

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
September 13 – September 19, 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.



Region I- Calhoun (Northwest)

No activity to report.

Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

HABERSHAM COUNTY

On September 18th, RFC Chad Chambers and US Forest Service Law Enforcement Officer Jeff Angel checked a baited area near the Black Mountain area. The officers located two individuals hunting bear over a baited station containing breads, chips, corn, syrup and minerals. RFC Chambers charged the two men with Unlawful Use of Bear Bait. Federal charges are pending.

TOWNS COUNTY

On September 19th, CPL Kevin Dyer and US Forest Service Law Enforcement Officer Jason Arrowood patrolled Swallow Creek WMA. The officers located multiple subjects under the age of 21 years old that had been drinking alcohol. These subjects were issued federal citations for possession /consumption of alcohol and warnings for littering. The subjects voluntarily cleaned up the trash in the camp.

WHITE COUNTY

On September 13th, RFC Chad Chambers received a complaint from off duty RFC Anne Britt regarding a possible illegal bear kill on Unicoi State Park. Chambers spoke to the complainant and on September 13th, he and Ranger Beth Gilbert interviewed witnesses and the suspect. It was determined by the officers that the suspect had shot the bear with a bow and arrow while on Unicoi State Park from a public road that runs through the campground. The suspect was charged with Hunting on a State Park and Hunting from a Public Road. He was given a warning for Possession of a Projectile Weapon on a State Park. The bear was wounded, but not recovered.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

WALTON COUNTY

On September 19, Rangers David Allen and Jason Harrison checked a baited deer stand. They found a juvenile hunting over bait. The Rangers gave verbal guidance and explained the baiting laws to the young hunter.

On September 19, Rangers David Allen and Jason Harrison responded to hunting without permission complaint near Walnut Grove. The rangers met with several property owners and issued land affidavits. Several hours later, the rangers received a phone call stating the suspect was in the woods. The rangers located the hunter and cited him for hunting without permission and license violations.

GREENE COUNTY

Rangers Derrell Worth and Dan Schay cited four individuals for hunting on the Redlands Dove field, which was closed for hunting.

MCDUFFIE COUNTY

On September 19th, Sgt. Doyte Chaffin and Cpl. Ryan Swain apprehended 6 subjects for hunting doves over bait. The subjects were cited and released. The dove field was flagged and shut down for hunting.

COLUMBIA COUNTY

On September 20th, Sgt. Doyte Chaffin and RFC Robert Timmerman apprehended three subjects for hunting deer without permission. One subject was also charged with hunting under the influence of alcohol. Two of the subjects were cited. The HUI suspect was arrested and transported to Columbia County Jail.

RICHMOND COUNTY

On September 19, Cpl. Payne Cpl. Adams and Sgt. Boswell worked Richmond County checking baited deer stands and without permission complaints. Several areas were checked with no violations detected. Later in the morning the officers worked Spirit Creek WMA. One violation of hunting on WMA without stamp was documented. In the afternoon Cpl. Payne received a call from dispatch stating that there was an individual fishing without permission in a containment pond at Phinzy Nature Swamp. Upon arrival Cpl. Payne witnessed an individual fishing in a containment pond and went to arrest him. The individual began to run and after a short chase Cpl. Payne handcuffed and arrested him. He was charged for fishing without permission and taken to jail.

JEFFERSON COUNTY

RFC Matherly worked a complaint of night hunting in North West Jefferson County this past week. It had been reported by the landowner, that several nights the prior week two vehicles had been seen riding the area late in the evening and shining a spot light in several soybean fields looking for deer. The land owner stated that the vehicles would at times shine their spot light through the windows of his residence as they passed by. An investigation into the matter is ongoing, No contact with the suspects has been made at this time.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

On September 19th Cpl. Adams worked hunting without permission complaint in Washington County with no violations detected. Later that day Cpl. Adams checked several dove hunters in the area of Davisboro. No violations were detected.

WILKES COUNTY

On September 13th, Cpl. Mark Patterson conducted a patrol of the Fishing Creek Wildlife Management Area for hunting and fishing activity. During the patrol violations of driving on a closed road and fishing without a license were documented.

On September 19th, Sgt. Brian Carter and Cpl. Mark Patterson patrolled the Clarks Hill WMA and nearby public boat ramps. One violation of taking game fish by illegal methods was documented when a subject was found taking game fish with a cast net.

CLARKE COUNTY

On September 20th RFC Tim Butler attended the University of Georgia Career Fair at the Classic Center.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

HARRIS COUNTY

On September 19th, Cpl. Jeremy Bolen located a dove shoot on private property. While checking the hunters, Cpl. Bolen located 2 individuals from Alabama hunting without valid non-resident license. The hunters were each issued citations for non-resident hunting without a license and 25 doves were confiscated.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

ELMODEL WMA

On September 18th, Cpl. Greg Wade and Ranger Cliff Tippens received a complaint in reference to hunting occurring on a closed WMA. The rangers proceeded to Elmodel WMA and located a subject hunting dove in one of the area's sunflower fields. The subject was charged with hunting on a closed WMA.

DOUGHERTY COUNTY

On September 13th, Cpl. Robbie Griner and Sgt. David Ruddell located several hunters shooting dove on a sunflower field. As the Rangers were checking the hunters required license, bag limits and plugged shotguns, one hunter was found to be over the daily bag limit. Sgt. Ruddell discovered that whole corn had also been scattered along the sunflower field's edge. The shoot was stopped and the individual responsible for placing the bait on the field was charged with unlawful enticement of wildlife. The hunter that had taken over the limit was charged for taking over the daily bag limit.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

WARE COUNTY

On September 13th, Corporal Jason Shipes was patrolling for hunting and fishing activity along the northern edge of the Okefenokee Swamp. Cpl. Shipes observed several vehicles parked on the shoulder of the roadway on Swamp Road at Suwannee Creek. As he approached several individuals that were fishing, Cpl. Shipes smelled a strong odor of marijuana smoke coming from the group sitting along the creek bank. Cpl. Shipes found that none possessed a valid fishing license. Two of the individuals possessed illegal prescription medication (Xanax and oxycodone) along with marijuana. Charges were made for fishing without a license, possession of Schedule II narcotics, and possession of drugs not in their original container. Ware County Sheriff's deputies transported the violators to jail.

On September 19th, Sergeant Patrick Dupree and Ranger Daniel North were conducting a night hunting patrol when they received a dispatch that a semi-truck had struck and killed a large black bear on US Highway 1 at the Ware/Charlton County line. Sgt. Dupree and Ranger North arrived on-scene and collected age data for the game management wildlife biologist. The 300-plus pound bear was turned over to a local citizen to utilize the meat.



Large black bear killed by vehicle in Ware County

CHARLTON COUNTY

On September 15th, Ranger First Class Sam Williams assisted Charlton County Sheriff's Office, U.S. Marshall's Service, and Hamilton County Sheriff's Office from Florida with apprehending a fugitive from justice that had been located in the Folkston area. The suspect was wanted by Hamilton County S.O. for burglary, arson, and murder. The suspect was arrested without incident.



On September 19th, Sergeant Patrick Dupree and Ranger First Class Sam Williams conducted an investigation at a residence in Folkston where RFC Williams had received information that an individual was keeping live raccoons and squirrels in cages. A male subject at the residence admitted to trapping the animals on his property and keeping them in cages and voluntarily showed the officers where they were located. The officers advised the subject that it was illegal to keep game animals without proper permits. The violation of holding a game animal without a permit was documented and the officers removed two raccoons and three squirrels from the residence.



On September 19th, Sergeant Patrick Dupree and Ranger First Class Sam Williams attended the Varn Land & Cattle Company's annual hunting club meeting at Coleraine. The officers discussed hunting regulation changes while Wildlife Resources Division biologist Greg Nelms instructed the attendees on deer aging and herd management ideas.

RFC Sam Williams updating hunters on regulation changes in Charlton County

BULLOCH COUNTY

On Friday, September 11th, Corporal Eddie Akins was patrolling areas off Hwy. 119 near the Ogeechee River for late afternoon dove shoots. On a dead end road he discovered an enclosed trailer that had been abandoned there for what appeared to be several days. The discovery seemed suspicious due to the fact that the back doors had a padlock on them but the latch on the tongue of the trailer did not. The trailer also had a Louisiana tag on it. Cpl. Akins contacted the Bulloch County Sheriff's Department and turned the information over to them for them to follow up on. It was determined by the Sheriff's Department that the trailer was stolen out of Chatham County earlier that week.

On Saturday, September 12th, Corporal Eddie Akins and Sergeant Don Dasher patrolled areas north and west of Portal for dove hunting activity. Their efforts resulted in one dove shoot being checked with nine hunters on it. No violations were documented.

On Monday, September 14th, Corporal Eddie Akins investigated a complaint of poisoning wildlife and domestic animals in the city of Brooklet. No proof of wildlife being poisoned was ever established. The matter of poisoning of domestic animals was turned over to the Brooklet Police Department. The incident is under further investigation by the police department.

On Friday, September 18th, Corporal Eddie Akins checked an ongoing dove shoot off the Leefield-Stilson Hwy. While checking the hunters, it was determined that the field was baited with cracked corn. Seven hunters were charged with hunting over bait and 31 birds was confiscated.

CANDLER COUNTY

On September 7th 2015, Corporal Eddie Akins and Ranger Jordan Crawford patrolled Candler County for dove hunting activity. During the patrol Cpl. Akins and Rgr. Crawford encountered a baited field off Old Kermit Rd. Five poachers were questioned and six violations were documented. Violations included hunting over bait and attempting to flee and elude. 30 doves were confiscated off the field.

EFFINGHAM COUNTY

On September 10th 2015, Captain Scott Klingel, Lt. Colonel Jeff Weaver and Ranger Jordan Crawford attended the Georgia Department of Public Safety Board meeting at Effingham County High School. Colonel Weaver was among several speakers at the meeting to present programs to over 100 students about the operations of state law enforcement in Georgia.

On Saturday, September 19th, Corporal Eddie Akins investigated a boating incident on Abercorn Creek. A vessel occupied by two subjects struck a submerged obstacle which resulted in their boat overturning and sinking. Both individuals made it back to Abercorn Landing without any injuries. The incident is still under investigation.

EMANUEL COUNTY

On Sept. 6th while on patrol, Sergeant Don Dasher, Corporal Shaymus McNeely, Corporal Mike Wilcox and Ranger Randell Meeks checked a dove shoot on Hummingbird Lane in the Oak Park area of Emanuel County. While checking the field, it was observed that the field was baited with cracked corn. In total 13 citations for hunting over bait and two failure to participate in migratory bird program were written. 31 doves were confiscated and turned over to a local Sheriff Department.

On Sept. 19, Ranger Meeks checked a dove shoot on Noonday Church Road in Emanuel County. 5 hunters contacted, 1 failure to participate in migratory bird harvest information program was documented.

APPLING COUNTY

During the week of the 13th – 17th, Cpl. Altman attended and completed the Hunting Incident Investigation Academy that was held at the Training Center in Forsyth. This class was attended by 55 Rangers from 15 different states.

PIERCE COUNTY

On the evening of the 18th, Cpl. Altman responded to an area just north of Blackshear in regards to a call of an injured bald eagle on private property. The immature eagle was tracked through a cotton field into the timber line on the back side. Cpl. Altman was able to safely find and cover the eagle with a sheet and place it in his patrol vehicle. The eagle, which seemed to have two broken legs, was transported to the nearest biologist for further care.

EVANS COUNTY

On September 13, 2015, Ranger First Class Debbie Brannen patrolled the Evans County Public Fishing Area. Several licenses were checked resulting in violations for fishing without licenses and fishing without a WMA stamp on a PFA were documented.

On September 14, 2015, Ranger Debbie Brannen conducted a Hunter Education Class. A total of 9 students were certified.

On September 17, 2015, Ranger Debbie Brannen checked a complaint area off the Canoochee River. One individual was cited for fishing without a license and fishing without permission.

On September 20, 2015, Ranger Brannen checked fishing and boating activity on the Evans County Public Fishing Area. Two violations for fishing without a WMA stamp on a PFA was documented.

JEFF DAVIS COUNTY

On September 18, Cpl. Altman conducted a Hunter Education class at Towns Bluff Heritage Center, certifying 11 students.

DODGE COUNTY

On September 18th, Ranger First Class Allen Mills received a call in reference to a littering complaint. RFC Mills met with complainant and collected evidence from the site. RFC Mills then contacted the suspect and she advised him that she has recently had work done around her home and those individuals took trash and debris with them. RFC Mills then made contact with those two suspects and conducted a brief interview. Two violations for littering were documented.

On September 18th, Ranger First Class Allen Mills conducted a night patrol at Dodge County Public Fishing Area in reference to an alligator hunt. Seven hunters were checked for license compliance and safety inspections were conducted on two vessels. Verbal guidance was given for minor violations.

LAURENS COUNTY

On September 19th, Corporal Dan Stiles received a complaint from a property owner reporting several bags of trash that had been dumped on his property on the edge of and in a “duck pond”. Cpl. Stiles investigated the scene and located the violator responsible for dumping the trash. A citation was issued to an individual for illegal dumping of egregious litter (less than 500 lbs. / 100 cu. ft.).



Litter site in Laurens County

COOK COUNTY

On September 20th, Corporal Tim Hutto and Corporal Tommy Daughtrey completed a two week hunting deer without permission complaint in Adel. The complaint resulted in citations and warnings being issued for hunting without permission and hunting big game over bait without landowner permission.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)



MCINTOSH COUNTY

On September 6th, Sgt. Damon Winters and Ranger Jay Bright responded to a complaint about fisherman keeping a sea turtle at the Sapelo Ferry Dock. After arriving at the dock the Rangers checked three fishermen fishing from the dock. One of the fishermen was found to be in possession of a live sea turtle in a cooler. The turtle was seized and turned over to rehabilitators on Jekyll Island. The fisherman was cited for Taking Protected Species.

WAYNE COUNTY

On September 19th, Cpl. Randy Aspinwall was working a night hunting complaint in the Broadhurst area of Wayne County. While he was watching the area he observed someone drive by his location in a truck and shine a spotlight across the fields in the area. After stopping the vehicle Cpl. Aspinwall determined the driver was Hunting Deer at Night. Violations for Hunting Deer at Night, Hunting from a Motor Vehicle, and Hunting from a Public Road were documented.

On September 19th, Cpl. Bobby White was working a night hunting complaint in the Screven area of Wayne County. While watching the area Cpl. White observed someone shining a spotlight from a truck across the fields he was watching. After stopping the vehicle Cpl. White was able to determine the two subjects in the truck were hunting deer at night. Violations for Hunting Deer at Night and Hunting from a Public Road were documented.

PIERCE COUNTY

On September 19th, Sgt. Damon Winters and Ranger Jay Bright were working a night hunting complaint in the Cross Swamp area of Pierce County. While watching the cut corn field they were sitting on they observed a car being driven slowly by the field. Someone in the car started shining a spotlight across the field. The Rangers started following the car and watched the subjects inside shine two more fields before initiating a vehicle stop. After a short investigation it was determined the 3 subjects were hunting hogs. Violations for Hunting from a Public Road, Hunting from a Motor Vehicle, and Non Resident Hunting without a License were documented. When Sgt. Winters and Ranger Bright finished with the 3 subjects in the car they went back to their position and settled back in. After a short time they observed a truck slow down and the driver started shining a spotlight across the field they were watching. The Rangers followed the truck and watched the driver shine two more fields before initiating a vehicle stop. The 2 subjects inside were secured and after a short investigation it was determined they were hunting hogs. Violations for Hunting from a Motor Vehicle and Hunting from a Public Road were documented.

GLYNN COUNTY

On September 16th, Corporal Craig Smith received a call reference a boat that had been dumped in Turtle River. Cpl. Smith responded and was able to locate the owner. He was cited for Illegal Dumping.

On September 18th, Corporal Craig Smith observed two people in a boat that he knew had active warrants. Once they pulled up to the boat ramp Cpl. Smith placed both subjects under arrest and turned them over to Glynn County Sheriff's Office.

On September 18th, RFC John Evans and Ranger Colte Shaske patrolled Paulk's Pasture Wildlife Management Area during the Adult/Child Hunt. Multiple hunters were checked for compliance and during the patrol, a truck was found parked in the middle of the road. RFC Evans and Ranger Shaske attempted to locate the owner of the vehicle. While searching, RFC Evans found an individual in a climbing stand about 20 feet off the road and asked where his guardian was. The youth stated that he was further in the woods and Ranger Shaske tried to locate the guardian but was unsuccessful in his attempt. The rangers had the youth call the guardian via cell phone and advised him to come out of the woods. The suspects were cited for Blocking the road on a WMA, Violation of Adult/Child rules on a WMA(Not within sight/hearing of youth), and Hunting within 50 Yards of a WMA Road.

On September 18th, 2015, all of Region VII Rangers participated in boat training in Brunswick. The training was conducted by National Association of Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) certified instructors. The training went into detail on several topics including safe boat towing procedures, water recoveries and CPR and First Aid.

WAYNE COUNTY

On September 17, Captain Bob Lynn, SGT. Damon Winters, SGT. Mark Carson, CPL. Randy Aspinwall, CPL. Bobby White, CPL. Kate Hargrove, RNG Patrick Gibbs, and RNG Mark Day responded to Paradise Park on the Altamaha River in reference to a boating incident. Two boats collided on the river causing injuries and a fatality to the occupants in one of the boats. The incident is being investigated by the Critical Incident Reconstruction Team.

On September 20, 2015, RFC Kiel Toney continued the investigation into a boating collision that occurred on the Altamaha River. Some of his investigation included photographing the vessels involved and an inventory of the damages potentially caused by the incident.