were apprehended hunting deer at night on Little Satilla Wildlife Management Area. Both were charged with hunting deer at night, hunting from a vehicle, and criminal trespass on a WMA.

*RFC Sam Williams unloading weapons found in poacher's vehicle on Little Satilla WMA in Pierce County.*

### **ECHOLS COUNTY**

On December 31<sup>st</sup>, Sgt. Patrick Dupree and RFC Sam Williams patrolled deer-dogging leases in the eastern portion of the county. Two hunters were encountered that were not displaying the dog-deer permit number on their vehicle. Both were given verbal guidance to comply with the requirement.

### **APPLING COUNTY**

On the evening of December 31<sup>st</sup>, Corporal Chase Altman was out patrolling for after hour duck hunting, when numerous shots were heard from a creek nearby. Six hunters were found hunting waterfowl after hours, along with three hunting licenses violations. Seven Wood Ducks were confiscated and donated to a needing family. Nine hunting violations were recorded and the hunters were handed citations and released at the scene.

### **JEFF DAVIS COUNTY**

On December 28, RFC Bobby Sanders responded to a complaint of a beaver in a swimming pool in Jeff Davis County. After only a few minutes the home owner and RFC Sanders caught the beaver and turned it over to a licensed nuisance trapper for that area.



### **IRWIN COUNTY**

On December 30<sup>th</sup>, Corporal John A Stokes responded to a deer hunting without permission complaint. Three poachers were located and violations for hunting deer without fluorescent orange vest were documented.

On December 30<sup>th</sup>, Corporal John A Stokes patrolled for an after legal hours duck roost shoot. Two juveniles and one adult were found. Violations were documented for hunting waterfowl after legal hours.

### **LAURENS COUNTY**

On December 25<sup>th</sup>, Sergeant James McLaughlin responded to a call about two overdue boaters. Sgt. McLaughlin determined that the boaters had passed their landing of destination and was unable to operate their kayaks in the darkness. Sgt. McLaughlin located the two individuals 17 miles downriver from Shady Field Landing and transported the two individuals to the nearest boat landing.

### **TELFAIR COUNTY**

On December 24<sup>th</sup>, Ranger Lamar Burns conducted night patrol at Little Ocmulgee State Park. No violations were documented.

On December 31<sup>st</sup> Ranger Lamar Burns patrolled Horse Creek Wildlife Management Area. No violations were documented.

### **WILCOX COUNTY**

On December 29<sup>th</sup>, Corporal John A Stokes worked a hunting without permission complaint. One violator was located and charged as a non-resident hunting without a license and a non-resident hunting without a big game license.



### **COFFEE COUNTY**

On December 31<sup>st</sup>, Cpl. Tommy Daughtrey received a complaint in reference to a baited duck shoot near Broxton. Cpl. Daughtrey located the duck shoot still in progress. The creek was found to be baited. Six subjects were charged with hunting ducks over bait. Numerous license violations (hunting without a license, hunting without GA waterfowl license, and hunting without a federal stamp) were also documented.



## **BERRIEN COUNTY**

On December 28<sup>th</sup> Sergeant Morty Wood patrolled Paradise Public Fishing Area. Three violations of fishing without a WMA license were documented.

On December 31<sup>st</sup>, Cpl. Tommy Daughtrey checked several fishermen at Paradise PFA. Two violations of fishing without a WMA license were documented.

## **LOWNDES COUNTY**

On December 24<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Tommy Daughtrey responded to a fishing without permission complaint at Lakewood Farms. Per the complaint's request two subjects were charged with fishing without permission.

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

### **GLYNN COUNTY**

On December 26<sup>th</sup>, SGT Chris Ridley and RFC Colte Shaske received a complaint of someone killing a deer from the road. Complainant stated they she heard 3 shots come from the road and someone jump back into a small pickup truck and proceed back into a hunting club. RFC Shaske and SGT Ridley patrolled the area and found where a deer had been killed and found 3 spent shotgun shells and 1 unspent shell in the road. RFC Shaske and SGT Ridley further patrolled the area and found the suspect vehicle in question at the camp cleaning a freshly killed deer. Upon investigation the Rangers found a new box of the same ammunition in the front seat of the pickup with only 1 unfired shell left in the box. Rangers were able to interview the suspect and determine that he shot the deer and where he shot it. The suspect was cited for hunting from a public road.

### **GLYNN AND CAMDEN COUNTIES**

On 12/29/2016 and 12/30/2016, Rangers inspected wholesale seafood dealers. Rangers documented violations of the shellfish sanitation program and met with seafood dealers and shellfish harvesters to ensure future compliance with program guidelines and food safety standards. On 12/31/2016, Rangers patrolled Glynn and Camden County inshore waters to ensure commercial and recreational harvest of shellfish in compliance with fishing regulations.

On 12/30/2016 and 12/31/2016, Rangers assisted Wildlife Resources Division on Paulks Pasture Wildlife Management Area with deer-dog hunts. This 8 point buck was taken during the hunt.



### **CHATHAM COUNTY**

On December 30, Ranger Doug Chambers, Cpl. Buster Coper, and Sgt. Cindy Miller patrolled the salt waters of Chatham County checking recreational fishermen. Several boats were checked and two were cited for fishing without a license.

On December 31, Sgt. Cindy Miller was conducting dockside boarding's for the Joint Enforcement Agreement (JEA) when she came across a boat that had 4 red snapper. Evidence was collected and the case was turned over to NOAA to handle. Red snapper are illegal to catch and possess in Federal waters.



### **BRYAN COUNTY**

On Friday December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016, RFC Toney checked a fisherman coming in at the Demeries Creek boat ramp. The fisherman had approximately six bushels of oysters. Upon investigation RFC Toney found that the fisherman gathered the oysters from an area not approved by the Department. This means that the oysters could be deadly to eat. It was also determined that the fisherman had no fishing license, no registration, and had approximately four bushels of oysters over the limit. The fisherman was cited for the violations. All the oysters were seized and returned to the water.



### **LIBERTY COUNTY**

On Wednesday December 28<sup>th</sup>, Rangers were conducting a night-hours salt water patrol in the area of the Medway River. RFC Thain and Toney noticed a vessel with no stern light. Upon checking the vessel they noticed that the operator seemed impaired. After a brief investigation, RFC Thain determined that the operator was under the influence of alcohol. The operator refused the required state test and was cited for operating a vessel with no

stern light and operating a vessel under the influence of alcohol. The operator was then transported to the Liberty County jail for processing. The vessel was returned to a nearby dock.