

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
April 5 - 11, 2015

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.

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Region I- Calhoun (Northwest)

BARTOW COUNTY

On April 11th, RFC Zack Hardy responded to Allatoona Lake where he received a complaint of a vessel taking on water. During the complainant's call to dispatch, the complainant was disconnected. The initial complaint was a vessel taking on water in the area of Allatoona Landing. Georgia State Patrol dispatch did not get a call back number or a complainant's name. RFC Hardy was able to locate a call back number from a Ranger Hotline associate. RFC Hardy made contact with the complainant and they advised that they were being towed by another vessel to Blockhouse boat ramp. RFC Hardy was able to make contact with the vessel at Blockhouse boat ramp and assured that everyone was accounted for and safe. The complainant advised that his bilge pump had quit working and they were bailing buckets of water out of the vessel.

CHEROKEE COUNTY

On April 11th, Sgt. Mike Barr and RFC Zack Hardy responded to a boating incident on Allatoona Lake near Galt's Ferry that involved two personal watercrafts (PWC) with injuries to one operator. RFC Hardy gathered information at the scene of the incident. RFC Hardy interviewed witnesses and the uninjured PWC operator about the incident. Sgt. Barr traveled to Kennestone Hospital to interview the injured operator. The cause of the incident was operator inexperience and inattention.

POLK COUNTY

On April 6th, RFC Chad Cox answered a complaint of hunting without permission in the Aragon Community of Polk County. RFC Cox located a hunter who had killed a hen turkey, but had permission to hunt on the property. The hunter did not have any valid licenses. RFC Cox issued him citations for hunting without a hunting license and for taking totally protected wildlife. He was also warned for hunting without a big game license. The hen was confiscated and donated.

PAULDING COUNTY

On April 11th, RFC Chad Cox was patrolling the Paulding Forest WMA and located a vehicle parked on the side of Hwy 278. When the hunter returned to the car RFC Cox checked his licenses and the hunter did not have a WMA license or a big game license. RFC Cox issued the hunter a citation for hunting without a WMA license and warned him for hunting without a big game license and hunting without hunter education certification. The hunter had only completed the online portion of the hunter education class.

FULTON COUNTY

On April 11th, Rangers Mark Puig and Shane Brown, Ranger First Class Chad Cox and several US Park Service officers conducted a joint special detail on the Chattahoochee River at the Morgan Falls Dam. Utilizing undercover and surveillance officers targeting state and federal resource crimes several violations were observed and addressed throughout the day.

Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

WHITE COUNTY

On April 9th, Sgt. Steve Seitz and Cpl. Derek Dillard received a call from White County EMS to assist with the recovery of an injured hiker on the Appalachian Trail. The female hiker had been bitten by a spider and was having an allergic reaction. White County EMS had requested a GSP helicopter to help extract the victim from this remote area on the trail. Sgt. Seitz and Cpl. Dillard responded to the area of Low Gap Road near the trail. The EMS personnel were able to bring the victim out on the ground where she was transported to the hospital by ambulance. While the officers were on the scene of this search and rescue mission, they received another call of a fisherman on the Chattahoochee River about a mile below the check in station in the Wildlife Management Area (WMA) had fallen and broke his ankle. This victim could not walk and needed to be carried out of the woods. The GSP helicopter crew analyzed the situation and determined the victim could not be hauled out by air because of the remote/rugged terrain. Cpl. Dillard called Wildlife Tech 4 Scott Barderwerper to respond to the area to assist the EMS. Sgt. Seitz responded to the area as well. The rescuers had to haul the victim out about a mile from the river to the WMA check station in a basket where he was placed into an ambulance and taken to the hospital.

On April 10th, RFC Anne Britt Patrolled Smithgall Woods state park and warned a fisherman from Michigan for not having a valid non-resident trout license while fishing on Dukes Creek. RFC Britt checked two turkey hunters that had been hunting on the Chattahoochee WMA off Alt. 75. One hunter was cited for not having a WMA license and warned for having an expired big game license. The other hunter was warned for not having his shotgun plugged. RFC Britt then patrolled Unicoi State Park and checked several fishing licenses on Unicoi Lake. RFC Britt warned 1 adult male for not having a fishing license and consuming alcoholic beverages on the State Park. RFC Britt also warned an adult female for not having a fishing license. RFC Britt then patrolled the Chattahoochee WMA for fishing and turkey hunting activity. She warned a man and his wife for not having trout licenses.

HALL COUNTY

On April 11th, Cpl. Jason Roberson arrested a subject for operating a vessel under the influence and another for possession of marijuana in Shoal Creek on Lake Lanier.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

ELBERT COUNTY

On April 11th Cpl. Julian Wilkins and Intern Babb conducted a patrol of Lake Russell. During this patrol, violations of operating a vessel with insufficient personal flotation devices and fishing without a license were documented.

WILKES COUNTY

During a patrol of the Clarks Hill Wildlife Management Area on April 11th Cpl. Mark Patterson documented a number of violations for illegal operation of ATV's. Also a subjected was found to be taking game fish by illegal methods when he was observed catching bream with a cast net.

JEFFERSON COUNTY

On April 11, RFC Matherly and RFC Billips participated in the annual Jefferson County AG Day. The Rangers set up a booth and talked with people about ATV and Boating Safety. There were approximately 300 people in attendance for the event.

JOHNSON COUNTY

On April 12, RFC Matherly was checking a large track of land close to Adrian which he and Cpl. Payne had previously found turkey bait. While checking the baited areas three subjects ran from RFC Matherly. RFC Billips and SGT Boswell responded to the area to assist in locating the three subjects. After locating the subjects they were all charged with hunting big game over bait and two of the subjects were found to be non-residents who did not possess a hunting license. They were both charged with Non Resident hinting without a hunting license and Non Resident hunting without big game license.

NEWTON COUNTY

Ranger Jason Harrison and RFC Ricky Boles patrolled Lake Varner noting violations for insufficient PFD's. The Rangers also responded to fishing w/out permission complaint on a pond located adjacent to Lake Varner and cited the individual.

LAKE OCONEE

Ranger Harrison and Cpl. David Allen patrolled Lake Oconee for boating and fishing violations. One vessel was stopped for allowing a child under 13 to ride in a moving vessel w/out a PFD.

LINCOLN COUNTY

On April 11th, Cpl. Ryan Swain and Ranger Michael Madden apprehended a subject for hunting turkeys with an unplugged shotgun. The subject was cited and released.

COLUMBIA COUNTY

On April 11th and 12th, Cpl. Ryan Swain, RFC Robert Timmerman, and Ranger Michael Madden responded to a missing person complaint at West Dam Recreation Area. The subject possibly drowned himself. Search and Rescue patrols were performed both by land and water. Columbia County Sheriff's Office is investigating the matter. The missing subject is wanted by several authorities for criminal charges.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

MONROE COUNTY

On April 8th, RFC Keith Page and K9 Drake were patrolling High Falls State Park. The two exited the main entrance to the park and were flagged down by store clerks of a nearby Dollar General Store. The clerks exclaimed that they had just been robbed and that the armed suspects may still be inside the building. Before Page and Drake could get to the front of the store, the armed suspects fled into the woods. Page and Drake waited on backup to arrive before tracking the suspects into the woods. A short time later, both suspects were located and arrested inside a nearby home. K9 Drake was again deployed to look for evidence around the house. He was able to locate a mask that one of the men was wearing during the robbery.

Later on April 8th, RFC Keith Page and K9 Drake were requested by the Monroe County Sheriff's Department to look for a stolen gun that a suspect had hidden in a wooded area. Page and Drake responded and within 30 minutes K9 Drake had located the handgun that was hidden in the woods and had been covered with leaves and limbs.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

GRADY COUNTY

On April 6th, Sgt. Rick Sellars conducted a patrol on an area where an illegal trap set was located during earlier patrols. The trap consisted of a live rooster in a cage with snares set around the perimeter. During this patrol, a turkey hunter was located on the property and was found to be hunting without the required licenses. The hunter also admitted to setting up the trap on the property. The subject was cited for non-resident hunting without a license, hunting without a big game license, trapping with an unlawful device, and trapping without a non-resident trapping license.

DECATUR COUNTY

On April 7th, RFC Tony Cox responded to a landowner complaint of subjects that had possibly poached a turkey on his property earlier. The landowner had been sent a video that the poachers had taken while killing a turkey, and believed that it was on his property. RFC Cox met with the complainant and viewed the video. He then conducted a foot patrol of the property locating and gathering evidence in the area where the video was taken.

On April 9th, RFC Cox interviewed the three suspects and all admitted to poaching the turkey on March 24th. The turkey was located and confiscated, and warrants were taken on the three subjects for hunting on lands of another without permission.

STEWART COUNTY

On April 11th, Cpl. Steve Robinson encountered two subjects hunting turkeys. One of the subjects was found to be hunting without license and cited for non-resident hunting without a license and non-resident hunting big game without a license.

That evening Cpl. Robinson was patrolling Rood Creek Park and after checking several people fishing from the bank in the park, two subjects were encountered fishing without a license. The two individuals were issued citations for fishing without a license. One of the subjects had outstanding warrants in Sumter County. Once the warrants were verified the individual was turned over to Stewart County Sheriff's Office.

CHATTAHOOCHEE COUNTY

On Saturday evening April 11th, Cpl. Steve Robinson was patrolling Chattahoochee County for fishing activity. Two individuals were encountered fishing from the bank at River Bend Park. The two individuals did not have fishing license and were issued citations for fishing without a license.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

LOWNDES COUNTY

On April 11th, Ranger First Class Keith McDonald was patrolling a property in Lowndes County that was baited for turkeys. RFC McDonald located an individual hunting on the property but the individual was not hunting over bait. RFC McDonald used the CAD system in his patrol truck to determine the individual did not possess a hunting license or a big game license. RFC McDonald also determined the shotgun was unplugged. Citations were issued for hunting without a hunting license and hunting with an unplugged shotgun. A warning was written for hunting without a big game license.

On April 10th, Ranger First Class Keith McDonald received a complaint reference an individual fishing without permission in a slough off of a river in Lowndes County. RFC McDonald located the individual and explained the landowner has that slough posted because he does not want anyone fishing on the property. Warnings were given for operating a vessel without registration, fishing without a license and fishing without permission. A citation was issued for operating a vessel without life jackets as well.

Later the same day Ranger First Class Keith McDonald received a phone call from the same complainant reference the same individual fishing in the same area. RFC McDonald located the individual and waited for him to return to the bridge. He was issued a citation for fishing without permission and operating a vessel with improper lights.

On April 11th, Ranger First Class Keith McDonald received a phone call from the same complainant reference the same individual fishing in the same area he was fishing in the day before. RFC McDonald located the individual and asked him to meet at the bridge. The individual was arrested for fishing without permission and operating a vessel without registration.

JENKINS COUNTY

On April 6, Corporal Mike Wilcox assisted Jenkins County Sheriff's Office search for a missing person. The person has been missing for several months. Later in the week human remains were found in the area being searched.

EMANUEL COUNTY

On April 9, Cpl. Eddie Akins checked Oohoopee Dunes WMA for turkey hunting activity. No hunters were located on the area.

EFFINGHAM COUNTY

On April 8, Ranger Jordan Crawford and Corporal Eddie Akins conducted a vessel patrol along Ebenezer creek. During the patrol several boaters were checked with no violations documented.

On April 11, Ranger Jordan Crawford patrolled several boat ramps throughout Effingham County. Numerous boats were checked with no violations documented.

SCREVEN COUNTY

On April 11, Corporal Shaymus McNeely conducted a patrol of Tuckahoe WMA for turkey hunting, boating and, fishing activity. Violations of improperly displayed registration and no registration displayed were addressed at Miller Lake.

EVANS COUNTY

On April 8, Ranger First Class Debbie Brannen patrolled the Canoochee River for fishing and boating activity. Several boats and licenses were checked. One violation for fishing without a license was documented.

TATTNALL COUNTY

On April 11, RFC Clint Jarriel and SGT Jon Barnard patrolled Little Tattnall Landing for fishing activity. One bank fisherman was checked and issued a citation for fishing without a license.

TOOMBS COUNTY

On April 11, RFC Clint Jarriel and SGT Jon Barnard patrolled an area off Center Rd for turkey hunters. Two hunters were checked and citations written for hunting big game over bait (turkey), hunting big game w/o a license, hunting w/o a license and verbal guidance given for other issues.

ECHOLS COUNTY

On April 5th, Ranger Daniel North was patrolling Register Road for turkey hunting activity when he observed individuals catching their hounds on the side of the road. Ranger North spoke with the suspects who advised that they were training their hounds for deer season. A loaded .22 caliber rifle was found inside of the truck between the passenger and driver seats. A violation of possession of illegal equipment (firearm) while training dogs was documented. Verbal guidance was given to the individuals about the legality of running deer with dogs out of season.

WARE COUNTY

On April 6th, Corporal Jason Shipes was checking boating and fishing activity along the Suwannee River Sill. Cpl. Shipes encountered a number of boats and fisherman in the area. While checking for the required fishing license and safety equipment, Cpl. Shipes found one vessel with insufficient personal floatation devices on board. After speaking with the owner of the vessel, a citation was issued for the violation.

CLINCH COUNTY

On April 11th, Sergeant Patrick Dupree and Ranger Daniel North conducted an interview with a suspect involved in poaching a 10-point buck near the city limits of Fargo. The investigation began in October 2013 in response to citizen complaints. Over the past sixteen months officers worked to gain more information and evidence related to the poaching incident. Violations of hunting big game from a public road and hunting from a vehicle were documented against the suspect. The illegally-killed deer was seized.



Ranger Daniel North & Ranger Judd Sears with the illegally-killed Clinch County buck.

On April 11th, Sergeant Patrick Dupree, Ranger Daniel North, and Ranger Judd Sears checked the Suwannee River landing at Fargo for fishing and boating activity. Throughout the day 46 boats and 87 fishing licenses were inspected. One citation was issued for allowing underage child to ride in moving vessel without life jacket. Violations of operating vessel above idle speed within 100 feet of object were also documented.

DODGE COUNTY

On April 9th, Ranger First Class Allen Mills assisted the Dodge County Board of Education with the removal of a Hog Nose snake from the building. Many employees of the board were extremely pleased with RFC Mills' assistance. The snake was relocated to a more suitable habitat and released unharmed.



Hog nose snake removed from building.

LAURENS COUNTY

On April 10th, Corporal Dan Stiles received a complaint of persons hunting without permission. Cpl. Stiles responded, but the subjects had left the scene. After an investigation Cpl. Stiles was able to locate the two subjects at their work site. After an interview it was determined the subjects had permission to hunt the area. One subject was issued citations for hunting without a license and hunting turkey without a big game license and the beard, fan, and spurs of an illegally taken turkey were confiscated.

On April 11th, Corporal Dan Stiles patrolled the Hugh M. Gillis Public Fishing Area. One vessel was checked for registration and safety equipment compliance and 23 anglers were checked for license and creel limit compliance. Two violations for fishing on a Public Fishing Area without a Wildlife Management Area license were documented and verbal guidance was given to four other visitors for other minor violations.

BEN HILL

On April 8th, Corporal John A Stokes investigated a complaint about a subject having an alligator at his house. The violator had caught the gator on the river and took it home to show his daughter and returned it back to the river; the violation was documented.

On April 11th, Corporal John A Stokes investigated a complaint about two violators killing a goose out of season. The subjects were asked to meet Cpl. Stokes at the Ben Hill sheriff's office where they both admitted to killing the goose. Two violations were documented for hunting out of season.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

No activity to report.