

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



Patrol, Protect, Preserve

November 8, 2019 through November 21, 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

CALHOUN COUNTY

Officer Burkhead received information about an individual that killed a large eight-point buck at night. He located a picture of the suspect with the deer on a social media site. Officers Burkhead and Humphrey found the suspect and conducted an interview. The suspect admitted to shooting the deer at night, produced the deer head, and a .243 rifle. The appropriate citations were issued.

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

Officers Brown and Land discovered five red snapper on a Florida vessel in state waters during an inspection. The red snapper season was currently closed; the appropriate citations were issued.

JACKSON COUNTY

Officer Forehand located a site within the Chipola Wildlife Management Area (WMA) baited with corn and "Acorn Rage" deer attractant. Officer Forehand returned to the site and found a hunter in a climbing tree stand with a bow, grunt call, and deer rattling antlers. The hunter admitted to placing the bait in the area. The appropriate citation was issued.

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Senior Officer Maltais was on patrol in the Eglin Wildlife Management Area (WMA) when he observed a vehicle parked and partially blocking a range gate. He waited for the subject to return and conducted a resource inspection. The subject was carrying a crossbow and did not possess a disabled persons crossbow permit, which is required to hunt on the Eglin WMA during archery season. A further inspection revealed that the area where the subject was hunting was baited with corn. The appropriate citations were issued.

Officer Rockwell was on patrol in the Yellow River Wildlife Management Area (WMA) when he located a parked vehicle. He waited for the subject to return and determined the subject had placed corn in the management area. The appropriate citation was issued.

Officer Brown and Lieutenant Molnar received a call from Rocky Bayou State Park regarding an intoxicated subject at the ranger station. Upon arrival, the subject was no longer at the ranger station, but was located at a camp site within the state park. The intoxicated subject was issued a non-expiring trespass warning in 2018 by Officer Wilkenson related to an incident that occurred within the state park. Officer Brown arrested the subject for trespass after warning and booked him into the Okaloosa County Jail.

Officer Hicks and Lieutenant Molnar were working Blackwater State Forest and came across an occupied pickup truck that was parked on the side of the road. Contact was made with the subjects who stated they just finished archery hunting and were waiting to get back in the tree stand later in the afternoon. Both officers could smell a strong odor of cannabis coming from the vehicle. When questioned, the passenger stated there was marijuana in the vehicle and it belonged to him. A search of the vehicle revealed 1.9 grams of cannabis. The appropriate citation was issued.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Officer Parrish and Lieutenant Walsingham were on patrol in Holmes County regarding several night hunting complaints. A truck came by and stopped in the middle of a paved roadway and shined two fields. Officer Parrish and Lieutenant Walsingham stopped the vehicle that contained two subjects. Three loaded firearms and a spot light were in the vehicle and the subjects did not have permission to hunt the properties. The firearms and spotlight were seized and the subjects were cited accordingly.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING – EXPANDING PARTICIPATION IN CONSERVATION

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Officer Specialist Rockwell and Officers Brooks and Brown went to Crestview High School for Operation Adopt a School. The officers brought a vessel and conducted a

vessel stop scenario with some of the students. The officers explained what they do when they conduct a vessel inspection and talked about the dangers involved. They also talked about the importance of safety equipment on the vessel. Officer Specialist Rockwell said that next month he would bring a wildlife biologist to talk about the importance of deer management and the new reporting system. There were 79 students in attendance.

Lieutenant J. Molnar, Officer Specialist J. Rockwell, and Officer R. Hicks attended a Torch a Truck outreach event at the Destin Commons. FWC, USCG, EOD, EMS, Life Flight with their helicopter, Destin Fire Department, and OCSO were just a few of the organizations present. The officers brought a patrol vessel to the event for the kids to climb in and take pictures. There were approximately 2000 parents and kids, ages 2-13, in attendance.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

CASES

NASSAU COUNTY

Officer Stuhr received information about illegal hunting on private property. The subject was a known convicted felon that has not had his rights restored. Several local officers entered the property and located two subjects hunting in a blind with a rifle, one being the convicted felon. Both individuals were charged with felony armed trespass. The convicted felon was also charged with possession of a firearm and violation of probation.

Officer Christmas checked in on hunter on Four Creeks Wildlife Management Area, whom he had previous dealings with and had issued a resource citation. The hunter did not pay the fine or request a court date, so an arrest warrant was issued. The hunter was arrested and booked on the outstanding warrant charges.

DUVAL COUNTY

Officer Schirbock was watching a group of people fishing from a dock that had a "No Trespassing" sign on it. After several hours, one subject caught an oversized red drum and placed it on a stringer. A few minutes later another subject drove his car to the dock, grabbed the fish off the stringer, ran and placed it in his car, and drove off. Officer Schirbock stopped the car and found the driver to be in possession of a 42-inch red drum. The appropriate citations were issued.

Officer Schirbock was on land patrol when he stopped to get gas and noticed several individuals in trucks hanging out at the gas station. After several minutes, the group loaded up into one truck and Officer Schirbock watched one subject take a spot light with him. Officer Schirbock followed the truck and watched them open a gate and enter

a hunt club. Officers Shearer and Sankey assisted by following the subjects and watched as they used the spotlight. The subjects were not in possession of a firearm, but were trespassing on private property. The ten subjects were issued appropriate citations.

BAKER COUNTY

Officer Burnsed initiated a targeted enforcement detail for activity in Osceola Wildlife Management Area during the closed season. A fixed wing aircraft was used to assist officers with patrolling the 250,000-acre property. Over 100 users were checked, resulting in citations and warnings for hunting during closed season and operating motor vehicles on closed roads.

Officer Burnsed and Dasher located a tree stand with bait in the John Bethea section of the Osceola Wildlife Management Area. On opening morning of general gun season, Officer Burnsed located a hunter hunting from the tree stand. The hunter was cited for placing bait in the management area.

Officers Fanelli and Dasher were patrolling the still hunt section of the Osceola Wildlife Management Area when they found hunting dogs actively pursuing deer. The owners were located and cited accordingly.

COLUMBIA COUNTY

Officer Johnston received information about a baited dove field. Officers Johnston and McDonald inspected the field and observed several hunters actively shooting doves. As the officers walked onto the field to begin checking hunters, they saw corn on the ground in several locations and around the edges of a small pond. The property owner was located and admitted to having knowledge of the corn. The property owner and hunters were cited accordingly.

Officer Johnston was patrolling at night in a remote area of the county when he noticed a vehicle parked with the engine running on the shoulder of the highway. As he approached the vehicle, the driver displayed indicators of impairment. Field sobriety exercises were conducted, and the driver was arrested for driving under the influence.

ALACHUA COUNTY

Officer Drew and Investigator Bembry were patrolling Goethe State Forest when they located several individuals picking palmetto berries without a required permit. One subject had an active warrant and the other was in possession of seven grams of methamphetamines and four methamphetamine pipes. Both subjects were arrested, and the appropriate citations were issued.

CITRUS COUNTY

Officer Browning was on land patrol at Macrae's Boat Ramp when he observed four individuals fishing from the dock. The officer checked the fishermen and located 18 undersized mangrove snapper in a cooler. The appropriate citations were issued.

Officer Browning was on water patrol in the Salt River when he observed the operator of a commercial oyster vessel returning from an area known for oyster harvesting. An inspection revealed several violations including undersized oysters, oysters not culled at the bed, and operating a vessel without a hull identification number. The operator of the vessel has a history of commercial oyster violations; he was placed under arrest and booked into the Citrus County Jail.

Officer Banks was working at a check station in the Flying Eagle Wildlife Management Area during the general gun quota hunt. A hunter brought in two deer, and the officer noticed one of the deer did not meet the legal antler requirement. A resource citation was issued for the violation.

Officer Butler investigated a complaint about trespassing on private property. The complainant advised he met with the subject who was trespassing and told him not to return to the property. Officer Butler discovered evidence that the subject was continuing to trespass, met with him, and warned him about the violation. He followed up the investigation by setting up a game camera at the site and captured the suspect on camera pouring out corn and hunting the property at night with a firearm. Charges are being filed with State Attorney's Office.

GILCHRIST COUNTY

Officer Allen received information from a landowner about two subjects actively trespassing and hunting on private property. The complainant stated he observed two men enter his property with hunting dogs running behind the truck. Officer Allen arrived and located the men as they were leaving the area. Officer Cooper and K-9 Officer Wiggins arrived to assist and found a gate that had been destroyed for the men to gain access to the property. Trespass and criminal mischief charges are being filed with the State Attorney's Office.

TAYLOR COUNTY

Officers Ransom and Waychoff were patrolling local hunt clubs and checked a group of hunters with an ice chest containing deer meat. The owner of the ice chest admitted to killing a deer and not tagging the meat. The subject was cited appropriately.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING – EXPANDING PARTICIPATION IN CONSERVATION

COLUMBIA COUNTY

Officer Johnston participated in the annual Veterans Day Parade in Lake City. The parade was sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Officer Johnston was among numerous law enforcement and public service agencies participating in the event.

NORTHEAST REGION

CASES

MARION COUNTY

Officer Chriest responded to the Ocala Wildlife Management Area after receiving a call from a concerned citizen that subjects were possibly hunting prior to the season opening. Officer Chriest observed two subjects walk out of the woods wearing camouflage and carrying rifles. The subjects were hunting deer during the closed season and the appropriate citations were issued.

Officer Dias was checking hunters when he encountered a vehicle parked off the main trail. He observed a subject walking back to the vehicle after the morning hunt. The subject was hunting with a modern Inline muzzleloader and was a convicted felon. The subject was arrested and charged with possession of a firearm by a convicted felon and transported to the Marion County Jail.

Officer Specialist Rice and Officer Hyde were patrolling the Ocala Wildlife Management Area checking hunters for license and resource compliance. While checking a hunter, Officer Rice observed blood on the dog box in the bed of the pickup truck. When asked where the blood came from, the hunter stated that he killed a hog on private property. When presented with the evidence of deer hair being in the blood, the hunter admitted to killing a six-point buck in the management area the day prior. The hunter admitted to not reporting the deer through the harvest reporting system and not checking the deer in at a required check station. The hunter was issued a Notice to Appear for the violations.

Officer Specialist Dias was patrolling the Ocala Wildlife Management Area when he observed a vehicle exiting the woods at dark. Officer Dias contacted the hunter to conduct a resource inspection. A cooler was observed tucked away inside the hunter's dog box with what appeared to be fresh blood on the latch. When questioned about the blood, the hunter stated that a member of his hunting party had earlier killed a short-horned buck and he was headed to ice down the meat. Officer Dias located the hunter who allegedly shot the deer and after a brief interview, the subject admitted to killing the illegal buck while dog hunting in the Wildlife Management Area. Both hunters were cited accordingly, and the deer meat and firearm used were seized as evidence.

ST. JOHNS COUNTY

While conducting fisheries inspections at Vilano Beach Pier, Officer Thomas observed a subject pulverizing a bucket of oysters to use for chum. She saw a bucket of oysters

next to the subject that had not yet been pulverized, and the subject showed Officer Thomas where he harvested the oysters. The area was a prohibited oyster harvest area. A resource inspection revealed 95% of the oysters to be less than the legal-size requirement of three inches. The appropriate citations were issued.

Officer Lawshe received information that a UTV was operating in Matanzas Forest Wildlife Management Area (WMA). This type of vehicle is prohibited on this WMA. Officer Lawshe located the UTV stuck in a mud hole on a closed road. With Officer Lawshe's assistance, the operator and passenger were able to get the UTV unstuck and put back on its trailer. The operator and passenger were issued the appropriate citations.

VOLUSIA COUNTY

Officer Vanas was on patrol in the Tiger Bay State Forest when he received a complaint about illegal campers. He responded to the campground and contacted two females occupying a campsite. They had not paid for the site and both women had felony warrants from two counties in Georgia. One county declined extradition while the other county agreed to extradite. One of the women was booked into the Volusia County Jail and the other was released at the scene. They were both cited accordingly.

Officer Sapp was inspecting a local hunting club camp when he encountered a man in possession of a cooler filled with deer meat. The meat was not tagged with any hunter identification information. The man claimed it was from a doe and produced an antlerless deer tag. He did not report the harvest as required by the new regulations. The man was cited accordingly.

Officer Cornell was on water patrol in the New Smyrna Beach area and observed two men actively fishing from their boat. A resource inspection revealed one subject possessing an under the legal minimum size limit of mangrove grey snapper. He was issued the criminal Notice to Appear for the violation.

Officer Pelzel was checking shoreline fishermen in the New Smyrna Beach area when she approached a subject actively fishing. He was unable to produce the required fishing license and a dispatch identification check revealed an active arrest warrant for violation of probation. Additionally, two syringes containing methamphetamine were found in his possession. The drugs were seized, and the subject was arrested for the warrant and felony drug possession and transported to the Volusia County Jail.

BREVARD COUNTY

Officer Hallsten observed a subject catch a very large redfish, hide the fish in a bag, and immediately pack up his gear and leave the area. Officer Hallsten conducted a resource inspection and found the subject in possession of one 44-inch Redfish. The appropriate citation was issued, and the fish was returned to the water alive.

Officer Balgo was on foot patrol at Pump House Loop Road when he observed an individual fishing from a kayak. A fisheries inspection revealed several undersized spotted seatrout, one undersized snook, and one undersized red drum. The subject did not possess a valid fishing license or snook permit. The appropriate citations were issued.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING – EXPANDING PARTICIPATION IN CONSERVATION

SUMTER COUNTY

Officer Sweet participated in the first annual Touch A Truck event in Sumter County. There were over 100 citizens who participated in the event.

MARION COUNTY

Lieutenant Chase assisted in teaching boating basics at the annual Becoming an Outdoors Woman Event. There were over 200 women in attendance.

SOUTHWEST REGION

CASES

HARDEE COUNTY

Officer Franks saw a truck with a light being shined out of the driver side window. The truck picked up speed and he lost sight of the vehicle. Officers Stephens and Kobs were nearby and located the truck. As they followed the truck, both officers watched as a light was shined out of both the driver's and passenger's windows. A stop was initiated, and an inspection revealed three spotlights, a .270 hunting rifle, and a .380 handgun inside the truck. Both subjects were given a Notice to Appear for hunting with a gun and light and hunting off the roadway. The spotlights and hunting rifle were seized as evidence.

Officer Geeraerts saw a vehicle driving slowly down a rural road. As she followed, the driver stopped several times, backed up, and a spotlight was shined from the passenger window illuminating adjacent groves and nearby ditches in a manner capable of disclosing the presence of wildlife. A stop was initiated and revealed two subjects with an unloaded shotgun with the safety off in the back seat of the truck, three shotgun slugs on the passenger floorboard, and a second spotlight near the slugs. Officer Geeraerts filed charges against both subjects for hunting off the roadway and hunting with a gun and light.

Officers Livingston and Stephens were on night patrol when they saw a vehicle drive slowly past their location. They followed and saw a spotlight shine out of the driver side window in a sweeping manner capable of disclosing the presence of wildlife. A stop was

initiated and revealed a driver and three passengers with two scoped rifles, a .243 caliber bullet, several .270 rifle bullets in the glove box, and a flashlight pushed down between the front seat and the center console. All four subjects were given a Notice To Appear for hunting off of the roadway and hunting with a gun and light. Both rifles and the flashlight were seized as evidence.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

Officer Caldwell observed three individuals fishing from a boat in the closed area surrounding the Alafia Banks Critical Wildlife Area and initiated a vessel stop to address the violation and conduct a fisheries inspection. The subjects possessed a fifteen-inch undersized redfish during the closed season. The appropriate citations and warnings were issued.

LEE COUNTY

Officer Winton responded to complaints of a subject feeding raccoons in North Fort Myers. He found the location of the violation and initiated an investigation. His contact with the subject revealed she had a warrant for her arrest. The subject was arrested and transported to the Lee County Jail. The subject was also educated about not feeding raccoons and warned for the violation.

Officer Self and his Field Training Officer Stanley responded to a complaint of an undersized deer being taken in the Webb Wildlife Management Area. They spoke with a subject who stated he directed his son to take a shot at deer that had jumped. The son shot the deer twice and the antlers measured less than five inches. The father was cited appropriately.

Officer Winton received information from a Cape Coral Police Marine Officer about a derelict vessel in the Caloosahatchee River. Officer Winton and the CCPD officers collaborated on the investigation, identified the vessel and located the most recent owner. The vessel's owner was issued a Notice to Appear for storing a derelict vessel upon the waters of the state. The civil removal process for the derelict vessel was also initiated. The outcome of this case is pending.

Officer Winton responded to reports of burrowing owls being impacted by construction activities at a residence in Cape Coral. Officer Winton discovered that two burrowing owl burrows had been impacted by unpermitted construction activities. The responsible party was located and charges for the take of burrowing owl burrows are being filed with the State Attorney's Office.

Recruit Flynn and Field Training Officer Furbay were on offshore patrol when they saw a commercial stone crab boat with three men actively pulling stone crab traps. An inspection revealed that none of the men had stone crab endorsements and neither did the boat. One of the men had an active warrant from Lee County for a traffic related

violation and was arrested and booked into the Lee County jail. The other individuals were cited appropriately.

PASCO COUNTY

Officer Specialist Pulaski was on land patrol in the Richloam Wildlife Management Area (WMA). He encountered an individual leaving who had questions about harvesting plant life from the WMA. While speaking with the individual, Officer Pulaski noticed signs of impairment. Field sobriety tasks were conducted, and the subject was arrested for DUI and was transported to the Pasco County Jail.

PINELLAS COUNTY

Officer Specialist Bibeau stopped a vessel with people spearfishing. His inspection revealed a plastic bag of fillets hidden in a small hatch. One of the individuals admitted to spearing and filleting an undersized red grouper. The appropriate citation was issued.

Officer Specialist Bibeau observed a fishing vessel return to a nearby boat ramp. He contacted the occupants and conducted a fisheries inspection. A fish box contained two out of season red snapper and three undersized gag grouper. The appropriate citations were issued, and the fish were returned to the water.

POLK COUNTY

Officers Karr and Franks watched a vehicle drive slowly down a rural road. The driver shined a spotlight out of the window in a manner capable of disclosing the presence of wildlife and illuminated a pair of deer near his truck. The driver positioned his truck so that the headlights were facing the deer. Officers Franks and Karr heard what sounded like a small caliber gunshot. The driver repositioned his truck and shot again. A vehicle stop was initiated, and the officers found a handheld spotlight, a pneumatic rifle, and a 7 mm rifle. The driver was arrested and charged appropriately. Both rifles and the spotlight were seized as evidence.

Officer Livingston was targeting night hunting violations and observed a vehicle drive by his location very slowly. A person was displaying a light out of the passenger side of the vehicle in a manner capable of disclosing the presence of wildlife. After conducting a stop and search of the vehicle, Officer Livingston located a loaded Winchester 30-30 rifle on the floorboard in the back seat and flashlight on the center console. The three occupants of the vehicle received a Notice to Appear for hunting with a gun and light. The rifle was seized as evidence.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING – EXPANDING PARTICIPATION IN CONSERVATION

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

Captain Guy Carpenter II attended the monthly meeting of the Punta Gorda Isles Fishing Club. Approximately 100 people were in attendance and he answered numerous questions about fishing and boating regulations as well as our Wildlife Alert program.

PASCO COUNTY

Officers Petru and Rothchild and Officer Specialist Pulaski participated in the Great American Teach-In at different schools around Pasco County. The officers provided information about fishing, hunting and boating. They also spoke about the role of being a Fish and Wildlife Officer. The officers spoke with 356 students across numerous grade levels.

Officers Tsongranis and Rothchild, Officer Specialist Pulaski and Lieutenant Parisoe participated in the “Great American Teach-In” at schools around Pasco County. The officers provided information about fishing, hunting and boating. They also spoke about the role of being a Fish and Wildlife Officer. The officers spoke with 450 students across numerous grade levels.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

Captain Holcomb participated in the “Great American Teach-In” by visiting five classrooms of students with an alligator to display. He spoke about fishing, hunting and protecting the environment, as well as the dangers of alligators in the wild. He answered questions about each topic and shared information about a career as a FWC Officer.

SOUTH REGION A

CASES

MARTIN COUNTY

Officer Pecko observed a subject fishing with multiple rods and reels. While conducting a fisheries inspection, the subject was found in possession of three bonefish and advised that he uses them for bait. The subject was cited accordingly.

Officers Cernuto and Johnson conducted a fisheries inspection on a subject at the Bridge Road Bridge. An inspection of the subject’s cooler revealed two undersized snook and there was also a fishing license violation. The appropriate citation was issued.

While checking deer hunters in the Dupuis Wildlife Management Area, Officer Norbrothen observed three subjects in camouflage with long guns. The officer asked the hunters for their quota permits, licenses, hunter orange garments, and to see their firearms. None of the hunters had a quota permit for the area, only one had a hunter

orange garment in a backpack, and two were hunting with non-expanding full metal jacket ammunition. The appropriate citations were issued.

Officer Pecko observed a vessel coming back from fishing and conducted a fisheries inspection, license check and boating safety inspection. The subject had an expired snook stamp and undersized snook. The subject was cited accordingly.

Officer Hudson observed a commercial vessel operating without navigation lights headed towards the Stuart Causeway boat ramp. The officer observed the subject dock his vessel and then begin to back down his trailer which did not have trailer lights. The officer conducted a fisheries inspection and found the commercial fisherman to be in possession of three undersized pompano. The subject was also driving on a suspended license and had multiple boating safety equipment violations. The subject was issued citations and warnings accordingly.

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officer Schroer observed a man catch an undersized snook and hide it in nearby bushes. He contacted the subject and conducted a fisheries inspection. The subject claimed he did not catch any fish and Officer Schroer retrieved the snook from the bushes and found two more undersize snapper hidden nearby. The subject was cited accordingly.

Officer Brodbeck was on patrol in Lantana when he observed a vehicle operating erratically and at a high rate of speed. A stop was initiated to address the violations. The driver exhibited signs of impairment and refused to complete field sobriety tasks. He was arrested for DUI and transported to the Palm Beach County Jail.

Officer Brodbeck was on nighttime vessel patrol near the Blue Heron Bridge when a vessel was observed on plane in a slow speed zone. A stop was initiated to address the violation and the operator displayed numerous indicators of impairment. Seated field sobriety tasks were conducted, and the vessel operator was placed under arrest for BUI and transported to the Palm Beach County Jail.

While patrolling Storm Treatment Area 1-West, Lieutenant Hankinson located three subjects who illegally entered the property through an undesignated public entrance. The subjects were observed harvesting fish in an area closed to the public and did not have freshwater fishing licenses. The subjects were cited accordingly.

Officers Mann and Riggs stopped a vessel at Phil Foster Boat Ramp to conduct a fisheries and boating safety inspection. The subject was in possession of an undersized spinner shark, which he thought was a blacktip shark that has no size regulations. The subject was educated on the differences between the two shark species and was cited accordingly.

GLADES COUNTY

Officers Dial and Flynn were on land patrol at the Fisheating Creek Boat Ramp when they observed a vessel operating without navigation lights coming from the Fisheating Creek Wildlife Management Area. Onboard the vessel were three occupants all wearing headlamps and they possessed alligator hunting equipment. During the resource inspection, it was discovered that the subjects were hunting alligator after the season had closed. The appropriate citations were issued.

OKEECHOBEE COUNTY

Officer Padgett was on land patrol when he observed a vessel without navigational lights properly displayed. When the vessel landed, he contacted the subjects onboard. The two subjects had harvested an alligator and the cites tag was not attached. The permit holder also failed to have the permit on board while engaging in alligator hunting. Officer Padgett had the individual tag the alligator in his presence and he was cited accordingly.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING – EXPANDING PARTICIPATION IN CONSERVATION

GLADES COUNTY

Lieutenant Brown and Public Information Coordinator Parrish participated in a high school career day for the school systems of Glades, Hendry and the Indian Reservation. There were approximately 600 students participating. They discussed the process for becoming an FWC Officer as well as the many different opportunities within the FWC.

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officer Schroer attended the annual Jupiter Inlet Veterans Family Fishing Classic. The event allowed veterans currently admitted to the West Palm Beach VA Medical Center a chance to enjoy the outdoors. FWC freshwater fisheries John Cimbaro, FWC Regional Director Tom Reinert and Officer Schroer provided information on local recreational fisheries to event attendees and assisted as needed.

ST. LUCIE COUNTY

Lieutenant Rogerson was invited to a youth robotics club to present information on invasive reptiles affecting the area, such as Agama lizards. The group is working on a project to help control and or eradicate these species from one recreational park. They are in the process of creating inexpensive trapping enclosures made with common household recyclable materials. Once a viable prototype is produced and testing is completed, production will commence and traps will be provided to the public for use.

SOUTH REGION B

CASES

MIAMI DADE COUNTY

Officer McKinley was on land-based water patrol when he stopped a recreational fishing vessel at a boat ramp. The subject was in possession of one parrotfish and one undersized mutton snapper. He was cited accordingly.

COLLIER COUNTY

Officer Stearns located a partially dismantled vessel that had sunk in the Barron River while on patrol near Everglades City. Officer Stearns initiated a derelict vessel investigation. Multiple citations for were issued to the registered owner and a criminal investigation is ongoing.

Officer Knutson observed a vehicle driving erratically as it dangerously crossed a busy intersection. Officer Knutson stopped the vehicle due to its dangerous driving pattern and Officers Yurewitch and Georgevich responded to assist. The operator showed signs of impairment and field sobriety exercises were conducted. The subject was arrested for DUI.

MONROE COUNTY

Captive Wildlife Investigator Fernandez responded to a complaint regarding the illegal possession of a raccoon. Upon arrival, an individual was found to be in possession of a raccoon without the required license. Three warnings were issued for the illegal possession and related violations. The raccoon was seized and turned over to a licensed facility.

MAJOR WILDLIFE ASSISTANCE

COLLIER COUNTY

FWC received a report from the Collier County Sheriff's Office regarding a panther that had been struck by a vehicle near the Hendry County line. Officer Stearns responded for the endangered species investigation and determined that the cause of death was a vehicle strike with no indications of intentional harm. The panther was transferred to the biologist's office for additional research studies.

FWC received the report of a python on the beach at Keewaydin Island. Officer Kleis responded and removed the 11.5-foot python and transferred it to the biologists to use in baiting other pythons for capture.

Officer Curbelo responded to the report of an injured bald eagle on the side of Interstate 75. The reporting party was concerned because the eagle wasn't flying away from

traffic. Once on-scene, Officer Curbelo determined that the eagle's wing was broken. He transported it to the Von Arx wildlife hospital at the Conservancy of Southwest Florida. The eagle will be rehabilitated and released back into the wild.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING – EXPANDING PARTICIPATION IN CONSERVATION

MIAMI DADE COUNTY

Officers Albert and Washington staffed a joint community outreach event to show appreciation for veterans. The venue was USCG Opa-locka Airstation and approximately 4,000 people were in attendance. FWC officers arranged a static display with a patrol vessel and two patrol trucks. They also met with individuals interested in a career with FWC and answered questions about the many opportunities provided by the agency.

MONROE COUNTY

PIO Dube and Recruiters Pestka and Alvarez participated in a Career Day at South Dade Senior High School. The officers spent the day visiting classrooms, giving presentations, and showing the FWC recruiting video to students, staff, and faculty.