

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
September 29-October 5, 2013

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 October 2nd, Sgt. Mike Barr and RFC Zack Hardy responded to a call for assistance from a family who was lost after dark at the Pine Log Creek Trail off Highway 140 near the Cherokee County line. The three had started hiking on the trail about 6pm. The area is mountainous and quickly became dark. The family got turned around and did not have any source of light and a cell phone that had little power. They were able to get a call out for assistance before the phone went dead. They used the limited light source from the son's watch as light to get to the main trail. Sgt. Barr and RFC Hardy responded for the search and rescue. Ranger Hardy utilized an ATV to access the remote area, but due to a steep ravine, had to continue on foot. After some time searching, he was able to locate the family and assist with getting them back to the parking area around 930pm. The family was grateful for the assistance and commented that they would never begin even a short hike without the basic survival tools including several forms of light.



RFC Zack Hardy prepares for a search and rescue by ATV on the Pine Log Creek Trail.

SOUTHEAST GEORGIA

During the second weekend of the South Georgia bear season, Cpl. Shawn Elmore and RFC Chad Cox assisted Sgt. Patrick Dupree's Region 6 work section in Clinch, Echols, Ware, and Charlton counties. Several bear hunting clubs were checked and several citations were issued for hunting bears over bait.



Sgt. Dupree discussing operational plans with officers working the detail.

WALKER COUNTY

On October 05th, Cpl. Tommy Gentry and Sgt. Jeff Galloway checked a baited area previously located by Cpl. Gentry. One citation was issued for hunting big game over bait.

DOUGLAS COUNTY

On September 29th, Cpl. Eric Brown was patrolling for deer hunting activity. A landowner complaint was received and Cpl. Brown responded to investigate. After investigating the scene it was determined that a buck had been killed earlier that morning with a rifle. One subject was cited for hunting without permission, hunting big game over bait, hunting out of season, and illegal possession of wildlife. One 6 point buck was confiscated.

Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

FRANKLIN COUNTY

On October 4th, Cpl. Craig Fulghum received a call from Franklin County 911 reference a homeowner burning illegal items in the Gumlog community. After Fulghum arrived at the scene he found a homeowner that had burned household items including a couch, shingles, and mattresses. Cpl. Fulghum issued a citation for unlawful burning of waste to the homeowner.

MADISON COUNTY

On October 5th, RFC Shane Sartor checked an area that had been baited for deer. He issued one citation for hunting big game over bait.

HALL COUNTY

On September 30th, Cpl. Jason Roberson taught a two hour hunter safety class and certified twenty students.

JACKSON COUNTY

On October 6th, RFC Eric Isom checked a baited property in west Jackson County. He located one subject hunting approximately 75 yards from whole corn. The subject received a warning for hunting big game over bait. He was instructed to hunt at least 200 yards from the bait or clean it all up and wait 10 days.

BANKS COUNTY

On October 5th, 2013 Cpl. Adam Loudermilk patrolled Banks County. During the patrol he issued one citation to a subject for burning tires.

On October 5th, Cpl. Adam Loudermilk taught a hunter education class. A total of 22 students were certified.

UNION COUNTY

On October 2nd, at approximately 20:00 RFC Barry Britt received a call from Hall County 911 Dispatch in reference to four subjects that was lost on the Appalachian Trail. The lost hiker's cell phone had hit one of the cell towers in Hall County due to the hiker's altitude. Hall County 911 determined that the hiker's location was in Lumpkin County and transferred the call to Lumpkin County 911. RFC Britt contacted RFC Anne Alexander and gave her the hiker's information. While speaking briefly to the hikers due to bad cell service RFC Alexander was able to get a general location of the hikers. The hikers had parked at the Byron Herbert Reese Trail head in Union County and traveled West on the Appalachian Trail. RFC Alexander called RFC Kevin Dyer who lives in Union County and she advised him of the situation. RFC Alexander was able to contact the hikers briefly again and she advised then to call the Union County Dispatch so that the dispatch could ping the hikers cell phone and get an exact location. RFC Dyer met Lt. Jeff Fortenberry with the Union County Fire / Rescue at Union County Fire Station 1. Union County Dispatch was able to pin point the exact location of the hikers. The hiker's

location was on a private track of land south of Jarrard Gap. RFC Dyer and Lt. Fortenberry used a closed USFS Road to drive to the remote location. RFC Dyer and Lt. Fortenberry located the lost hikers and had them to load their gear into RFC Dyer's truck. The hikers rode with Lt. Fortenberry to the Byron Herbert Reese Trail head where their vehicle was located.

On October 5th, RFC Kevin Dyer assisted DNR WLT 4 Scott Bardenwerper, WLT 3 Frank Manning, WLT 3 Eric Wood, WLT 3 Brandon Walls, WL Biologist Scott Frazier, WLT 2 Scott Palmer, DNR day labor Sarah Willburn and the Cooper Creek Sportsman Association with the annual Adult / Child Hunt on Cooper Creek WMA. The Cooper Creek Sportsman Association provided lunch and door prizes for the youth. There were approximately 470 people attended the hunt and 5 bucks, 10 antler less deer, 7 bears and 4 hogs were checked in.* Special thanks go to the Cooper Creek Sportsman Association for their hard work and their sponsors to make this hunt one of a kind. Through donations the Cooper Creek Sportsman Association provides lunch for all the hunters and gives several hundred door prizes out.

DAWSON COUNTY

On October 1st, RFC Barry Britt and Ranger Shane Brown conducted an On-Line Hunter Education Class at Lanier Technical College in Dawsonville. During this class a total of 18 students were certified in Hunter Education.

FORSYTH COUNTY

On September 30th, Sgt. Lee Brown was notified about a body floating in the Chattahoochee River below the McGinnis Ferry Bridge. With the assistance of the National Park Service, Johns Creek Fire Department and the Johns Creek Police Department the body was recovered and turned over to the Fulton County Medical Examiner's Office.

GWINNETT COUNTY

On October 3rd, Cpl. Eric Sanders and Ranger Shane Brown assist the Governor's Task Force searching for marijuana being grown.

On October 3rd, Cpl. Eric Sanders and Hunter Education Instructor Walt Knight taught an On-Line Hunter Education Class at Johnson Park in Conyers. A total of 27 students were certified in Hunter Education.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

TALIAFERRO COUNTY

On October 5th, RFC Robert Timmerman, RFC Brian Adams, and RFC Grant Matherly responded to an in progress night hunting complaint. The Rangers saturated the area to try and apprehend the suspects. After working the complaint for several hours, no contact was made with any suspects.

COLUMBIA COUNTY

On October 3rd, Sgt. Doyte Chaffin taught a Hunter Safety Course to approximately 30 students at Wesley Methodist Church in Evans.

MCDUFFIE COUNTY

On October 5th, Cpl. Ryan Swain and RFC Robert Timmerman conducted a concentrated patrol of McDuffie PFA. Several subjects were checked but no violations were detected.

BURKE COUNTY

On October 5, Cpl. Ben Payne and Sgt. Max Boswell patrolled Burke County checking without permission complaints. The officers worked together and located complaint properties and evidence of poachers. The officers worked the complaints but no contact was made.

CLARKE COUNTY

On October 5th RFC Tim Butler checked an area known to have baited deer stands. One hunter was issued a citation for hunting big game over bait.

Also on the 5th Sgt. Brian Carter, Cpl. Mark Patterson, and RFC Tim Butler operated a laser shot hunting simulator and distributed safety related materials for National Safety Day at an event sponsored by Sears.

OGLETHORPE COUNTY

On October 3rd DNR Rangers assisted State Patrol with a security detail for a Luke Bryan concert. Rangers involved were Sgt. Matt Garthright, Cpl. Julian Wilkins, Cpl. Micheal Crawley, RFC Tim Butler, RFC Phillip Nelson, and RFC Bobby Timmerman.

WILKES COUNTY

On October 4th Cpl. Mark Patterson checked and cited one bow hunter for hunting without a license.

LAKE OCONEE

On October 5th, Sgt. John Harwell and Cpl. Derrell Worth responded to a complaint of an intoxicated kayaker on Lake Oconee. The officers located the individual and he was arrested for public drunk and violation of Habitual Violator permit.

GREENE COUNTY

On October 5th, Cpl. David Allen and Cpl. Derrell Worth attended a Law Enforcement Appreciation Day in Greensboro.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

PIKE COUNTY

On September 30, Cpl. Travis Sweat completed an illegal burning investigation in Pike County. Cpl. Sweat issued a written warning for the offense.

HEARD COUNTY

On October 5, Cpl. Keith Waddell and Sgt. Brent Railey responded to a complaint of possible illegal hunting in Heard County near Centralhatchee. Rangers investigated and discovered several people target practicing.

BALDWIN COUNTY

On Sept 29, Cpl. Josh Copelan checked baited hunting areas in Baldwin County. One hunter was located hunting over bait and charged accordingly.

LAKE SINCLAIR

On October 3, Cpl. Stanford received a complaint from Baldwin County about a stranded vessel on Lake Sinclair. Cpl. Stanford was able to locate the vessel and assist them with getting back to shore. The vessel was occupied by two adults and two juveniles.

LAMAR COUNTY

On October 1st, RFC Keith Page was looking for baited deer stands in southern Lamar County. After locating several baited deer stands, Page heard an ATV crank up behind a house near his location. Page listened as the ATV closed in on his position. RFC Page decided to hide in some thick brush as two hunters rode by him and proceeded towards two of the baited stands he had previously located. The ATV stopped and the hunters walked to the stands with their bows in hand. Page proceeded to the baited stands and located one of the men sitting 10 yards from a pile of corn and his buddy sitting approximately 40 yards behind him in another stand. After checking their hunting licenses, Page explained to the men that they were hunting over bait and charged both with hunting big game over bait.

MONROE COUNTY

On October 3rd, Sergeant Tim Kendrick located a bucket type feeder with corn in it and pears on the ground around the feeder. A climbing deer stand and a ground blind were located approximately 10 yards from the feeder. On October 5th, Kendrick checked the baited area just after daylight and found a 14 year old boy in the climbing stand. The juvenile said his grandfather had dropped him off at the stand and was not hunting. Kendrick located the grandfather sitting in a box blind on the back side of the property without a weapon. Due to the hunter being a juvenile, verbal guidance was given and Kendrick explained to the grandfather that the bait must be completely removed for 10 days before the area could be legally hunted again.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

SEMINOLE COUNTY

On September 29th, Sgt. Rick Sellars, RFC Tony Cox, and Ranger Jace Heard located a duck hunt that was being held in a partially flooded corn field. After identifying several over limit violations, the Rangers called Cpl. Bob Holley and requested that he utilize his K-9 dog to thoroughly search the area. A total of 17 citations were issued to the hunters. These violations included 9 over limits, 5 without federal duck stamps, 1 without Georgia waterfowl license, 1 unplugged shotgun, and 1 hunting out of season violation. A total of 82 teal and 2 wood ducks were confiscated in this incident.



RFC Tony Cox (left) and Ranger Jace Heard with confiscated ducks

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

DODGE COUNTY

On October 4th, RFC Allen Mills concluded an investigation with Environmental Specialist Bill Lucas of EPD from an anonymous complaint received by the EPD. After gathering all the information and evidence, RFC Mills called and met with the individual and conducted an interview at which time the suspect admitted to illegally burning household trash and other debris. A violation for unlawful burning of litter was documented.

WARE COUNTY

On September 29th, Corporal Josh Chambers, Corporal Jason Shipes, and RFC Mark Pool conducted an investigation related to bear hunting over bait in eastern Ware County. After an eight-hour investigation, a hunter was charged with hunting big game over bait and possession of illegally taken wildlife. A 315 pound bear was seized as evidence.



CHARLTON COUNTY

On October 5th, Cpl. Josh Chambers, Cpl. Robert Stillwell, Cpl. Jeremy Bolen, RFC Mark Pool, RFC Chad Cox, Ranger Daniel North, and Ranger Sam Williams were conducting a bear hunting enforcement detail near Moniac. Some of the officers were conducting surveillance of bear bait sites previously located. Around mid-morning, several hunters drove up to a bait site that was under surveillance and released hounds on a bear that had visited the bait. The remainder of the officers, who were waiting nearby, responded and located the hunters involved. Five hunters received citations for hunting big game over bait. During the subsequent contact, a small bag of marijuana and a pipe was located that resulted in one hunter being arrested and charged with Violation of Georgia's Controlled Substance Act. He was transported to Charlton County Jail.

CLINCH COUNTY

On October 4th, Cpl. Jason Shipes and Ranger Daniel North were notified that a very small bear had been brought to the DNR Game Management checking station in Fargo to be tagged. Upon arrival, the officers learned that the hunter had shot the bear the previous afternoon while still hunting near Council. After transporting the small bear for weighing on certified scales, the officers discovered the bear weighed just 68 pounds. For a bear to be legal to harvest its weight must be at least 75 pounds. The hunter was charged with taking an undersized bear and warned for possession of illegally-taken wildlife. The bear was seized.



EVANS COUNTY

On Sept. 28th, RFC Debbie Brannen, RFC Jack Thain of the Law Enforcement Division and Steve Mincey and Ben Ballard of the Fisheries Sections presented a program on wildlife awareness and identification and fishing techniques using the shocking boat. The event was held for the Cub Scouts of America. The weekend event included camping, archery, BB gun range, hiking, and fishing. There were approximately 300 adults and children in attendance.



On Oct. 5th, RFC Debbie Brannen helped with the first annual JAKES Day event hosted by the Tattnall-Evans Limb Hangers and the Evans County Wildlife Club. RFC Brannen operated the Laser shooting simulator during the event. Approximately 50 children and adults were in attendance. Other activities were BB gun range and introduction to archery. Lunch was provided and the event ended with a drawing of prizes ranging from archery targets, T-shirts, caps and gift cards.

Later on October 5th, RFC Brannen patrolled the Evans County Public Fishing Area. Several licenses and boats were checked. Violations for operating a vessel without registration and operating a vessel with insufficient PFD's were addressed.





WHEELER COUNTY

On October 1st, Cpl. Kevin Joyce received a complaint and responded to possible deer hunting out of season. Upon arrival he located a subject in possession of two antlered deer. It was determined that both deer were shot with a 308 caliber rifle. The subject was charged with hunting with an illegal weapon and possession of illegally taken wildlife. Both deer were seized for evidence.

JEFF DAVIS COUNTY

On September 29th, Ranger Patrick Gibbs, CPL Chase Altman, and SGT Jon Barnard patrolled river landings along the Ocmulgee River resulting in 2 boats checked, 3 license checks and 1 violation documented for operating a vessel with insufficient PFD's.

On October 3rd, Ranger Patrick Gibbs and RFC Clint Jarriel taught a Hunter Education class at Jeff Davis County High School. 27 students were certified.

On the Bullard Creek WMA early primitive weapon hunt, Cpl. Altman and Ranger Gibbs patrolled for any illegal activity during the three days of the hunt. Two hunters were charged with hunting without big game license, and given warnings for hunting w/o a license.

APPLING COUNTY

On September 22nd, Cpl. Altman responded to a night hunting complaint on Craven Road. A vehicle was stopped and found to be in possession of a small deer. The vehicle was occupied by an adult and three juveniles. The adult was charged with hunting deer at night, hunting from a vehicle, and hunting big game from a public road. The juveniles were released to their parents and informed they would be placed in juvenile court for the same charges.

On the night of October the 5th, Cpl. Altman was working a night hunting complaint when an ATV came by his location. The ATV drove into a peanut field and began shining a light. The ATV was stopped in the peanut field, and two occupants were inside. They had a .22 rifle and were rabbit hunting. Violations for hunting rabbits at night were documented.

JEFF DAVIS

On the Bullard Creek WMA early primitive weapon hunt, Cpl. Altman and Ranger Gibbs patrolled for any illegal activity during the three days of the hunt. Two hunters were charged with hunting without big game license, and given warnings for hunting w/o a license.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

MCINTOSH COUNTY

On September 29, 2013 RFC Randy Aspinwall, Ranger Kate Hargrove, and Ranger Jay Bright were patrolling in the area of Two Way Fish Camp when they stopped a vessel. While checking their creel it was found that they had a Red Drum in excess of 30 inches. A citation was written for possession of an illegal size fish.



GLYNN COUNTY

On October 5th, DNR officers from Region VII and Region VI assisted the Coastal Resources Division with the 19th Annual Coastfest event held at the Brunswick DNR office. Officers parked vehicles, directed traffic, and assisted with emergency calls throughout the day. It was estimated that over 9500 people attended the event.



BRANTLEY COUNTY

On October 2nd, Cpl. Craig Smith received a call around midnight reference someone possibly killing a deer in a field in Brantley County. Cpl Smith responded to the area and was able to find several tracks from a vehicle and two different set of footprints in the area. After several hours in the field, Cpl. Smith was able to locate the small deer that had been shot. The incident is still under investigation.

On October 5th, RFC John Evans responded to a night hunting complaint in progress. Upon arrival, he got information from the complainant and investigated the field. After further investigation RFC Evans was able to determine who two of the suspects were and where they lived. RFC Evans made contact with them at about 2:00 am and found the third suspect was still with them. All three were cited for Hunting Deer at Night, Hunting From a Vehicle, and Hunting From a Public Road.

On October 4th, RFC David Brady and Ranger Colte Shaske were patrolling near Hoboken when the officer's noticed a buck deer lying in the ditch on the side of the road. The Ranger's stopped to investigate and discovered that the deer had been shot with buckshot just prior to their arrival. The Ranger's quickly set up surveillance on the dead deer and short time later a car stopped and a male subject jumped out and drug the deer into the edge of the woods, returned to the car and sped off. Approximately ten minutes later the same male subject returned with help, but this time in an SUV. The two men waited for traffic to pass and then quickly loaded the deer up and drove off. RFC Brady then attempted to make a traffic stop and a short pursuit ensued. After getting the vehicle stopped and a lengthy investigation, the three occupants were arrested and charged with Possession of illegally taken wildlife, Giving false information to an officer, Possession of Firearm by a convicted felon, Possession of a controlled substance/ Crystal Methamphetamine, and Possession of drug related objects and materials, along with outstanding warrants.



BRYAN COUNTY

On Sept. 29th, Cpl. Jay Morgan checked boats and fishermen returning to Morgan's Bridge ramp on the Ogeechee River at Hwy. 204. One fisherman was cited for operating above idle speed within 100 feet of the bridge.

On Sept. 30th, Ranger Jason Miller checked the boat ramp at Ft. McAllister before daylight and cited one commercial crabber for operating a vessel without lights during hours of darkness.

LIBERTY COUNTY

On Oct. 4th, Cpl. Chris Moore, RFC Jack Thain, and Ranger Jason Miller patrolled offshore of St. Catherine's Island, checking commercial shrimp boats for licenses, Turtle Excluder Device and By-catch Reduction Device violations. No violations were found.