

FWC

Division of Law Enforcement Weekly Report



April 27, 2018 through May 3, 2018

This report represents some events the FWC handled over the past week; however, it does not include all actions taken by the Division of Law Enforcement.

Patrol, Protect, Preserve

NORTHWEST REGION

CASES

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

Officers Allgood and Manning responded to a call regarding two subjects fishing from a vessel in a restricted no motor zone near Fort McRee. While approaching, they noticed there was a tent set up in the area near the vessel. They approached the tent and spoke to the two subjects who were present. While speaking to them, they noticed drug paraphernalia lying in the tent and one of the subjects had a methamphetamine pipe in his front pocket. Both subjects were found to be in possession of cannabis, cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine. Both subjects were arrested and transported to the Escambia County Jail.

While on patrol, Officer Cushing saw a vessel near the 17th Avenue Boat Ramp without any navigational lights on not making way. A second vessel inbound was hauled by the first vessel to assist getting to the boat ramp. When both vessels neared the boat ramp, Officer Cushing contacted the disabled vessel as the assisting vessel was idling away. Cushing projected his voice several times to get the attention of the assisting vessel operator. The operator seemed hesitant to respond, but the officer eventually contacted him. When questioned about having any fish, he indicated that he only had white trout. When asked to see the fish, the individual was slow to reveal the contents of the live well. Officer Cushing directed him to move a tackle bag and open the lid fully. Inside the live well was a 33-inch redfish. Officer Cushing initiated a fisheries inspection with the other vessel. The operator stated that he had two redfish and a red snapper and some other miscellaneous fish. Officer Cushing inspected the catch. One of the redfish was

oversized. Citations were issued to both subjects for the oversized redfish violations and several warnings for the other resource and boating safety violations.

Department of Agriculture Criminal Investigator Shaw advised Environmental Investigator Hughes his agency had received a complaint regarding the storage and disposal of yard trash debris (land clearing debris) on private property in Escambia County. Investigator Shaw stated the yard trash debris had been placed on the property by the complainant's daughter's previous boyfriend who operated a commercial stump and tree removal business. After a month-long investigation, an Escambia County Circuit Judge reviewed and issued a warrant for the arrest of a defendant for violation of Section 403.161(1)(b) pursuant to Florida Administrative Code 62-701.300(1)(a) that states "(1) General Prohibition. (a) No person shall store, process, or dispose of solid waste except as authorized at a permitted solid waste management facility or a facility exempt from permitting under this chapter" (1st degree misdemeanor).

FRANKLIN COUNTY

Officers Richardson and Sauls were inspecting recreational fishermen under the Apalachicola Bridge. During the inspection, Officer Richardson found a subject in possession of three undersized sheepshead. Officer Sauls asked another subject in the group if he had any fish and he stated they were in a cooler. Officer Sauls inspected the cooler and found one undersized seatrout. Both subjects were cited for the violations.

Officer Travis received a complaint in early March about a bait site on the Tate's Hell Wildlife Management Area. Officer Travis monitored the site for several weeks. Officer Travis returned and found that someone had rebaited the site. He tracked the all-terrain tire sign to a nearby residence. After a short interview with the resident, he admitted to placing the bait in the management area. The subject was cited for placing bait on the management area and issued a written warning for operating his UTV in a closed area.

Officer Travis was on water patrol in federal waters south of Carrabelle. He checked multiple vessels engaged in bottom fishing. During his patrol, he issued three citations for possession of gag grouper during closed season.

Officer Sauls was conducting an oyster detail in the Eastpoint Area. She saw a boat returning from harvesting oysters and stopped it to complete a resource inspection. There were three subjects on the vessel and two bags of oysters. Officer Sauls counted and measured every oyster in one of the bags. The bag contained 70% undersized oysters. Officer Sauls cited one subject and seized 288 undersized oysters. The undersized oysters were returned to the water alive.

LEON COUNTY

While on resource patrol in the Apalachicola National Forest, Officer Pekerol saw two vehicles driving on a designated trail. After a few moments, both vehicles started doing

“donuts” in the road causing damage to the road. Officer Pekerol stopped both vehicles and issued citations to both drivers for damage to state lands.

Officer Johnson was on water patrol on the Ochlockonee River when he stopped a vessel to conduct a resource and boating safety inspection. Upon investigation, it was discovered that the vessel owner had failed to change his registration numbers from Georgia to Florida and had knowingly attached a registration sticker from a different vessel onto his boat. Officer Johnson issued the vessel owner/operator a citation for the unauthorized sticker.

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Officer Pifer was conducting saltwater fisheries and license inspections at the Destin East Jetty when he contacted a commercial fisherman. During the fisheries inspection, Officer Pifer could smell the distinct odor of cannabis coming from the individual. Officer Pifer also noticed the individual kept trying to position himself downwind. Officer Pifer noticed a bulge in the individual's pants pocket with a shape consistent of a device commonly used to smoke cannabis. When asked, the individual stated he had a pipe and cannabis. The pipe and cannabis was seized and the individual was cited for possession of cannabis and drug paraphernalia.

SANTA ROSA COUNTY

Officers Jernigan and Arnette responded to a single vessel accident on the Blackwater River. The lone occupant lost control of his 13-foot boat and was thrown from it in a curve of the river. The vessel continued around the curve and ran up into the brush along the riverbank. The man luckily suffered only minor abrasions. The man was issued a citation for violation of a navigation rule.

Officer Ramos conducted a fisheries inspection on three subjects at a boat ramp. The officer found an oversized red drum located in a cooler next to the subjects. One of the subjects admitted to catching the oversized red drum. Officer Ramos continued his investigation and located multiple white baggies with white substances which were field tested and identified as powder and crack cocaine. The subjects were also in possession of crushed Xanax without a prescription. The subject was placed under arrest and transported to the county jail for possession of a controlled substance. He was also issued a warning for the oversized red drum.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

LEON COUNTY

Officer Hildebrand was on water patrol at Lake Talquin. He pulled his vessel up to the dock at Coe's Landing to check vessels returning to the boat ramp. A citizen ran towards him saying that a man fell out of his truck, hit his head on the pavement, did not have a pulse and was not breathing. Officer Hildebrand grabbed his first aid equipment

and ran towards the scene. Upon arrival, he saw a person on the phone with Leon County Sheriff's Office dispatch and a person giving CPR to the injured man. Officer Hildebrand advised he would give compressions and continued the compressions until Emergency Medical Services arrived approximately three minutes later at which time the injured man was transported to the hospital.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROLS

SANTA ROSA COUNTY

Officers have been receiving many complaints about subjects on the Navarre Pier catching their daily bag limit for pompano, taking it home, and then returning to the pier to catch more pompano exceeding their daily bag limit. Santa Rosa County officers formed a targeted enforcement detail to address the violations in which multiple subjects were seen catching pompano, departing the area and returning hours later to catch more pompano. Several subjects were issued notice to appear citations for taking over the daily bag limit of pompano.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

HOLMES COUNTY

Officers Yates, Greene, Gore and Lieutenant Walsingham assisted with a 4-H Youth Fishing event where approximately 27 Holmes County Middle School students (grades 5-8) put their classroom skills to the test on a 2-day fishing excursion. While not many fish were caught, the students still had a great time and three of them experienced their first time fishing.

JEFFERSON COUNTY

Officers Wilcox and Anderson (with K-9 Scout) and Lieutenant Wass de Czege participated in the 11th Annual Outdoor Experience at the Beau Turner Youth Conservation Center. They brought an airboat and several small alligators and set up a display along with Sam Yuan from the Invasive Plant Management Section. Lieutenant Russel, Captain Pate, and Major Duval helped at the shooting ranges and Captain Wood helped at the fishing pond. There were approximately 900 people of all ages in attendance throughout the day.

LEON COUNTY

Officer Anderson, K-9 Scout, and Captain Shaw conducted an outreach event at Celebration Baptist Church in Tallahassee for approximately 50 kids.

Officer Miller conducted an outreach event with the Boy Scouts of America. Officer Miller brought an alligator and talked about the agency mission. There were approximately 45 people in attendance.

Lieutenant Wass de Czege participated in a fishing clinic at Piney Z Lake which was sponsored by Conner Hughes, the FWC Fisheries Communications Coordinator. Approximately 19 participants attended from a local seniors group. Lieutenant Wass de Czege spoke to the group about freshwater fishing regulations and boating safety. While very few fish were caught, the participants enjoyed the wonderful weather and expressed interest in future fishing events.

Officers Brookes and Korade conducted an outreach for Take your Daughters and Sons to Work Day event at the Florida Department of Transportation Headquarters in Tallahassee. The officers brought an airboat and alligator. Approximately 100 employees and their children were in attendance.

Officer Anderson and K-9 Scout conducted an outreach for Take your Daughters and Sons to Work Day event at the FWC Headquarters in Tallahassee. FWC employees and their children got to meet K-9 Scout and learn about the mission of a FWC K-9.

Lieutenant Wass de Czege taught the laws portion of the Hunter Safety course which was held at the Bryant Building in Tallahassee. There were 16 students in attendance.

Officers Brookes, Pekerol and Miller attended an outreach event at Lake Jackson. It was the 1st Annual Lake Jackson Aquatic Preserve Fun Paddle hosted by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. It was attended by approximately 150 participants who got to take a paddle trip through the preserve. The officers set up a static display with an airboat and alligators. They talked about boating safety and the importance of the aquatic preserve.

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Officers Brooks and Rockwell attended two outdoor education classes at Crestview High School. The officers brought a vessel and simulated a vessel stop using students as participants. The officers talked to the students about boating safety related events they dealt with and explained to the students how the required safety equipment is important in a successful rescue. There was a total of 60 students in attendance.

Officer Jarvis participated in an outreach event called "Construction Junction," presented by the Community Police Officers of Fort Walton Beach. This is a community event where kids interact with construction equipment, military, and law enforcement vehicles and personnel in a safe environment. Approximately 2,000 kids participated in this year's event. Officer Jarvis provided informational brochures and coloring books about black bears, snakes and general wildlife for the kids. Also, boating safety information was provided to the boating public.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

CASES

NASSAU COUNTY

Officer Christmas received information that a subject living in Nassau County had taken an alligator illegally. He and Officer Stuhr located the subject at his residence. He was notified about the investigation and interviewed. The subject confessed to catching an alligator in a nearby creek over a year ago and brought it home to keep it as a pet in his pond. The subject stated he fed the alligator three to four times a week. The pond was fenced in so the alligator was not able leave. The subject stated he did not have a permit to take the alligator from the wild or to keep it at his residence. The subject was issued misdemeanor citations for taking the alligator and keeping it at his residence without a Class 2 captive wildlife license. SNAP was contacted to send a trapper out to remove the alligator due to its size and aggressiveness.

COLUMBIA/GILCHRIST COUNTIES

Officer Johnston recently spent two shifts working the upper Santa Fe River in response to requests from a waterfront property owner asking for FWC Law Enforcement's presence on the water. Officer Johnston encountered multiple boating safety and resource violations which included no freshwater fishing license, insufficient boating safety gear and vessel registration violations. Officer Johnston also assisted a distressed swimmer who was calling for help. Officer Johnston maneuvered his vessel next to the subject who was able to grab on and be pulled inside. He was safely escorted to the shoreline. One vessel stop conducted near the waterfront entrance to Blue Springs State Park resulted in several boating safety and narcotics related violations. Officer Johnston discovered the operator had an insufficient number of life jackets among other boating safety violations. During the boating safety/registration inspection, Officer Johnston detected the distinct odor of cannabis coming from the vessel. A subsequent search revealed 35 Klonopin pills (a schedule IV controlled substance) located in a sandwich bag, THC oil, two smoking devices, and less than 20 grams of cannabis. Because of the vessel stop, two felony charges are being filed along with multiple misdemeanor charges. The operator of the vessel was also issued a non-criminal infraction and two written warnings for boating safety/registration violations.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROLS

The Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) 2005 Fincat with Officer Canfield, OPV Gulf Sentry crew members Smith and Alvis and NOAA Law Enforcement Agents Widner and Hughes, along with the OPV Vigilance (out of Panama City) participated in a NOAA enforcement detail targeting commercial shrimp vessels offshore Citrus and Hernando Counties.

During the detail, the OPV Fincat saw a commercial shrimp vessel with trawls deployed, operating inside the Big Bend Shrimp Closed Area. A vessel stop was conducted. Officers Smith and Alvis boarded the commercial vessel and found them to be in

possession of scallops, which is prohibited. Officer Alvis issued the operator of the vessel a citation for trawling in a closed area and a warning for possession of scallops.

OPV 2005 Fincat crew members Boyer and Canfield participated in a USCG enforcement detail targeting commercial shrimp vessels offshore of Hernando and Citrus Counties. During the detail, four vessels were stopped, resulting in one citation for improper look out and several warnings for boating safety issues.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

COLUMBIA COUNTY

Captain Huff, Lieutenant Kiss, Officers McDonald and Cline responded to a missing/endangered 83-year-old man in the Lake City area. The officers assisted with searching city blocks for the man along with Lake City Police, Columbia County Sheriff's Office and the Lake City Fire Department. After hours of searching, city personnel located the man who was dehydrated but alive. He was transported to the hospital for further treatment.

CITRUS COUNTY

Officer Canfield responded to a vessel taking on water in the Gulf of Mexico approximately three miles west of Homosassa Point. Officer Canfield found the swamped vessel and a short time later, located the occupants who had been picked up by a Good Samaritan vessel. The occupants were not injured and it was determined the engine on their vessel had quit. While the occupants worked on the engine, the vessel took on water and became swamped. The occupants flagged down the Good Samaritan vessel. A boating accident report will be completed.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

COLUMBIA COUNTY

Several FWC officers in Columbia County and surrounding area participated in the annual Public Service Memorial ceremony located at the First Baptist Church in Lake City. Many local, county and state agency representatives were present to honor the officers and personnel that made the ultimate sacrifice for their community.

NORTHEAST REGION

CASES

VOLUSIA COUNTY

Officer Haskins was on water patrol on Lake George when he stopped a vessel for violating the slow speed zone at the south end of the lake. During the stop, Officer Haskins detected the odor of an alcoholic beverage coming from the operator and saw signs of impairment. The operator admitted to having a few beers and taking a prescription pain medication. Officer Haskins determined that the operator's normal faculties were impaired and arrested him for boating under the influence (BUI). He was transported to the Volusia County Jail. The operator refused to give a breath sample.

Officer Edson was performing marine fisheries inspections along the intracoastal waterway in Holly Hill when he encountered a female in possession of two 12-inch black drum. She was issued a citation for possession of the undersized fish.

Officer Cameron and Lieutenant Eason responded to a suspicious person complaint at Blue Springs State Park where park staff suspected that an individual had evaded park fees. The subject was sitting in pajamas and was not responsive to park officials. Officer Cameron contacted the subject, who repeatedly provided a false name and date of birth. The subject also provided resistance when the officers tried to place him under arrest. Once secured, he was transported to the Volusia County Jail for resisting without violence and evasion of park fees. He was booked in as a "John Doe." Three days later, Officer Cameron learned the subject remained in jail due to two outstanding felony arrest warrants with no bond.

BREVARD COUNTY

Lieutenant Lightsey and Officer Kearney were on water patrol at night when a vessel was observed with no navigational lights displayed. During the vessel stop, the passengers and operator appeared to be under the influence of alcohol. Numerous empty bottles and cans of alcoholic beverages were on the deck of the vessel. The operator admitted to consuming numerous alcoholic beverages and showed signs of impairment. After conducting field sobriety exercises, Officer Kearney arrested the operator for boating under the influence and delivered him to the Brevard County Jail.

OSCEOLA COUNTY

Officer Marroquin received information that a subject failed to check in a turkey at the Triple N Ranch Wildlife Management Area (WMA). Officer Marroquin contacted the suspect and conducted a resource inspection. The suspect stated that he did not shoot any turkeys that day. While interviewing the suspect, the suspect admitted to taking a gobbler and throwing it in the woods. The suspect stated he threw the bird away in whole condition and knew it was wasteful. Further into the interview the suspect admitted to taking the spurs and beard off of the turkey and threw the meat and fan away to conceal his activity so that he could continue to hunt on his permit. After producing the spurs and beard it was discovered the suspect had taken three turkeys in two days on the WMA. K-9 Officer North and K-9 Max arrived to provide assistance in locating the turkey. The suspect was cited for willful and wanton waste of wildlife, failure

to check in game at check station, over the daily bag limit on a WMA, and over the spring season limit of turkey.

SOUTHWEST REGION

CASES

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

Officer Birchfield responded to a call about an individual killing an alligator. When he arrived on scene he located the alligator. He found it had been shot several times with a pellet gun. The owner of the property admitted to shooting the gator and Officer Birchfield issued the individual a criminal citation.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

While on patrol at the Courtney Campbell Boat Ramp, Officer Pettifer saw an individual unload a cooler and fishing tackle from his vessel. He initiated a resource inspection and through the course of the inspection, Officer Pettifer discovered the individual to be in possession of an undersized, 25-inch snook. The minimum size limit for snook on the Gulf Coast is 28 inches. The individual was cited for the violation.

While on patrol at the North Skyway Fishing Pier, Officer Rorer conducted several resource inspections. Through the course of the inspection she discovered one person to be in possession of three undersized mangrove snapper. The individual was cited for the violation.

While checking people fishing at Rowlett Park, Officers Martinez and Wilkins approached a subject sitting at the river bank to see if he was fishing. The officers noticed he had two clear mason jars next to him with a green leafy substance inside. When the officers made their presence known the subject hid the jars. The officers advised the subject they saw what he hid, and found the man to be in possession of 86 grams of marijuana. The subject was booked into the Hillsborough County Jail for a felony charge.

While on land patrol at the Courtney Campbell Causeway, Officer Bibeau contacted a subject that was preparing to leave the area. Officer Bibeau asked the subject if he had a cooler and he told the officer he had one located in his trunk. Officer Bibeau was given permission to conduct an inspection of the cooler and located an undersized and out of season snook. Officer Bibeau wrote the subject a misdemeanor citation for possession of an undersized and out of season snook, along with a warning for not obtaining a snook permit.

LEE COUNTY

Officer Hazelwood was patrolling near a popular fishing location when he spotted a man walking toward a fillet table carrying what appeared to be an undersized cobia. Officer Hazelwood approached the man and asked what he was doing with the fish. The man explained that he was going to fillet the fish. Officer Hazelwood measured the cobia and determined it was less than the required 33-inch fork length. Appropriate charges were filed.

Officer Stapleton was checking shoreline fishermen when he met two men shark fishing from a beach. While conducting a fisheries inspection, Officer Stapleton noticed a fish shaped object wrapped in aluminum foil. When he asked about it one of the men stated that it was "his snook" that he'd harvested several months earlier. It was evident the man intended to use the partially frozen snook as shark bait. However, the snook was several inches short of 28 inches total length, the minimum size limit. The man was cited for possession of an undersized snook.

Officer Hardgrove received a tip that someone was possibly illegally harvesting fish in a local canal. From a concealed location, Officer Hardgrove saw three people fishing on a boat and met them back at the boat ramp. During a fisheries inspection he discovered that the boat's owner had a revoked fishing license for prior violations. Lieutenant Ruggiero arrived to assist and the two officers discovered the boat was missing a hull number. Further investigation revealed that the boat had been fraudulently titled the previous year. The boat owner was arrested for multiple title fraud charges along with the charge for fishing with a revoked license.

Lieutenant Ruggiero responded to a complaint about a possible eagle nest violation. When he arrived on scene he saw clues that a construction company had removed some trees close to a nearby active bald eagle nest. After investigating, he found the construction company did have a federal permit but was not following the guidelines as required. Lieutenant Ruggiero collected evidence and wrote a report about the violation, and then coordinated with a U.S. Fish and Wildlife agent who will be issuing a summons for the violation.

Officer Winton was on vessel patrol when he saw a vessel being operated near the Sanibel Causeway without navigation lights, registration numbers, or a registration decal. A vessel stop was conducted and it was determined the vessel's registration was expired by two years, was missing safety gear, and was improperly carrying gasoline. The vessel was escorted to a nearby boat ramp to continue the investigation. One of the subjects backed a trailer into the water that was unregistered, did not have working lights, and did not have a vehicle identification number (VIN). The operator of the vessel was issued multiple citations and warnings relating to the vessel violations, and the operator of the vehicle/trailer was issued a notice to appear for operating an unregistered trailer.

Officer Winton received information that several subjects in Cape Coral were keeping undersized fish. Upon arriving, Officer Winton discovered that one of the subjects was in

possession of four undersized mangrove snapper that were not in whole condition. The subject was issued a notice to appear and a warning for the violations.

Officers Winton and Fogle assisted the Coast Guard with a boating under the influence (BUI) investigation. Through the investigation, it was determined that the vessel operator had been driving while his normal faculties were impaired, for which he was placed under arrest. The subject refused to submit to a breath test, and was booked into the Lee County Jail for BUI.

Officer Winton responded to a hit and run boating accident that occurred on Fort Myers Beach. Through his investigation, the vessel that fled was identified and located. Evidence and statements were collected, and the operator of the involved vessel was issued a notice to appear for hit and run.

MANATEE COUNTY

Officer Dalton was on land patrol around Anna Maria Island at the Coquina Boat Ramp and performed a fisheries inspection on a vessel returning to the ramp. During his inspection, he found that the captain of the vessel had caught and kept one undersized gag grouper. The captain was cited for possession of undersized gag grouper and will have to appear in court for his violation.

PINELLAS COUNTY

Pilot Fields, Officer LaRosa, and Lieutenant Laskowski responded to a complaint of illegal commercial fishing activity near Boca Ciega Bay. Pilot Fields spotted a net strung across a water opening in the mangroves from the air. He directed Officer LaRoasa by water and Lieutenant Laskowski by land to the location. Officer LaRosa blocked the waterway opening with her patrol vessel to prevent the individuals from leaving. Lieutenant Laskowski approached the individuals through the mangroves on foot. Lieutenant Laskowski contacted the individuals and initiated a resource inspection. He saw a soft seine net tied to the mangroves on either side of a canal completely blocking the waterway opening. The individuals were using the net to block the fish attempting to exit the canal as the tide went out so they could cast net them. In Florida, it is illegal to completely obstruct a waterway with a net. The violation is commonly called "stop netting." During the inspection, Lieutenant Laskowski saw a snook in the water under some mangroves. Upon recovering the snook there was evidence it had been caught in the net. One of the individuals admitted the snook got tangled in the net and he had to cut it out of the net. The two individuals were cited for stop netting and cited for illegal take of snook.

POLK COUNTY

Officer Karr received information that someone had cut a fence and was trespassing on private property, possibly committing resource violations. When Officer Karr arrived on scene he encountered one male on the private property; who he later found out gave

him a false name. Officer Karr also encountered a female carrying a bucket and fishing pole on the private property. When Officer Karr was interviewing the female, the male subject fled the scene through a metal culvert. Polk County Sherriff's Office assisted with the search of the male subject, but they were unable to find him. The female subject was arrested for trespassing, and the male subject's vehicle was towed from the scene.

SARASOTA COUNTY

Officers Grenz and Ridgway were on water patrol just south of the Stickney Point Bridge and performed a boating safety and fisheries inspection on a vessel in the bay. During the inspection, it was discovered that one of the men on the boat caught and kept one 16-inch gag grouper. The subject was cited for possession of gag grouper undersized and out of season. He will have to appear in court for his violations.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROLS

LEE COUNTY

Officers Hazelwood and Stapleton, along with Lieutenant Barrett worked a joint operation with Lee County Sheriff's Office, Cape Coral Police Department, and the United States Coast Guard targeting marine sanitation and vessel safety violations. The four agencies patrolled areas with high numbers of houseboats and conducted inspections on several dozen boats. The operation yielded approximately 25 citations, and one arrest for boating under the influence.

SOUTH REGION A

CASES

HENDRY COUNTY

Officer Brodbeck was on patrol when he received a call from off-duty Officer Keen regarding turkeys that had been harvested during closed season. A Hendry County Sheriff's Office Deputy had stopped a truck with a single occupant with fresh blood on the tailgate. Officer Brodbeck arrived on scene and after reading the driver his Miranda Rights, located fresh turkey meat on ice, two turkey legs, a turkey beard, and a shotgun used to kill the turkey. In a written statement the subject said that he and a friend each shot a turkey that morning, three weeks after season had closed. The evidence was photographed and seized. The driver was issued a Notice to Appear (citation) for possession of freshly killed turkey during closed season. During a follow up interview with the second subject, an additional written statement was obtained, along with evidence from the second turkey. Charges will be direct filed against the second subject for taking turkey out of season.

OKEECHOBEE COUNTY

Officer Allen was on foot patrol in the Oak Creek Campground no hunting zone when he found a freshly built hunting blind. The next morning, he returned to the area and apprehended a subject near the blind hunting wild turkeys. The man received a notice to appear in court for hunting in a posted no hunting zone

Officers Hausler and Allen responded to a complaint at E-Lock in the Kissimmee River. The complainant advised that three subjects trespassed onto the lock, walking across the chained off lock gates and onto the spillway. The officers arrived and apprehended the subjects who were fishing. In addition to the chained off areas the subjects went through, they walked by four "No Trespassing" signs. The subjects received notices to appear in court for the violation.

Officer Davis conducted a resource inspection on a subject fishing around the S-84 Water Control Structure. Upon checking the subject's identification card through the communication center, it was found that the subject had an active warrant out of Dixie County. The subject was placed under arrest and booked into the Highlands County Jail.

Officers Crosby and Hausler were conducting resource inspections at the D-Lock on the Kissimmee River. During a resource inspection, a subject was found to be possession of 6 soft shell turtles that he caught on bush hooks along the river. From May 1 to July 31 there is a closed season on soft shell turtles in Florida waters due to breeding and egg laying season for the turtles. The subject was cited for violation of the closed season of soft shell turtles. All the turtles were returned to the water alive.

Captive Wildlife Investigator Toby responded to a report that an individual was in possession of opossums. Upon arrival, he verified the individual was in possession of five opossums without the required license. One misdemeanor citation and six warnings were issued for the illegal possession and related violations.

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officer Keen was dispatched to a location where a subject was known to have a freshly harvested alligator. Upon arrival, Officer Keen located the subject and the freshly harvested alligator. The subject was issued a misdemeanor citation for illegal possession of an alligator.

Captain Schaeffer and Lieutenant Russo assisted with transporting equipment and supplies for a BUI enforcement detail at Lake Boca, located on the ICW. Six boating under the influence arrests were made and numerous boating safety citations and warnings were issued by FWC Officers.

ST. LUCIE COUNTY

Captive Wildlife Investigator Toby concluded an investigation into the illegal possession of marine turtle parts. An individual collected 15 deceased baby sea turtles from the beach after Hurricane Irma. She performed her own taxidermy on the turtles, then displayed them in her residence. The turtles were seized and one misdemeanor citation was issued for the possession of marine turtle parts without a proper permit. Officers Carroll and Brevik assisted on this incident.

BROWARD COUNTY

Captive Wildlife Investigator Corteguera responded to a report of a marmoset monkey that was found roaming a residential neighborhood. The monkey was captured and the owner of the monkey was identified. The facility was inspected to ensure compliance with regulations regarding the possession of the monkey. The monkey was returned to the owner and one misdemeanor citation was issued for the escape.

Captive Wildlife Investigator Corteguera and Officer Armstrong responded to a complaint stating that a subject was keeping baby raccoons. One subject was found to be in possession of two baby raccoons taken from the wild and one baby mocking bird. The animals were seized and taken to a licensed rehabber. Five criminal citations and one infraction were issued relating to the illegal possession and rehabilitation of wildlife.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officer Hankinson responded to a boat fire on the Intracoastal Waterway in Jupiter. With the assistance and teamwork provided by responding agencies, all seven occupants were rescued without major injuries. Due to the joint agency effort, the boat was promptly removed from the water in whole condition alleviating environmental concerns. Officer Hankinson is conducting the boating accident investigation.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

Environmental Investigators Luher and Booth attended the Annual Emergency Responders Networking Conference. This conference was coordinated by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Southeast District Office. Presentations on environmental and hazardous issues and response included personnel from U.S. Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Investigations, Florida National Guard, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Florida Department of Transportation.

SOUTH REGION B

CASES

MIAMI DADE COUNTY

Captive Wildlife Investigator Smith responded to a report of an individual in possession of a burmese python without the required license. Upon arrival, the illegal possession was verified. One misdemeanor citation was issued for the violation. The snake was seized and turned over to a licensed facility.

Captive Wildlife Investigator Landa assisted another agency with the seizure of wildlife. While serving a search warrant for unrelated matters, the agency found the individual to be in possession of an alligator, a lemur, and a screech owl without the required licenses. After contacting our agency, Investigator Landa responded to seize the wildlife and place it at a licensed facility. Officer Dominguez assisted on this incident.

Officer Raul Perez was dispatched to North Bayshore William Lehman Park in Miami-Dade County about a complaint of subject keeping multiple undersized fish. They saw an individual grabbing fish from his white five-gallon bucket and scaling them. When the officers approached they saw multiple undersized fish in plain view inside the individuals bucket. A fisheries inspection revealed the defendant to be in possession of nine undersized lane snapper, one undersized gray snapper and one undersized yellowtail snapper. Appropriate citations were issued.

COLLIER COUNTY

While conducting a boating safety and freshwater fishery inspection at a local boat ramp, Lieutenant Mahoney determined a vessel was without any required boating safety equipment as well as two resource violations. The operator of the vessel returned to his truck to look for the vessel registration and Lieutenant Mahoney met the operator as he back downed his trailer. Upon approach to the vehicle, Lieutenant Mahoney detected the odor of cannabis coming from the open window of the truck. A search of the vehicle revealed less than 20 grams of cannabis and drug paraphernalia. The subject was cited for two misdemeanor charges and two boating safety equipment infractions.

Officer Plussa and Lieutenant Bulger were conducting water patrol in Naples Bay when they saw a rental vessel with a 3-year old child hanging off the front of the vessel by herself, without wearing a life jacket. Officers conducted the stop to address these safety issues and to conduct a livery inspection. They escorted the vessel back to the livery to investigate. The livery employee admitted he had rushed the pre-ride instruction but the operator had signed the form noting children under six had to wear a PFD. The operator was cited and the livery employee was warned. As they departed they saw a kayak returning to the same livery and had no life jackets or whistle onboard for its two occupants. The livery manager was charged for renting the vessel without required safety gear.

Officer Plussa and Lieutenant Mahoney were conducting water patrol near Keewaydin and stopped a PWC for violating the Manatee Zone. During the stop, a rental pontoon vessel passed dangerously close by. Officers finished the PWC encounter and stopped

the vessel for the navigation rule violation. Officer Plussa determined the operator was severely impaired in that he could not count how many life jackets were needed for his five occupants, could not find his ID with it being in his pocket, could not find the throwable that he was sitting on, and could not find the whistle that was attached to the vessel ignition keys. He was arrested for boating under the influence (BUI) and cited for the navigation rule violation and refusal to submit a breath test.

Officer Plussa responded to an initial report of a suspicious boating incident in the buffer preserve zone near Rookery Bay. Through a combined investigative effort with Florida Highway Patrol, Collier County Sheriff's Office, and a local marine salvage company, Officer Plussa determined the owner of the suspicious vessel had thrown a party three days prior and intentionally left an inoperative large metal grill, propane tanks, a broken party tent, and other debris on the buffer preserve beach within the research reserve. Officer Plussa charged the subject with criminal dumping due to the items left on the beach, issued him an infraction citation for the vessel being left unlit on the water, and warnings for other criminal and infraction violations.

Officers Johnson and Knutson were on water patrol out of Big Marco Pass when they conducted a resource inspection on a vessel approximately 12 miles southwest of Marco Island. During the inspection, Officer Johnson discovered that the owner was in possession of undersized Spanish mackerel and lane snapper. Officer Johnson explained the violation and the owner of the vessel was charged accordingly.

Officer Yurewitch saw a subject litter, discarding a lit cigarette butt out his truck window. The vehicle was stopped and the driver and passenger quickly exited the vehicle and began to argue with each other. Officer Plussa and Investigator McCulgan responded to assist. An investigation revealed the driver had a suspended license for a recent DUI violation. During the officer's inventory of the vehicle prior to tow, Officer Plussa found marijuana and drug paraphernalia in the vehicle along with open alcohol containers. The driver was arrested, charged, and cited accordingly in addition to his probation for the original DUI being violated.

Investigator White and Officer Johnson responded to a report of a free roaming exotic animal. With the assistance of local law enforcement, they secured the animal, which was identified as a kinkajou. Captive Wildlife Investigator Alford responded to further investigate the incident. He located an individual that was licensed for the animal near where it was captured and verified that she was the owner. The kinkajou was returned to its owner. One misdemeanor citation and one warning was issued for the escape and improper caging.

MONROE COUNTY

Officers Thompson and Hoppe along with Investigator Hein were on water patrol in the upper keys and conducted a boating safety and resource inspection on a vessel. The vessel had multiple safety equipment violations, the occupants did not have fishing licenses, and had multiple short fish. The officers also noticed a speared snapper in the

cooler. After a thorough investigation, they learned that an individual that was still actively spearfishing in a different location. The individual hid his spear gun in the mangroves and had multiple fish hidden underwater as well. The vessel operator was cited for 6 undersized mangrove snapper, 9 speared mangrove snapper and one sheepshead. The diver was cited for spearfishing in the upper Keys and over the bag limit of mangrove snapper. The vessel operator was also issued 4 boating citations and both subjects were cited for fishing licenses violations.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROL

MIAMI DADE COUNTY

Officers Swensson and Almagro were on patrol in Biscayne National Park with a special focus on the recent addition of the month of April to the permit spawning season inside the SPZ. Upon fisheries inspection of a vessel, a plastic bag containing fish fillets was found in the cooler, as well as three great barracudas. The vessel captain claimed that the fillets were from a mutton snapper that was bitten by a shark. Upon closer inspection of the fillets, officers noticed that they looked like grouper fillets instead. There was a small piece of skin on one of the fillets. After being read Miranda rights, the individuals admitted that it was a black grouper. The captain was issued 3 misdemeanor citations for the violations

COLLIER COUNTY

Officer Plussa, Lieutenants Mahoney and Bulger, along with members of the CCSO Marine Unit conducted focused foot and vessel patrol near Keewaydin Island and the corresponding CWAs and buffer preserves. They interacted with hundreds of boaters and beach goers, issuing a total of 7 warnings for violations involving dogs off leash. Officer Plussa stopped one subject whom was launching and landing an ultralight aircraft on the beach adjacent to the CWA. Officer Plussa explained the impact his aircraft could have on the nesting birds and the federal penalties he could face for affecting their behavior in violation of the Federal Airborne Hunting Act which outlaws harassing wildlife with aircraft. He was issued a warning for the violation and vacated the area.

MONROE COUNTY

Officer Rafter was on sanctuary patrol in Key Largo when he came across a vessel actively trolling within Grecian SPA. An initial inspection of the vessel resulted in the discovery of an undersized, out-of-season black grouper. Officer Rafter followed the vessel to shore to conduct a more thorough investigation. Officer Baumgartner assisted with the resource inspection at the dock and found the two individuals to also be in possession of an undersized mutton snapper, as well as having no valid fire extinguisher on board. The individuals were cited federally for fishing within a sanctuary, and cited for state resource and boating safety violations.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

MIAMI DADE COUNTY

Sixteen officers from Miami Dade County who are volunteers in the 'Bigs in Blue' through Big Brother Big Sisters met with their "littles" from Miami Jackson senior high at the FWC Miami Station. They participated in outdoor activities including archery, simulated fishing, boating safety education and subject safety. With the help of LEO, the South Region Partnership Coordinator of the Florida Youth Conservation Centers Network, they introduced these sports to the high school students and had breakfast and lunch with them while discussing topics related to education and professional life.

MONROE COUNTY

Local officers participated in the "Career Day 2018" at the Plantation Key School in Islamorada. Officer Dube spoke with students about our agency's role in Hurricane Irma preparation, response, and recovery. Officer Baumgartner and Investigator Hein, both members of the SRB Dive Team, had on display the team's trailer and various diving equipment they use. Officer McKay manned the reptile table where he had an American alligator, an American crocodile, a California king snake, and a ball python which the students and staff could hold. Major Beaton assisted with logistics and circulated among our presentations assisting the officers. Over 300 students from pre-kindergarten through 8th grade and staff and parent volunteers were in attendance along with the 30+ other participants from various agencies including USCG, US Border Patrol Marine Interdiction, Florida Park Service, the local power company, fire rescue, and the sheriff's office.

Officer Dube and the entire FWC Honor Guard Team traveled to Tallahassee for the Annual Police Memorial services at the State Capitol. Memorial activities included the candlelight vigil followed by a parade and honors ceremony by state law enforcement and police agencies from around the State the next day. A roll call of the current and past law enforcement officers was read and their names were inscribed on the Wall of Honor.

Officer McKay took the time to meet with sheriff's deputies in Monroe County to discuss the differences between two crocodylians and FWC's response to calls for service pertaining to them. Recently a squad of deputies responded to the reported sighting of a 9-foot crocodile which was out of their realm of expertise. McKay discussed the SNAP program and how the deputies can assist our responding officers and staff on these encounters. Following this training session McKay stopped by the evening police academy with a crocodile and a California king snake for the recruits to experience. He answered numerous questions pertaining to our agency and our hiring process. One cadet has already applied with our agency.

MAJOR WILDLIFE ASSISTANCE

COLLIER COUNTY

Officers Kleis and Knutson responded to a call regarding a large alligator stuck in a storm drain. When the officers arrived, they discovered an approximately 7-foot-long alligator in the storm drain. Officer Kleis utilized his "catch pole" to gain control of the alligator and the two officers were able to remove the creature from the storm drain. The alligator was released into a nearby lake.

MONROE COUNTY

Officer Glen Way and Investigator Chris Mattson responded to a call of a Miami man harassing a pod of manatees at a local Long Key area resort. Officer Way saw the intoxicated man's behavior and a witness that called in the violation provided a written statement. The man was seen slapping the water, throwing things at the manatees and "making underwater noises." He was arrested and taken to Plantation Key Jail where he was cited for marine mammal harassment.