

**Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Division of Law Enforcement Weekly Report**



Patrol, Protect, Preserve

January 18, 2019 through January 31, 2019

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

NORTHWEST REGION

CASES

FRANKLIN COUNTY

Officers Travis and Kossey were patrolling the Apalachicola River when they heard gunshots. They went to the location of the shots and found a houseboat with three occupants. The officers conducted a camp check and found untagged deer meat. When questioned, one of the subjects admitted to shooting a doe earlier in the day. The subject was cited, and the deer seized.

Officers Pino and Swindell responded to a complaint of subjects hunting deer with dogs in the still hunt area of Tate's Hell Wildlife Management Area. They located the subjects who admitted they had dogs actively pursuing deer in the still hunt area. Both subjects were in possession of firearms. They were cited for hunting deer with dogs in the still hunt area.

Officer Sauls encountered several subjects in the Tate's Hell Wildlife Management Area and conducted inspections. During one inspection, the subject was in possession of fresh deer meat. The subject could not provide evidence of sex and the deer meat was seized and the subject was cited.

GULF COUNTY

Officer Gerber received a complaint regarding a doe being killed at night on a lease. After speaking with the complainant, Officer Gerber located the truck at a house nearby

and interviewed the two suspects. The individuals admitted to using their truck's headlights to illuminate the deer while one subject shot the deer from the sunroof of the vehicle. Both subjects were cited for night hunting and the rifle was seized.

Officer Gerber and Hayes were on patrol when they saw a truck displaying a light from the driver's side window in the direction of several open fields. They conducted a traffic stop on the vehicle and found the driver in possession of a loaded .270 rifle and a loaded 12-gauge shotgun. The driver admitted he was looking for deer. The subject was cited for night hunting and the firearms were seized.

SANTA ROSA COUNTY

Officer Ramos saw several vehicles parked near an interstate bridge. He located three people who unlawfully went around a fence designed to prevent trespassing and were fishing at the seawall. When Officer Ramos greeted the three subjects, he discovered a red drum that appeared to be undersized, still alive and on a stringer. None of the subjects would admit the fish was theirs, and two of the persons could not readily provide proof of a fishing license. After checking with dispatch, Officer Ramos determined one of the men had an active warrant. The three subjects were escorted back to their vehicles and the man with the warrant was placed under arrest. The same man admitted he caught the red drum. Officer Ramos measured the fish and determined it was undersized. A custodial search of the man under arrest revealed that he had methamphetamine in his pocket. The subject was transported to jail for the warrant and was also cited for the illegal drugs.

Officer Ramos saw a vehicle shining a spotlight in Blackwater Wildlife Management Area in a manner capable of disclosing the presence of deer. After following the vehicle for a short time, he conducted a traffic stop to determine if the subjects were attempting to take deer at night. As Officer Ramos approached the vehicle, the strong odor of cannabis emanated from the driver side window. While speaking with the subjects, Officer Ramos saw a bag of cannabis in plain sight. An interview with the subjects led to the seizure of nearly 13 grams of cannabis, 2 grinders, and 6 smoking devices with cannabis residue. The subjects were issued citations for the violations.

WALTON COUNTY

Lieutenant Hollinhead and Officers Bradshaw and Yates checked a group hunting ducks on private property and determined they had taken 87 ducks. All the ducks were in one vehicle and none of the subjects could identify which ones they had taken. Two of the subjects later admitted to taking over their daily bag limit. Thirteen subjects were unable to identify what ducks they had taken so each one was issued a warning for failure to maintain custody of their ducks while in the field. In addition to the warning, two subjects were cited for taking over the daily bag limit of ducks.

Lieutenant Hollinhead received a call from a Walton County deputy who saw an illegal deer in a vehicle when he stopped it for a traffic violation. Lieutenant Hollinhead arrived

at the location and determined the deer was a buck with antlers less than ten inches. The driver was cited for taking a deer with an antler length less than ten inches.

Investigator Armstrong and Officer Brooks searched for a subject in a wooded area of private property after a vehicle was located concealed in the area. The landowner previously had property stolen. When the subject learned the officers were searching for him, he called someone and was picked up to avoid being found on the property. Investigator Armstrong later stopped a suspicious vehicle leaving the area. An occupant of the vehicle was dressed in camouflage and was sweating. He later admitted to being on the property and calling someone to pick him up to avoid being caught. The subject was charged with trespassing at the request of the landowner.

Lieutenant Hollinhead and Officers Letcher, Tison, Bradshaw, and Yates targeted duck hunting activity the last two days of the season to ensure compliance with migratory bird hunting regulations. The officers located nine different areas with duck hunting activity and checked 43 subjects. Six subjects were cited for taking ducks over bait, one for no federal duck stamp, and two juveniles were issued warnings for taking ducks over a baited area.

WAKULLA COUNTY

Officers Hughes and Korade were conducting resource inspections at the fort in St. Marks when they saw what appeared to be a commercial fishing vessel returning to port. The officers checked the subjects after they loaded their vessel and found them to be in possession of over the daily bag limit of spotted seatrout, with one greater than 20 inches in length. Both subjects were issued citations for the violations and the fish was placed in evidence.

Officers Carr and Schulz were working the deer decoy in the Apalachicola Wildlife Management Area in response to complaints of illegal deer being shot. The officers set up the decoy deer on Forest Road 348. A subject stopped and looked for sign on the ground. He then reached for his rifle and fired three shots at the decoy deer (approximately a five-inch spike buck). The officers approached the subject safely, disarmed him, and cited him for taking an antlered deer that did not have at least one antler with two or more points.

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

Officer Allgood was working from a concealed location when he saw two vehicles approach the area and repeatedly spin out driving recklessly. Officer Allgood attempted to stop both vehicles and they both fled the area. One of the vehicles stopped after a short distance. Officer Allgood approached the driver and immediately smelled a strong odor of alcohol. While speaking with the driver, he noticed several signs of impairment. After performing poorly on field sobriety exercises, Officer Allgood arrested the driver for DUI and reckless driving. With the assistance of an Escambia County deputy, the other vehicle was located a short distance away. The driver admitted fleeing and claimed he

did because his driver's license was suspended. He was also arrested for fleeing, reckless driving and driving with a suspended driver's license. Both subjects were transported and booked into the Escambia County Jail.

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Officer Specialist Pifer was on land patrol conducting resource protection on the Eglin Wildlife Management Area in the Sikes Unit. Due to military training that day, Eglin closed this area. All subjects are required to access the Eglin daily closure map before going hunting. Officer Pifer saw a group in the closed area. Further, the officer heard barking consistent with hunting dogs in pursuit of wildlife. Officer Pifer drove further down the road and saw a subject wearing an orange vest retrieving hunting dogs. Seven subjects were identified as hunting in the closed area. All subjects were cited and issued a notice to appear citation.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

LEON COUNTY

Officer Specialist Miller received a call from dispatch about an overdue boater on Lake Iamonia. When Officer Miller arrived at the Bull Headley Boat Ramp, he launched his patrol vessel. A firefighter equipped with a handheld FLIR system, capable of detecting heat, joined him in the search. Every couple hundred yards, Officer Miller would shut his boat off, turn on his blue lights momentarily, and look for a response from the missing boater. When Officer Miller neared the opposite end of the lake near the Highway 12 Boat Landing, he saw a dim light in "Jakes Hole." The light was the missing boater who was extremely disoriented. Officer Miller loaded him into his patrol vessel and took the boater and his vessel back to Bull Headley Landing. EMS checked him and found him to be in good health. His family picked him up and drove him home.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

CASES

DUVAL COUNTY

Environmental Investigator Terrones located a large pile of debris consistent with a window remodeling project. Items in the litter led to a Jacksonville window company which had sub-contracted the installation job to another company. The responsible party was interviewed by Investigators Terrones and Starling and he admitted to the illegal dumping as well as to another nearby litter pile. Appropriate enforcement action was taken.

Officer Haskins was driving south on Heckscher Drive at the Simpson Creek Bridge when he saw a male subject fishing off the west side of the bridge. A resource check

determined the subject had caught two legal spotted seatrout and had a valid saltwater fishing license. Officer Haskins saw the subject using rod and reel with a treble hook tied to the line and using live bait. The subject was not in possession of any other fishing gear and stated that the trout had been caught with a treble hook and live bait. A resource citation was issued to the subject for the violation.

Officer Haskins was driving down Heritage River Road when he saw a male subject fishing from the shoreline. A fisheries resource inspection determined the subject was in possession of 5 out of slot spotted sea trout. The subject also did not possess a valid fishing license. The spotted sea trout ranged in size from the smallest being 10" and the largest being 14". A criminal citation was issued for the out of slot spotted sea trout and a written warning for no shoreline saltwater license.

NASSAU COUNTY

Environmental Investigator Terrones was contacted by Nassau County Code Enforcement for assistance with a Fernandina Beach resident who was allowing a commercial trucking company to dispose of assorted waste in a pit. The investigation revealed that approximately 60-70 dump truck loads of assorted construction materials and dirt were disposed of in the 82' x 160' x 20' deep pit over a three-month period. The property owner was also disposing of a hot tub and furniture in the pit and was cited for improper disposal and storage of solid waste. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is requiring the property owner to remove the debris from the pit and properly dispose of all the litter prior to going to court.

TAYLOR COUNTY

Officer Albritton and Lieutenant Loyed were working a duck hunting detail in Taylor County when they heard shots being fired after legal shooting hours. They located two subjects hunting ducks. An inspection of their guns revealed the subjects were hunting with lead shot. The two subjects were in violation of hunting migratory waterfowl after legal hours, hunting ducks with lead shot, no plug in their shotgun and numerous license violations.

Officers Albritton, Fowler and Colasanti were working the last weekend of duck season when they heard what sounded like a rifle shot. They proceeded to the area where they heard the shot and found a subject walking on Four Rivers Land and Timber property. The subject was questioned, and it was determined that he was trespassing. The subject told the officers that he had shot at a hog, but further investigation revealed fresh deer hair and blood on the ground. When shown the evidence, the subject changed his story and admitted to shooting a spike buck deer. The subject was arrested and booked into the Taylor County Jail for felony trespassing and taking deer during the closed season.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

TAYLOR COUNTY

Officers Robson, Colasanti and Lieutenant Loyed were called to a search and rescue near Rock Island in the Gulf of Mexico off the Taylor County coast. There were two subjects who were fishing with a dog when their vessel capsized six miles offshore. They were sitting on top of their vessel. The officers mobilized and after a two-hour search, the subjects were located. The U.S. Coast Guard helicopter arrived and transported the subjects to Tallahassee Memorial Hospital with mild hypothermia.

NORTHEAST REGION

CASES

LAKE COUNTY

Officer Phillips was patrolling Hilochee Wildlife Management Area (WMA) when he saw a truck with hunting dogs in the WMA after hours. He conducted surveillance and saw two individuals using the dogs to pursue wildlife in the WMA. The subjects admitted to illegally hog hunting in the WMA and were cited appropriately.

OSCEOLA COUNTY

Lieutenant Trusley, Officer Summers and Officer McLendon responded to an ATV accident with serious injuries in Suburban Estates. Due to the remote location of the scene, FWC Officers Summers and McLendon utilized their off-road patrol vehicle to transport State Troopers and medical personnel to the scene. Lieutenant Trusley secured the scene with Osceola County Deputies and State Troopers. The accident was turned over to Florida Highway Patrol for further investigation.

Officer McLendon was patrolling Lake Jackson Fish Management Area, which is catch and release only for largemouth bass. Officer McLendon saw a subject catch a large bass, fill a bucket with water, and place the bass inside. The subject then sat on the bucket and continued fishing. Officer McLendon conducted a fisheries inspection and discovered the subject was in possession of several undersized black crappie as well. The bass and crappie were returned to the water alive and the subject was cited accordingly.

Officer McLendon was patrolling Prairie Lakes Wildlife Management Area (WMA) when he saw a vehicle traveling at a high rate of speed, causing the vehicle to turn sideways and almost leave the roadway. Upon conducting a traffic stop on the careless vehicle, the driver was unable to provide a driver's license. The driver provided a name and date of birth but was unable to provide an address of his current residency. Officer McLendon ran the information through his agency computer and determined the description did not match the driver of the vehicle. Upon further questioning, the driver was correctly identified under a different name with two active warrants. The warrants

included driving on a suspended license and battery. The subject was arrested and transported to the Osceola County Jail and received two additional charges for providing a false name to law enforcement and driving on a suspended license.

BREVARD COUNTY

While on land patrol, Officer Rasey encountered a subject at Port Canaveral. Upon inspection, the subject was found to be in possession of four lane snapper. A measurement revealed the fish were between five and seven inches – below the regulated minimum size limit of eight inches. A citation for possession of undersized lane snapper was issued along with a saltwater regulation guide.

While on patrol, Officer Delano saw two men fishing from the shoreline. He approached and conducted a resource inspection. While speaking with the men, they stated they had caught some fish but threw them back since they were too small. An inspection of the men's cooler revealed three undersized spotted seatrout. A citation was issued for the offense.

While on patrol at a local boat ramp, Officers Dubose and Matthews saw a man fishing with a cast net. The officers approached to conduct a resource inspection. The officers' inspection revealed the man was in possession of undersized sheepshead and undersized mangrove snapper. It is illegal to take snapper by use of a cast net. A citation was issued for the undersized fish and a warning for illegal method of take.

Officer Eller coordinated a waterfowl detail on the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge and its surrounding water bodies with assistance from Lieutenant Davis, Lieutenant Bonds, Officers Hallsten, Delano, Mathews, Summers, FWC K9 Officers Simpson, Hadwin, North and US Fish and Wildlife Officer Bushwell. The detail was called "Operation Duck Commander". The detail ran from the opener of the November waterfowl season through the close of phase two at the end of January. There were 375 users checked with 46 state and federal violations being written and an overall positive response from the individuals participating in the hunt.

VOLUSIA COUNTY

Officer Edson was on patrol when he encountered a man in possession of an undersized bluefish. The man lied about having any fish and a records check showed he had recent prior citations for undersized and oversized fish. He was issued a citation for the violation.

Officer North was checking subjects at the Main Street pier in Daytona Beach when he encountered a man in possession of 10 undersized bluefish. A citation was issued for the violation.

PUTNAM COUNTY

Officer Cheshire responded to a complaint at Orange Creek Conservation Area about duck hunting. Officer Cheshire contacted a group of subjects and determined they were attempting to take ducks with lead shot. One of the shotguns was not properly plugged and they lacked all required safety equipment in their vessel. They were cited for the use of lead shot, and insufficient number of PFDs on the vessel and issued warnings for the other violations.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

PUTNAM COUNTY

Lieutenant Dickson, Officer Wester, and the Putnam County Sheriff's Office worked the "Free the Ocklawaha" Protest at Rodman Dam. The gathering was peaceful with no issues.

SEMINOLE COUNTY

Lieutenant Riley assisted FWC biologist Simmons with Bear Wise outreach and presentation for the Sanctuary neighborhood in Oviedo. The area has seen an increase in bear complaints over the last few months. There were approximately 50 individuals in attendance.

SOUTHWEST REGION

CASES

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

While on land patrol near Port Tampa Bay, Lieutenant Van Trees saw a vehicle with two subjects inside. The subjects were fishing through the sun roof as they sat in their car. Once the occupants noticed Lieutenant Van Trees, both subjects started moving around in the vehicle. Lieutenant Van Trees started to conduct a fisheries inspection and he noticed the driver had marijuana all over his lap. Once confronted about the marijuana, the driver gave the Lieutenant the remaining marijuana in the car. Lieutenant Van Trees had the driver exit the vehicle and saw a vape pen in the seat which the subject admitted had marijuana in it. K9 Officer Gaudion arrived to assist and a field test showed the oil in the vape pen was THC Oil, which is a felony. Lieutenant Van Trees found another canister with THC Oil in it and a records check showed the driver was already on felony probation. The subject was booked into jail for numerous felony charges and a misdemeanor charge of possession of drug paraphernalia.

LEE COUNTY

Officer Winton was on patrol at the mouth of the Caloosahatchee River when he saw a vessel violating a posted manatee slow speed zone. A vessel stop was conducted, at

which time it was determined that the operator had purchased the vessel approximately six months prior but had never transferred the vessel's title or registration. Additional violations pertaining to registration and safety gear were discovered by Officer Winton. The operator was issued a notice to appear for failure to transfer title within thirty days of purchase, a boating citation for inadequate number of life jackets and multiple warnings for related violations.

PINELLAS COUNTY

Officer Specialist Bibeau was following up on multiple reports of possible fishing violations occurring at the end of a residential road. He saw a vehicle in the area that is registered to an individual who is flagged as a repeat FWC violator. Officer Specialist Bibeau drove to a concealed location and waited for the individual to return to his vehicle. He contacted the individual a short time later and found that he was accompanied by two other individuals that were in the process of removing a small aluminum vessel from a creek. Officer Specialist Ferguson arrived to assist in the case and it was discovered the subjects were in possession of fifty-six mullet, three undersized black drum, three undersized sheepshead and ten snook, eight of which were undersized. One of the individuals admitted to catching all the fish with a cast net and was cited appropriately.

Officer Specialist Bibeau saw two individuals actively wade fishing. He watched the individuals from a concealed location and saw them catching multiple fish and placing them in backpacks. Officer Specialist Bibeau contacted the individuals once they returned to the shoreline and conducted a fisheries inspection. Officer Specialist Bibeau located five undersized redfish and cited the individuals accordingly.

Officer Specialist Bibeau saw an individual actively fishing from a seawall. As he approached, the subject attempted to dump the contents of a bucket in the water. Officer Specialist Bibeau managed to stop the subject from dumping the fish and conducted a fisheries inspection. He found the subject to be in possession of multiple undersized mangrove snapper. Officer Specialist Bibeau performed a query through agency files and found the subject had previous warnings for mangrove snapper size and bag limit violations. Officer Specialist Bibeau wrote the subject a misdemeanor citation for possession of undersized mangrove snapper.

Officer Specialist Bibeau saw two individuals actively wade fishing. He watched the individual's fish from a concealed location and saw them place numerous fish in a nearby cooler. Officer Specialist Bibeau waited for the subjects to begin packing up their belongings prior to driving to their location. When the two individuals saw him arrive on scene they quickly packed up their belongings and tried to leave the area. Officer Specialist Bibeau stopped the subjects and conducted a fisheries inspection. He located ten spotted seatrout, two of which were undersized. Officer Specialist Bibeau wrote the subjects a misdemeanor citation for harvesting over the daily bag limit of spotted seatrout and warnings for undersized spotted seatrout.

HIGHLANDS COUNTY

Officer Catalano and Officer Smith were on water patrol on Lake June when they heard numerous gunshots nearby. They returned to their patrol vehicles and canvassed the area. Officer Catalano received information from a local police captain that there were multiple individuals suspected of hunting on the east shoreline of the lake. With assistance from local city police officers and sheriff deputies, Officer Catalano and Officer Smith located three subjects hunting ducks who were in possession of several wood ducks. Sunset had occurred approximately thirty-five minutes earlier. Officer Smith checked three shotguns for round capacity and found one that had been loaded with four shells. The subjects were issued misdemeanor citations for hunting waterfowl after legal shooting hours, hunting without a valid Federal Duck Stamp and hunting waterfowl with an unplugged shotgun.

Officer Smith was on late midnight patrol on Lake June when he noticed two parked vehicles located in within the regulated parking area after legal hours. Officer Smith saw a male and female within one vehicle. After Officer Smith contacted the subjects, he smelled marijuana within the vehicle. After consent to search the vehicle, Officer Smith located a plastic baggie containing six grams of marijuana and an open alcoholic container. Officer Smith issued the female subject a notice to appear for possession of cannabis under twenty grams and a written warning for open container of alcohol in a vehicle.

MANATEE COUNTY

Officer Davidson was on water patrol in the Manatee River when he saw a commercial fishing operation. He performed a fisheries inspection on the commercial vessel harvesting fish in the river. During the course of the inspection, Officer Davidson discovered that three out of the four subjects on the vessel did not have the proper licensing required to harvest commercial quantities of fish. The three men were cited criminally and will have to appear in court for their violations.

Officer Davidson was on land patrol when he noticed a road rage incident occurring. He was able to intervene and in doing so, noticed that one of the drivers seemed to be under the influence of either drugs or alcohol. Officer Davidson performed field sobriety tasks on the driver to determine his level of impairment. After his investigation, the subject was arrested and taken to the Manatee County Jail for driving under the influence. At the jail, it was determined that the subject had a breath alcohol level of .188%. The legal limit in Florida is .08%.

POLK COUNTY

Officer Kobs and Officer Karr received a call saying that a witness saw three male subjects cross over a fence carrying buckets and cast nets. Officer Cloud and K9 Officer Gaudion arrived on scene to assist and attempt to track the subjects on the property. The FWC Officers and K9 Rita followed the subjects' foot sign and scent for over two

miles. FWC Pilot Lieutenant Dougan arrived on scene to assist in the search. After two hours of searching, the FWC officers found the three subjects hiding under some bushes. All three subjects were arrested for trespassing on property other than a structure or conveyance.

MAJOR WILDLIFE ASSISTANCE

POLK COUNTY

Officers Carter and Munkwitz responded to a residence in Lakeland where a red-shouldered hawk was being kept in a metal dog cage. They located the red-shouldered hawk in the cage with a shoe string tied to its leg to prevent escape. The officers conducted several interviews in the area and were able to locate a suspect. The suspect did not have any permits authorizing him to be in possession of the hawk. The suspect was issued a notice to appear for violation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the hawk was taken to a rehabilitation facility.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

Officer Salem was on land patrol in a local management area when he came across a father and son who were hunting. During this time, small game season was open on private lands, but it was closed in the management area. Officer Salem asked the two what they were doing, and they admitted they were hunting small game like dove and snipe. Officer Salem explained to them that the small game hunting season was closed in the management area and the father pulled out the statewide hunting regulations and explained why he thought it was still hunting season. Officer Salem asked if they had killed anything and they said no. After checking them for any game, Officer Salem took the time to educate the two about the differences between state wildlife management areas and private land regulations. Then he explained how they could participate next year when the season was open. The two were grateful for the information and apologized for the mistake. Officer Salem used this opportunity to teach and educate a family rather than use enforcement measures to ensure future compliance.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

FWC officers prepared and patrolled the major waterborne community event called the "Gasparilla Pirate Invasion" for the City of Tampa. Since November, planning and training meetings were held with numerous agencies in preparation. This included an FWC-led B.U.I. training day that included numerous local law enforcement agencies and the Hillsborough and Pinellas State Attorney's Office. On the actual parade date, over eighty FWC personnel participated, seventeen FWC vessels were used and ten people were arrested for B.U.I. With such a major event taking place, FWC utilized their Offshore Vessel "Gulf Sentry", Aviation units, SOG Team, Dive Team, and officers who are designated Drug Recognition Experts. The event was considered a success with no

major boating accidents, no major injuries and no marine-related deaths. There were over 10,000 spectators and hundreds of vessels which were aligned and scattered throughout the waterborne parade route.

PASCO COUNTY

Officer Specialist Pulaski conducted an outreach event for thirty-five youth who are part of a local Boy Scout group. He talked about the duties and responsibilities of being an FWC officer.

Officer Angelis and Officer Petru participated in a county sponsored fishing clinic. The event promoted outdoor activities and provided the children with some fishing tackle and instruction. The officers delivered information on ethics and how to be a good steward of the natural resources. In all they spoke with approximately eighty youth.

SOUTH REGION A

CASES

BROWARD COUNTY

Officer Sellers responded in reference to a fox that was found in a swimming pool. She found that the reporting party had the fox in a cage and relayed that it had been trapped in their pool skimmer. The animal turned out to be a small fennec fox. With information gathered, the case was turned over to Investigators Corteguera and Toby. Investigator Corteguera was able to contact the individuals who owned the fox. Pursuant to his investigation, he issued citations for not possessing a permit for wildlife. The investigation was later completed, the fox's owner was identified, and the fox was returned. After an inspection of the facility, two subjects were written citations along with eight warnings for the escape and other related violations. A follow up inspection will occur to ensure all violations are corrected. Captive Wildlife Investigator Toby and Officer Sellers assisted on this incident.

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officer Brodbeck was on patrol late at night in Riviera Beach conducting surveillance on a vehicle and trailer, the owner of which had a suspended/revoked fishing license. When the vessel returned from fishing, several violations were found. The owner of the truck and vessel was issued a misdemeanor citation for fishing with a suspended/revoked fishing license, as well as warnings for undersize snapper and fish not landed in whole condition.

Officer Brodbeck was on vessel patrol near Lake Worth Inlet when a vessel passed by on plane in a posted Slow Speed/Manatee Zone. A vessel stop was initiated to address the violation. Upon contacting the vessel operator, numerous signs of impairment were

detected. After completion of the seated field sobriety tasks, the vessel operator was placed under arrest for suspicion of BUI and transported to the Palm Beach County Jail. While at the jail, the operator refused to provide a breath sample. The operator of the vessel was issued two misdemeanor uniform boating citations for BUI with normal faculties impaired and refusal to submit to a lawful breath test, 2nd or subsequent refusal. A written warning was issued for the speed zone violation.

Officer Brodbeck was on patrol at John D. MacArthur Beach State Park when a subject was fishing with a cast net from a bridge. Once the individual was done fishing and had returned to their vehicle, the officer conducted a resource inspection. Located in a cooler in the vehicle was a large quantity of mullet, as well as undersize mangrove snapper. The subject was issued three misdemeanor citations for over the daily bag limit of mullet, possession of undersize mangrove snapper, and harvesting reef fish by an illegal method. A written warning was issued for no valid saltwater shoreline license.

Captive Wildlife Investigator Howell responded to the report of an escaped marble fox. The owner of the fox self-reported the escape. The fox returned home on its own. One citation and two warnings were issued for the escape and other related violations.

MARTIN COUNTY

Officer Pecko saw a suspicious vehicle on the side of the road in an area where people frequently fish. He saw the subjects from a concealed location that were throwing cast nets. After watching for a little while, he heard one of the subjects say the word "snook" after throwing the net. Once the subjects packed up and were exiting the area, Officer Pecko stopped the three subjects to conduct a fisheries inspection and license check. Upon inspection, there was a snook in their bucket and it was closed season for snook. The subjects only had cast nets, and it is illegal to catch snook by cast net. They can only be caught by hook and line. None of the subjects had fishing licenses or snook stamps. The subjects were cited accordingly.

Officer Hudson was patrolling the Stuart Causeway when he saw a subject fishing. He had a grey bucket sitting beside him filled half way with mud. The officer saw two undersized stone crab claws sitting on top of the mud. Officers Brevik and Carroll arrived on scene and were able to find a total of 17 whole stone crabs and 38 undersized stone crab claws in the bucket. The subject had previously been warned by Officer Hudson for the possession of undersized saltwater fish one month prior and was given a regulation handbook at the time of the previous inspection. The subject was cited accordingly.

OKEECHOBEE COUNTY

Officers Partelow and Allen were on water patrol on the Henry Creek Rim Canal when they saw two subjects fishing. One of the men did not have a fishing license and a warrants checks revealed he had an outstanding warrant from Okeechobee County for

grand theft. The man was booked into the Okeechobee County Jail and issued a citation for fishing without a freshwater fishing license.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officers Kirkland, Morrow, and Ames responded to the J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area (WMA) about subjects who had illegally gone off-trail in the management area and subsequently became lost. The officers searched for and located the subjects in good health and assisted them across the canal. The subjects were cited for the off-trail violations.

Officers Kirkland and Ames responded to a search and rescue in the Corbett Wildlife Management Area. A couple had taken their UTV off-trail and could not find their way back to their camp. After hours in the woods, and once the sun had set, they called FWC dispatch. The couple was able to email their location to the dispatch center and the officers quickly found them near the main grade, but on the other side of the canal. The couple left their UTV in the woods and the officers helped them across the canal. They were issued a citation for driving off-trail in the WMA and given a ride back to their camp.

MAJOR WILDLIFE ASSISTANCE

BROWARD COUNTY

Officer Lopez responded to a location in Davie about a call from an individual who had an owl in a box. Officer Lopez contacted the individual who relayed that the screech owl had fallen out of its nest and appeared injured. Officer Lopez took possession of the injured owl that appeared lethargic and delivered it to a wildlife rehabilitation facility.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

GLADES COUNTY

Officers Crosby and Fijalkowski manned a booth at the Buckhead Catfish Festival attended by approximately 200 people. They answered many questions related to hunting and fishing.

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Numerous FWC officers (and other FWC employees) worked the FWC booth at the South Florida Fair for 17 consecutive days. Thousands of people passed by and picked up brochures and asked questions about everything the FWC is involved in. They anticipated 500,000+ visitors to the fair this year although the weather didn't always cooperate.

SOUTH REGION B

CASES

COLLIER COUNTY

Officers Johnston and Yurewitch were conducting water patrol in the Marco River. The officers saw a vessel tied to the S.S. Jolley bridge. The operator of the vessel was fishing. Officers boarded the vessel to conduct a resource inspection and address the violation of tying the vessel to the bridge. Upon inspection, two gray triggerfish were found in the subject's cooler. The triggerfish were undersized and out of season. The fish were seized as evidence and the violator was cited accordingly.

While on patrol to Fort Jefferson the Interceptor Crew performed a fishery stop aboard a charter fishing vessel. During a reef fish inspection, the charter captain was asked to provide the appropriate federal permits for South Atlantic snapper/grouper charter boat. The vessel captain was unable to produce a valid permit. His federal permit had expired December 2017. The federal violation was handled accordingly by the boarding officer.

While on patrol the Interceptor Crew stopped a commercial snapper/grouper vessel. During the stop, the boarding officer located one red grouper in the ice box. The captain of the vessel was informed that the grouper fishery was closed for the South Atlantic fishery, including the area he was currently fishing. He was informed that if he wished to keep grouper, he would need to fish further to the north in the Gulf of Mexico. The boarding officers addressed this violation with a warning.

While patrolling back to Marathon from the Tortugas a lobster trap boat was inspected just north of the Marquesas Keys. The officers inspected the trap boat for appropriate permits, side and aerial displays, and appropriate tagging and marking of traps.

The Interceptor crew stopped a recreational fishing vessel northwest of Marathon. During the stop the officers identified multiple violations. The officers saw an undersized lane snapper being used as bait, and an expired registration. The officers addressed the violations with a ticket and several warnings.

The Interceptor crew worked in conjunction with the FWC aviation section to enhance patrols of the Tortugas Ecological Reserves and Pulley Ridge Marine Protection Agreement (MPA). The aviation division assisted in locating vessels along the "Ecological Reserve Boundaries" as well as one head boat fishing within the Pulley Ridge MPA. The Interceptor crew inspected and measured turtle excluding devices (TED) aboard one shrimp vessel anchored closely to the Northern Ecological Reserve. The head boat fishing within Pulley Ridge MPA was inspected. A lobster trap boat was inspected transiting within the Southern Ecological Reserve. No violations were identified during the daily patrol.

MIAMI DADE COUNTY

While checking subjects along the Rickenbacker fishing Pier in Miami-Dade, Officers Cartaya and Sample came across a subject who was reeling in what was thought to be a fish. Once landed it turned out to be a dumped firearm. Officer Carper arrived to assist and after carefully securing the firearm, the serial numbers were provided to FWC dispatch. A FCIC/NCIC search revealed the was firearm taken in a home burglary. The firearm was transported to Miami-Dade Police department for testing.

While conducting water patrol, Officer Perez saw a vessel heading West on Cape Florida Channel. The vessel had 4 people onboard and was displaying multiple fishing rods. Upon fisheries inspection, Officer Perez found 6 undersize mutton snapper and two undersize hogfish which were also out of season. The owner/captain was cited for the violations.

Officer Cartaya was on patrol on the Rickenbacker Fishing Pier. He saw 2 males on walking from the fishing pier. The subjects gave consent to inspect their catch which was in a white bucket. The inspection revealed 11 undersized mangrove snapper. The subjects stated that they were responsible for catching the fish and were cited accordingly.

Captive Wildlife Investigator Landa responded to a complaint regarding the illegal possession of a raccoon. The raccoon was seized and placed at a licensed facility. Three warnings were issued for the illegal possession and related violations.

MONROE COUNTY

Investigator Mattson performed an inspection on a Tavernier wholesale seafood company. Investigator Mattson saw several violations. Most notably was a cooler violation. The cooler temperature was 46 degrees and not 40 degrees or less. He went over the violations with one of the employees. The following day Investigator Mattson met with the owner and he was cited for the cooler violation. The owner had been warned about the violation in March of 2017. Investigator Mattson issued a Notice to Appear as well as two warnings.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

COLLIER COUNTY

While conducting water patrol, Officers Johnston and Yurewitch were dispatched to a call of an injured person on Kice Island. When the officers arrived on scene, they assisted Naples Fire Rescue transporting an injured woman to the boat ramp safely. She was transported to the hospital by Naples Fire Rescue.

Lieutenant Bulger and Officer Reams responded to Big Cypress National Preserve with Collier County Sheriff's Office and EMS regarding an individual who was injured while hiking the Florida Scenic Trail. Deputies were concerned that they could not reach the injured subject and requested that FWC respond with a swamp buggy. The subject was located and returned to the trailhead for treatment by waiting EMS.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROL

COLLIER COUNTY

Officers Yurewitch and McVane were conducting water patrol in a critical wildlife area. The officers saw vessels and subjects entering the posted wildlife closed area. The officers issued citations and warnings for entering the closed area. Citations were also issued for being in possession of undersized sheepshead, as well as multiple boating safety and registration violations.

MONROE COUNTY

FWC officers received an IFQ notification of a commercial fishing vessel landing in Summerland Key. Further investigation revealed the vessel had landed two days prior in Stock Island, without issuing a landing notification. Officer Foell arrived at the fish house landing location and waited on the commercial subject to arrive. Officers Piekenbrock, Mason, Rubenstein and Lieutenant Payne arrived to assist. The commercial subject arrived in a pickup truck with coolers of reef fish. The officers inspected the fish and located four red grouper less than the commercial gulf size limit of 18 inches. The subject was informed of the proper IFQ landing requirements and was issued a notice to appear for the violations.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

COLLIER COUNTY

Several officers manned the FWC booth at the 2019 Naples Boat Show. While at the boat show, the officers had the opportunity to spend time educating the public on boating safety, fishing regulations, and hunting regulations in Collier County. The officers also answered questions relating to the wildlife living in Collier County such as bear, panthers, and alligators. Also present at the boat show were some of FWC's partners in the field: an alligator trapper, a Florida Fish and Wildlife outreach specialist, and the Collier County Sheriff's Office. During the four-day event, the officers spoke with over 4,000 people.

Lieutenant Mahoney and Officer Conroy spoke to approximately twenty members of the newly formed fishing club at Lely High School. During this event the students were provided an overview of the career aspects of an FWC officer, saltwater/freshwater regulations and fish identification which was followed by a question and answer session.

MIAMI DADE COUNTY

FWC, as a crescent level sponsor for the Phi Beta Sigma fraternity, attended their annual state conference in Palm Beach county. Officers Albert and Washington attended over the weekend and made numerous contacts with possible candidates for employment. They also were given an award of appreciation for the agency's continued efforts in making conservation and environmental stewardship inclusive and accessible for everyone.

MONROE COUNTY

Officers Sapp and Cobb represented FWC during the second annual Safety Day, hosted by Sugarloaf School in the Lower Keys. Several agencies participated including Florida Highway Patrol, Monroe County Sheriff's Office, Key West Police Department, Monroe County Fire Rescue, and the Trauma Star Helicopter. Officers Sapp and Cobb discussed the importance of making a float plan, safety gear, and the hazards of swimming near engine propellers. An estimated 600 students were in attendance.