



GEORGIA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

Field Operations

Weekly Report
May 12 – May 18, 2019

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- Acworth (Northwest)

BARTOW COUNTY

On May 13th, several Game Wardens assisted a Federal Law Enforcement agency with the apprehension of fugitive near Adairsville, Georgia.

CHATTOOGA COUNTY

On May 17th, SGT. Mike Barr and Game Warden Carla Gann assisted the Park Manger at Sloppy Floyd State Park remove a vehicle that had been abandoned at a campsite.



Abandoned van at Sloppy Floyd State Park campsites.

DADE COUNTY

On May 12-15, 2019, Corporal Ben Cunningham assisted a Tennessee hunter, Diana Layton, with harvesting her first turkeys in Dade County, Georgia. She purchased the hunt at the annual Safari Club International (SCI) annual banquet in Chattanooga earlier this year and then purchased her out of state Georgia non-resident licenses. Ben volunteered as a guide and the hunt was held in what is locally known as the “big woods” on Sand Mountain. Together, they harvested two gobblers during the hunt. SCI is a strong supporter of DNR Law Enforcement and promotes legal and ethical hunting.



Diana Layton from Tennessee harvested her first ever gobbler on Sand Mountain in Dade County with the assistance of Game Warden Corporal Ben Cunningham.

FLOYD COUNTY

On May 19th, Game Warden Carla Gann was patrolling the Rocky Mountain Public Fishing Area (PFA). She found three sets of people at the beach area with alcohol. The facility prohibits alcohol. The people were issued citations for violation of a DNR regulation.



Shannon Matthews shows off his 5 lb. bass caught at Rocky Mountain PFA.

FANNIN COUNTY

On May 18, Corporal Cody Jones and Game Warden Kalem Burns were patrolling Lake Blue Ridge by vessel when they spotted a ski boat without visible registration. Upon stopping the ski boat, it was determined the operator of the boat had been drinking and was under 21 years of age. After putting the operator through field sobriety, the Game Wardens determined the operator was intoxicated. The operator was arrested for boating under the influence, minor in possession of alcohol, and operating vessel with improper registration.



Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

UNION COUNTY

On May 17, Sgt. Steve Seitz and GWFC David Webb patrolled Coopers Creek on Cooper's Creek WMA. The game wardens checked several fishermen during this patrol and located two men whom each had eight trout with them. The men were camping on the WMA and upon further inspection of their creel, the men were found to be in possession of nine trout over their legal limit. Each fisherman was cited for possession of over the limit of trout.

RABUN COUNTY

On May 18, Sgt. Steve Seitz patrolled Hwy 76 West of Clayton, GA and noticed several groups of bear hunters training their dogs in the area. Sgt. Seitz was able to check two groups of the hunters and found one hunter from North Carolina who had an expired hunting and big game license. Sgt. Seitz issued the bear hunter two warnings for his expired licenses since they had expired only seven days earlier and he had all his other required equipment and permits. The hunter was also able to get cell service and renew his license afterwards.

On May 18, Game Wardens David Webb and Beth Gilbert patrolled the Tallulah River for fishing activity north towards the North Carolina line inside Rabun County and Towns County. Two warnings were issued for fishing without license on person and fishing with an expired license.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

CLARKE COUNTY

On May 13th Cpl. Tim Butler arrested a fisherman for possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug related objects, and fishing without a license. Additionally, the fisherman had arrest warrants out of Clarke and Barrow Counties.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

MUSCOGEE COUNTY

On May 17th, Game Warden Dean Gibson checked the Lake Oliver Marina for fishing and boating activity. Game Warden Gibson located two subjects fishing without a license and one subject operating a vessel without registration numbers displayed or a vessel registration card onboard.

On May 18th, Sergeant Jeremy Bolen, Game Warden Ethan Franklin, and Game Warden Dean Gibson patrolled the Columbus Riverwalk, Chattahoochee River, and Oxbow Lakes by ATV's. Game Warden Gibson located one individual fishing without a license and one subject operating a motorized vessel without a personal flotation device or vessel registration.

On May 18th, Sergeant Jeremy Bolen, Game Warden Ethan Franklin, and Game Warden Dean Gibson checked Lake Oliver Marina for fishing and boating activity. Game Warden Gibson located an angler fishing without a license and an individual operating a vessel without lights during hours of darkness.

MERIWETHER COUNTY

On May 17th, Sergeant Jeremy Bolen and Game Warden Dean Gibson responded to a call in reference to an injured hiker at F. D. Roosevelt State Park. Sgt. Bolen and GW Gibson met park staff and Meriwether County EMS near the Rocky Point parking area and located the injured hiker. She was complaining of right leg pain after slipping and falling on wet rocks. EMS evaluated and packaged the subject for transport to an ambulance for the next level of treatment. Sgt. Bolen and GW Gibson assisted in carrying the injured hiker out to the ambulance for transport to an area hospital.

TROUP COUNTY

On May 18th Game Wardens Russell Epps and Charlie Follin, assisted by Sgt. Brent Railey, responded to a vessel fire on West Point Lake at Sunny Point Access in Troup County. Upon arrival they found a ski boat fully engulfed in flames. GW Epps and Follin put two LaGrange Firefighters on their patrol boat and were able to get the fire under control enough to tow it to shore and fully extinguish the flames. When the vessel initially caught fire, all occupants jumped into the water; two passengers subsequently transported themselves to a local urgent care center for minor (first degree) burns but were not admitted to the hospital. The operator was uninjured.

UPSON COUNTY

On the evening of May 18th Cpl. Wil Smith received a call from the Upson County Sheriff's Department concerning four subjects missing on the Flint River; it was believed the individuals put in float-tubes at Sprewell Bluff Park and floated down river. Cpl. Smith responded along with the Upson County Search and Rescue Team and began searching the area. During a search by land, visual contact was made with the subjects across the river in Talbot County, approximately 1.5 miles upstream from the Hwy 36 bridge. Cpl. Smith walked through the woods along the river's edge until he made contact with the subjects. Cpl. Smith checked the subjects for injuries. No serious injuries were reported. Upson SAR attempted a rescue by vessel but was unable to due to water levels and shoals. Cpl. Smith walked out to the nearest road and arranged transportation for the subjects. Upon investigation, it was discovered the individuals had decided to float down the river on tubes without letting anyone know – they also failed to leave a catch vehicle at the next take out. Their tubes popped while floating and none of the subjects had a life jacket. All subjects were returned to safety.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

No activity to report.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

EFFINGHAM COUNTY

On May 18th Game Warden First Class Jordan Crawford patrolled the Savannah River for boating and fishing activity. During the patrol five violations were documented. Violations include fishing without a license, Georgia's 100 foot law, and allowing an underage person to ride in a moving vessel without wearing a PFD.

JENKINS COUNTY

On May 17th, Corporal Mike Wilcox was patrolling boat landings along the Ogeechee River checking for fishing activity. Cpl. Wilcox documented two violations of fishing without a license.

On May 18th, Cpl. Wilcox conducted a vessel patrol along the Ogeechee River. Several boat and licenses were checked. Cpl. Wilcox documented several license violations and one violation for insufficient PFD's.

CHARLTON COUNTY

On May 12th, Game Warden First Class Judd Sears and GWFC. Sam Williams patrolled Saint George landing for fishing and boating activity. One vessel was checked for license requirements and safety equipment. This vessel was occupied by two subjects that were found to not have fishing license and no life jackets (PFD's) were in the vessel. Violations of non-resident fishing without license and operating a vessel without coast guard approved PFD's were documented.

On May 18th, GWFC. Daniel North and GWFC. Judd Sears conducted a vessel patrol of the St Mary's river. During this patrol 18 boats were checked for license requirements, creel limits, and safety equipment. One vessel was occupied by two subjects that were found to be fishing without license. Two other vessels were found to have safety equipment violations, not possessing a throw able device or fire extinguisher. Violations of fishing without license, operating vessel without fire extinguisher, and operating vessel without throw able device were documented.

On May 18th, GWFC. North and GWFC. Sears patrolled Burnt Fort landing for fishing and boating activity. Multiple boats were checked during this patrol and one subject was found to be fishing without a license. Violations of fishing without a license were documented.

On May 18th, Corporal Jason Shipes and Cpl Mark Pool patrolled Traders Hill boat landing for fishing and boating activity. Multiple boats were checked during this patrol. One of the boats checked was occupied by three adults. The boat operator only had two Coast Guard approved personal floatation devices on board. Violations for operating a vessel with insufficient PFD's were documented.

WARE COUNTY

On May 18th, Corporal Jason Shipes and Cpl. Mark Pool checked the Jamestown and the GA highway 84 boat landings for boating and fishing activity. Two vessels at Jamestown and one vessel at the GA Highway 84 landing were found operating vessel's without any Coast Guard approved personal floatation devices on board. Violations for operating a vessel without PFD's on board were documented.

COOK COUNTY

On May 17th, Sergeant Morty Wood and Game Warden Johnny Robinette patrolled fishing areas along the Withlacoochee River. While on patrol the Wardens located a vehicle parked under the bridge and then saw three subjects fishing, two males and one female. They were on the island in the middle of the river. The individuals were called to the side where the Wardens were and the Wardens checked their fishing license. The female subject had a valid fishing license. The two males did not have a fishing license and were charged with fishing without fishing license.

BERRIEN COUNTY

On Saturday May 18th, Sergeant Morty Wood and Game Warden Johnny Robinette assisted the Berrien County Sheriff Office with a women's firearms course. The class included instruction on Georgia law, safe handling of firearms, and live fire exercises on the range.



JEFF DAVIS COUNTY

On May 18th, Game Warden Randell Meeks patrolled Bullard Creek WMA in Jeff Davis County. GW Meeks stopped two off road vehicles that were riding inside the WMA. Two violations for illegal use of ATV on a WMA were documented.

TREUTLEN COUNTY

On May 18th, Game Warden Randell Meeks patrolled the Treutlen County section of the Oconee River for fishing and boating activity. One violation for operating a vessel without a registration, two violations for fishing without a license, three operating a vessel without Coast Guard approved personal floatation devices, and one violation for operating a vessel within 100' of object or shore above idle speed.

TOOMBS COUNTY

On May 18th, Game Warden First Class Bobby Sanders patrolled boat landings along the Altamaha River. Several violations were encountered for fishing without a license and operating a vessel within a 100' of an object above idle speed.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

BRYAN COUNTY

On Wednesday May 15, 2019 Cpl. Bryson conducted patrols in the area of Bryan Co-op Road. This is a remote area surrounded by hunting clubs. Cpl. Bryson watched a vehicle go into an area known for dumping with a load of debris. When the vehicle returned the load of debris had been removed. Cpl. Bryson stopped the vehicle and spoke with the driver. The driver reluctantly admitted that he had dumped the load of debris down the road. The driver was cited for littering.

LIBERTY COUNTY

On Monday the 13th of May, Cpl. Hargrove responded to a boating incident on the Medway River in Liberty County. Cpl. Hargrove's investigation revealed that the commercial shrimping vessel "Miss Denise" was operating on auto pilot and ran over a recreational vessel that was at anchor fishing. This collision capsized the recreational vessel and caused the two occupants to jump overboard in an attempt to get out of the way of the commercial shrimp boat. The commercial vessel pulled the two occupants from the water and towed the recreational vessel back to the Sunbury boat ramp. One of the recreational vessel occupants told Cpl. Hargrove that he had a bad back and the incident caused him further injury to his back. Cpl. Hargrove is continuing the investigation and will complete the boating incident report. Charges are pending.

On May 18, 2019 at 1300 hours, Game Wardens Jack Thain and Kate Hargrove responded to a boating incident in Walburg Creek near St. Catherine's Island. Dispatch reported a man with head injury and a woman with lacerations. Both persons were transported by a good Samaritan in a private vessel to St. Catherine's Island. At approximately 1500 hours, Air-Evac transported one occupant from St. Catherine's Island to Memorial Hospital in Savannah. Games Wardens assisted with vessel recovery once the tide allowed. According to the evidence and the operator's statement, the vessel ran into the marsh due to operator inattention. There was no sign of intoxication. There are no charges pending.

OFFSHORE WATERS

On Thursday May 16, 2019 Cpl. Bill Bryson along with NOAA Officers Ben Hughes and Miles Dover conducted a patrol offshore of St. Catherine and Ossabaw Islands looking for vessels commercially fishing for shrimp. The officers found several vessels in the federal waters known as the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The vessels were boarded and gear checked for compliance. One item checked for compliance was the Turtle Excluder Device (TED). This device allows turtles that get into the net to be pushed back out of the net before they drown. The vessels and all gear were found to be in compliance.