

FWC

Division of Law Enforcement



Weekly Report January 12, 2018 through January 18, 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

CALHOUN COUNTY

Officers Alsobrooks, Coker and Hayes were working night hunting when Officer Alsobrooks observed a truck on a county road traveling at a slow rate of speed. The truck continued to travel slowly while a spotlight out the passenger window illuminated clear-cut fields. Officer Alsobrooks followed the truck for approximately two miles and observed the passenger using the spotlight sweeping every clear-cut field they passed. The truck was heading in the direction where the other two officers were positioned. When the vehicle and officers met, a traffic stop was conducted. A female was operating the truck and a male passenger was using the spotlight. The occupants were in possession of a 30-06 rifle and ammunition. Appropriate charges and warnings were issued for the violations.

Officer Baber was conducting surveillance on a farm field and a newly cleared area. At approximately 8:00 pm, he saw a truck drive by slowly with a spotlight being used out of the driver's side window. Officer Baber conducted a traffic stop and found the driver had a loaded .22 caliber rifle in the passenger seat. The suspect was issued a notice to appear for the violations.

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

Officers Clark and Long discovered a large amount of trash dumped along a road way in Escambia County. They dug through the trash and found the name and address of an

individual they suspected dumped the trash. They located the subject and interviewed him and he admitted the trash belonged to him and that he dumped it along the roadside. The subject was issued a notice to appear for dumping.

FRANKLIN COUNTY

Officers Kossey and Travis were working duck hunting activity in Apalachicola Bay. After checking multiple vessels, they observed a vessel returning to the 10 Foot Hole Boat Ramp after dark operating without navigation lights. They stopped the vessel to address the violation. After stopping the vessel, they observed that the subjects were returning from duck hunting. The subjects stated they had killed a limit of blue bills and presented the ducks. After a thorough search of the vessel the officers located an additional nine blue bills stuffed into a chair bag. All three occupants were cited for over the bag limit.

While working deer hunting activity in the Apalachicola Wildlife Environmental Area, Officers Kossey and Travis located a subject hunting in Bloody Bluff with a short horn spike on his dog box. The subject initially stated that his son had shot the deer, but after a short investigation, he recanted his story and stated he had shot the deer. They cited the subject for taking an antlerless deer. Later that afternoon the officers encountered another subject in the Bear Creek area. They observed blood on the trunk of his car and a deer leg sticking out of the trunk. They stopped the car and a subsequent search revealed an illegal deer (spike) in the trunk of the vehicle. The subject was cited for taking a spike deer in the Apalachicola Wildlife Environmental Area.

While working oyster enforcement in the Eastpoint area of Apalachicola Bay, Officers Sauls and Matechik observed a boat traveling east in the Eastpoint Channel towards Barber's Seafood. When the operator of the vessel saw the officers waiting by the dock, he turned around and threw two bags of oysters overboard. The officers stopped the subject and he stated he would rather throw his catch over than receive a ticket for undersized oysters. The subject was cited for interference with an FWC Officer.

While on land patrol working hunting activity in the Apalachicola Wildlife Management Area, Officer Raker observed a vehicle traveling north on Ashley Landing Road displaying a light in a manner capable of disclosing the presence of wildlife. During a vehicle stop, the occupants were advised that a resource inspection would be conducted. During the inspection, the odor of marijuana was present. A search of the immediate area where the subject was seated in the vehicle revealed a small glass pipe under the seat. The subject was appropriately cited for the violation.

JACKSON COUNTY

Officer Hayes received information that five subjects harvested 39 wood ducks. He and Officer Forehand began an investigation and they located photographs of the subjects and ducks. All of the subjects were interviewed and all admitted to shooting the ducks. Appropriate charges for taking over the bag limit of wood ducks were filed.

Lieutenant Allen and Officer Forehand located an area where a known convicted felon was deer hunting. They located the suspect's blind and conducted surveillance of the area. The suspect came out of the blind approximately two hours after legal hunting hours and was not in possession of a firearm. The officers went to the suspect's blind and found a loaded .243 caliber rifle. The suspect was issued a notice to appear for the hunting violations and charged directly through the State Attorney's Office for possession of a firearm by a convicted felon.

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Officer Corbin was on land patrol near the Fort Walton Beach Landing when he observed a sailboat tied to the dock/boat ramp. Two individuals were on the vessel with one individual actively fishing. Two other individuals were interacting with the subjects on the boat. The subjects were sharing a small smoking pipe, and after inhaling, would pass it to another person. During a resource inspection, the subjects admitted they were smoking cannabis. Officer Corbin recovered and seized a small smoking pipe and a bag containing cannabis. Two of the subjects were issued a notice to appear citations for possession of drug paraphernalia and the other subject was issued a notice to appear citation for possession of cannabis.

Officer Corbin was on land patrol near the Fort Walton Beach Landing when he recognized a vessel tied to the dock that was previously anchored in the Destin Harbor. The officer contacted the registered vessel owner who advised he sold the boat in November 2017. The individual provided the officer with the new owner name/contact information. Officer Corbin contacted the new owner. The new owner confirmed that he purchased the vessel in November 2017. The officer asked for the bill of sale. The new owner stated the document got wet and he threw it away, but did provide the vessel's title. The new owner was issued a notice to appear citation for failure to transfer vessel title within the thirty days from the date of purchase.

SANTA ROSA COUNTY

Lieutenant Lambert arrived at Boiling Creek Boat Ramp in Eglin WMA a little after sunset. There were two trucks with boat trailers parked at the ramp. A brief time later, he heard several wood ducks fly over and heard multiple gun shots from two locations, one north of the boat ramp and one south of the boat ramp. The shooting continued until approximately 35 minutes after sunset. During waterfowl season, ducks can legally be hunted until sunset. The vessels arrived back at the ramp, one vessel from the north location and one from the south location. Lieutenant Lambert interviewed the subjects, they both possessed duck hunting equipment along with wood ducks. The subjects were cited and warned for several violations to include hunting ducks after hours, unplugged shotgun and various boating safety violations.

WALTON COUNTY

Officer Bartlett was on land patrol in the Freeport area when he was approached by a Walton County Deputy about a vessel located at Marsh Landing. The deputy advised the vessel was tied up to the dock and there was a white male living on the vessel. Officer Bartlett arrived at Marsh Landing and contacted the individual on the boat. The vessel displayed an expired registration since 2001. The officer determined the individual was also the vessel's owner. The boat owner stated he purchased the boat several months ago and provided the vessel's title documentation. The new owner had yet to transfer the vessel's title to his name. Officer Bartlett explained per statute he has thirty days to transfer the vessel title to his name. The officer stated he would return in thirty days to verify the transfer occurred. The officer then issued the boat owner several written warnings related required safety equipment. When the officer returned thirty days later, the vessel owner still had not complied with vessel transfer and was issued a notice to appear citation for failure to transfer title.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

CASES

DUVAL COUNTY

Resource Protection Squad officers were conducting plain clothes surveillance on trout fishing activity at Alimicani when several five-gallon buckets were found sitting in the mud at low tide. Two individuals were observed actively harvesting oysters from an unclassified closed area. The pair had eight buckets filled to the brim with oysters and were working on filling up three more. Neither person had a saltwater fishing license. The subjects were cited for violations including harvesting from a closed area and over the recreational oyster bag limit.

Environmental Investigator Terrones was notified of a large pile of debris that had been illegally discarded in a wooded field in Jacksonville. The items included wood flooring, 5-gallon paint buckets, fiberglass insulation, particle board, PVC pipes, cardboard and trash bags. A pizza box with a customer phone number and address led investigators to a female who admitted that her boyfriend was to blame. The suspect was later interviewed, admitted to the dumping and began to remove and properly dispose of the litter. The suspect was charged accordingly.

HAMILTON COUNTY

While on patrol in Hamilton County, Officer Nichols observed a group of subjects leaving a private hunting lease. Upon conducting a hunting inspection, Officer Nichols found the subjects in possession of three deer, two of which were antlerless. Citations were issued for taking antlerless deer during closed season and non-resident hunting license violations.

While patrolling Hamilton County, Officers Nichols and Cline located a freshly dumped doe deer carcass. The officers observed a large amount of blood that had come from a vehicle carrying the deer. The officers back tracked the blood trail down approximately one mile of dirt roads to a residence. At the residence, a vehicle was located with fresh blood and deer hair in it. The officers contacted a subject at the residence who admitted to shooting the doe deer. The subject was issued a notice to appear for taking doe deer during a prohibited period of the season.

COLUMBIA COUNTY

Officer McDonald was on patrol in Osceola Forest WMA listening to a group of subjects pursue a deer using dogs. Officer McDonald heard numerous shots in the direction the dogs were barking. Officer McDonald heard a conversation over the radio by one of the subjects telling other members of the hunting party that the race was over and to come help catch dogs. Officer McDonald went to the location the hunting party was catching dogs. He observed several subjects and dogs being caught in the area. FWC Officers Burnsed, Tyson, Fanelli and K-9 Officer Gill responded to the area to assist. Fresh blood and a doe deer carcass was discovered just off the road. K-9 Friar also located a freshly spent rifle cartridge at the scene. All of the subjects refused to talk or answer any questions regarding who shot the deer. After a meeting with the Assistant State Attorney's office, charges were filed on 2 subjects that were using the dogs to pursue the deer. Charges included taking doe deer and hunter responsibility violations.

TAYLOR COUNTY

Officer Robson received a complaint about doe deer being killed out of season. The complainant advised that the suspects just left the hunting club and were currently at a residence near Keaton Beach. Upon arrival at the residence, the suspects were found along with a vehicle matching the description from the complainant. Interviews were conducting with the suspects and the doe deer was still in the vehicle. The shooter received a citation for taking doe deer out of season and the gun and deer were seized. The deer was donated to charity and charges will be filed with State Attorney's Office.

RESCUES

TAYLOR COUNTY

Officer Albritton received a phone call from a Perry PD Officer who stated he was in a pond in deep water inside of Three Rivers Hunt and needed assistance. FWC Officers Albritton, Wilder, Dale and Stephanie Wilcox responded and walked into the waste deep water of the heavily vegetated pond to locate the officer and helped him to the road where EMS was waiting.

NORTHEAST REGION

CASES

BREVARD COUNTY

FWC officers received numerous complaints about a large group of duck hunters on the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge. The complaints were directed at one group of hunters. The violations ranged from hunter harassment, over the bag limit, and multiple refuge violations. Some instances earlier in the season led to violent altercations with other hunters and this group. Officers Eller and Hadwin and Lieutenant Bonds with FWC teamed up with U.S. Fish and Wildlife officers for a plain clothes joint enforcement detail to investigate these complaints. Officers staged themselves in a popular hunting spot to see if this hunting group would use their intimidation tactics on them. As soon as the group entered the pond they went straight to the location of the officers and began trying to make them leave using verbal intimidation. When their efforts failed they returned to their hunting location for the remainder of their hunt. After their hunt, the officers conducted a resource inspection on the subjects in their duck blind and numerous violations were addressed that were observed prior to the hunt and during the hunt. All violations were addressed and the subjects were cited accordingly.

Officer Eller and Lieutenant Bonds were notified by a source about an alligator that was recently killed out of season. The source gave detailed information about the alligator. The officers located the carcass to get DNA samples and a pair of hedge clippers that were used to cut the gator's tail off. Once the evidence was collected, Officer West from Volusia County was asked to help with the investigation since the crime happened just over the Brevard County and Volusia line. The officers regrouped and went to the suspect's residence for an interview. During the interview, the suspect admitted to killing the alligator and provided officers with pictures of the animal from that day. Four packages of alligator meat and a rifle were seized as evidence. The suspect was cited accordingly.

Officers Rasey, Hadwin, Bohne and Matthews responded to a report of a group of men using a gill net in the Banana River, just south of Pineda Causeway. Officers Rasey and Hadwin positioned themselves in locations where they could observe the group in the water using the net and photo/video their actions. Officers Matthews and Bohne set up surveillance on the suspects' vehicles which had people inside serving as lookouts. As the group in the water returned to their vehicles with their illegal catch, all four officers quickly moved in and conducted a resource inspection. The four adult males who had been fishing were in possession of 2 monofilament gill nets, 8 undersized snook, 2 undersized red drum, 1 undersized sheepshead, 3 horseshoe crabs, and 2 coolers full of mullet. All 4 individuals were arrested and charged with 2 felonies and 5 misdemeanors each. The 2 gill nets were seized and the horseshoe crabs were returned to the water alive.

Officer Mendelson received intelligence about poaching on a piece of private property on Merritt Island. Officer Hadwin had previously observed two subjects launch a boat at that property with a feeder on board. Officer Hadwin and Officer Bohne went to the

property and located a large corn feeder with duck decoys floating around it, as well as several permanent duck blinds. Early Saturday morning, Officer Mendelson, Officer Hadwin and United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) Federal Officer Amoroso conducted concealed surveillance on the property. They observed two individuals hunting ducks in a blind next to the corn feeder throughout the morning. The poachers were apprehended, interviewed and charged with hunting migratory birds over bait. The shotguns and ducks harvested during the illegal hunt were seized. The lease holders were issued federal criminal charges by USFWS Officer Amoroso for placing bait on the property to hunt.

Officers Eller and Hallsten received a tip about a private duck lease in the Scottsmoor area that was baiting close to their duck blinds. The two officers conducted an assessment of the property and located several blinds. One of the blinds caught the officers' interest and they waded into the hip deep impoundment to take a closer look. They searched in about two feet of water and located corn underneath the water. The following morning Officers Hallsten and Lejarzar returned to the location and observed three subjects attempting to take ducks in the baited area. A thorough inspection revealed a large amount of corn within 10 yards of the duck blind. Multiple hunting violations to include license and baiting violations were addressed with criminal citations. All the hunting gear related to the take of the ducks was seized.

LAKE COUNTY

Officer Scrambling was patrolling Lake Griffin Fish Management Area when he observed three males fishing for, catching and keeping black crappie. A resource inspection revealed a total of 18 undersized black crappie in their coolers. The same subjects had previously been educated on the rules and regulations regarding black crappie in the area. All three were cited for undersized black crappie.

VOLUSIA COUNTY

Officer West conducted an inspection at a fish house in Volusia County. An investigation revealed an employee was buying fish from an unlicensed fisherman. Appropriate citations were issued.

Officer McDonough was on patrol near Halifax Harbor Marina when he conducted a fisheries inspection on a subject he observed fishing with a cast net. During the inspection, the fisherman showed Officer McDonough a bucket containing several mullet. Officer McDonough then located the subject's car and found a large cooler in the trunk. Upon inspecting the cooler, Officer McDonough found six snook, all of which were under the minimum required size for possession. The subject was cited appropriately for the violations.

ST. JOHNS COUNTY

While patrolling Guana Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in St. Johns County, Officer Chriest came across a hunter that informed her of a group of subjects possibly taking wading birds. Officer Chriest located the group and upon inspection found one to be in possession of three black crown night herons and one cat bird. The birds were seized, photographed and destroyed. The subject was cited accordingly for the violations.

SOUTHWEST REGION

CASES

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

While on land patrol, Officer Caldwell received a call at MacDill Airforce Base about a subject in possession of snook and sheepshead. Upon arrival Officer Caldwell met with the U.S. Air Force Police who had the subject detained. Officer Caldwell conducted a resource inspection of a cooler in the back of a pickup truck which revealed a 37 inch snook that was harvested during closed season, along with some legal sized sheepshead. Officer Caldwell explained the laws to the individual regarding the slot limits and seasons for snook in the Gulf region of Florida. Officer Caldwell issued the subject one resource citation for possession of snook during closed season and one warning for possession of oversized snook.

Officer Gaudion conducted a fisheries inspection on an individual fishing in Upper Tampa Bay who was in possession of 19 spotted seatrout, most of which were undersized. The individual was cited for possession of spotted seatrout undersized and over the daily bag limit. Officer Gaudion released many of the spotted seatrout alive.

While on foot patrol at the Sunshine Skyway Fishing Pier State Park (North), Officers Martinez and Bibler approached a subject who was fishing from the bridge. As the officers got closer, the subject ran to a bag of fish and attempted to get rid of them by stuffing them down a storm drain. Officer Martinez shouted at the subject to stop what he was doing and leave the fish where they were. The subject couldn't get the fish down the drain, so as the officers were about to get to him, he decided to throw the fish off the bridge. The officers saw that one of the fish the subject threw was a mangrove snapper. The subject was cited for obstruction/interference with an FWC officer.

LEE COUNTY

While on land patrol on Lovers Key, Officer Stanley observed two individuals and a commercial fishing vessel at the dock. As he approached, one individual left the dock quickly in the vessel. Officer Stanley questioned the second individual why he was not loading the vessel on the trailer but he did not have an answer. Officer Stanley advised the subject on the dock to contact the individual on the vessel, and advise him that FWC was instructing him to immediately return to the dock for a resource inspection. It took the vessel over 10 minutes to return to the dock even though it had only departed a few

minutes prior. The resource inspection revealed the fish contained on the deck of the boat were covered with bilge water and were against the starting battery of the vessel. The fish are required by Florida Administrative Code to be stored in a manner not to be in contact with bilge water and the fish shall be covered in finely divided ice or adequate refrigeration to preserve the food quality of the product. A sample temperature was taken of one of the mullet which registered 61 degrees. The subject was issued a notice to appear citation for quality control violations of failing to prevent fish from contacting bilge water/contaminants, and for failing to properly ice or refrigerate the mullet. He was instructed not to sell the product for human consumption.

While on patrol at Pineland boat ramp, Pine Island, Officer Hardgrove encountered two subjects as they were pulling up to the dock on a recreational fishing vessel. A resource inspection revealed 21 mangrove snapper and an undersized greater amberjack. The captain was issued a notice to appear citation for over the bag limit mangrove snapper and undersized amberjack.

Officer Bell was working land patrol when he was dispatched to an address. From a vacant lot next to the address, he noticed a yellow nylon line moving in the water with an end attached to a white cutting board at the complainant's address. As he watched, a snook surfaced attached to the line. Officer Bell pulled the line from the water and discovered two snook attached. The owner of the property was contacted and admitted to keeping the snook. He was issued a notice to appear citation for undersized and out of season snook. The fish were released alive.

Officer Winton responded to a complaint regarding a construction company impacting an active gopher tortoise burrow. When Officer Winton arrived on scene, he discovered that the gopher tortoise burrow had been collapsed from construction activities, and that no permits had been issued by FWC for its removal. An investigation was conducted, at which time the responsible party was located and interviewed. Charges relating to the unlawful destruction of a gopher tortoise burrow will be filed with the State Attorney's office.

MANATEE COUNTY

Officer Gonzales was on land patrol around the Bradenton City Pier on Anna Maria Island and stopped and performed a fisheries inspection on two men fishing from the pier. Upon completion of his inspection, he found the men to be in possession of three undersized gag grouper and two undersized spotted seatrout. One of the men admitted to catching all the fish and was subsequently cited for possession of over the bag limit, undersized gag grouper, and possession of undersized spotted seatrout.

Officer Martinez was on land patrol at the Sunshine Skyway Fishing Pier State Park (South) when he observed a man fishing. As Officer Martinez approached, the subject noticed him and ran to a bucket and started to throw sheepshead into the water. Officer Martinez hit his siren as he drove up to the subject, but the subject continued to throw more sheepshead into the water. He found the subject to be in possession of numerous

undersized sheepshead. The subject was cited for possession of undersized sheepshead and warned for obstruction/interference with an FWC officer.

PASCO COUNTY

While Officers Balfour and Pulaski conducted a retail inspection at a local bait shop, the owner was unable to produce records showing how they acquired their product. Officer Pulaski issued the individual a citation for failure to produce records on saltwater products.

PINELLAS COUNTY

Officer Ferguson was awakened around 3:30 a.m. to find several subjects burglarizing cars in his neighborhood. Officer Ferguson quickly put on his uniform, jumped in his patrol truck, and had FWC dispatch advise the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office. Officer Ferguson tried stopping the suspects' vehicle, but they fled and refused to stop for lights and sirens. Upon arriving back to his neighborhood to assist in the burglary investigation, Officer Ferguson was told by the Sheriff's office that multiple agencies including the Violent Crime Task Force Unit became involved and eventually found the vehicle and suspects driving in another part of town. The suspects again refused to stop, but the Sheriff's office did stop them and with the help of a K-9, arrested two of the three suspects. The driver was charged with grand theft auto, felony fleeing and eluding, and multiple traffic violations. Burglary charges are pending. Officer Ferguson helped local deputies in obtaining video footage of the thefts including the theft of \$3,000 in cash taken from a neighbor's truck two nights earlier.

RESCUES

PASCO COUNTY

Multiple FWC officers from several counties responded to the Pithlachascotee River to assist with rescue efforts on a commercial passenger vessel that caught fire. The United States Coast Guard, Pasco County Fire Rescue, Pasco County Sheriff's Office, Pasco County Emergency Management, Port Richey Fire Department, Port Richey Police Department, New Port Richey Police Department and Tarpon Springs Fire Department also responded to the incident. Through a coordinated effort all passengers and crew were located. The United States Coast Guard is conducting the investigation.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

Officers Salem and Furbay performed a hunter safety education presentation for approximately 25 students. The officers educated the students on the laws of hunting, introduced them to wildlife management areas, and encouraged proper hunting ethics.

The course gave students the opportunity to meet some of the local FWC officers and to ask questions before they completed the course and took a hunter safety exam.

SOUTH REGION A

CASES

BROWARD COUNTY

While patrolling in Dr. Von D. Mizell – Eula Johnson State Park, Lt. McDonald received a complaint that a man was walking around nude. Lt. McDonald met with the complainant who advised what area the subject was in and his description. Lt. McDonald observed a man fitting the complainant's description walking into the bathroom in a long sleeve top and nothing on from the waist down. The subject went into the bathroom and put a pair of shorts on. He was then cited for indecent exposure and permanently trespassed from the state park.

While patrolling waterfowl hunting activities in Stormwater Treatment Area (STA) 3 & 4, Officer Tarr observed that a subject had entered his name twice on the lottery list to get a standby permit to waterfowl hunt. Entering his name more than one time increases his chance of drawing a permit to hunt. You are only permitted to enter your name for a permit one time. The subject was trespassed from the STA for 1 year.

MARTIN COUNTY

Officers Rogers, Moss and Schroer were on ocean patrol, 7 miles offshore in Martin County. Throughout the day, the officers made multiple vessel stops and conducted resource inspections. The officers stopped two center console fishing vessels; each of the vessels had deep drop rods and reels on board. The officers found both vessels to be in possession of multiple bottom fish and a total of 4 snowy grouper. Snowy grouper is closed in federal waters. The officers issued a total of six federal citations and multiple boating safety gear warnings.

OKEECHOBEE COUNTY

Officers Fijalkowski and Allen were on airboat patrol in the Kissimmee River Marsh near Hickory Hammock when they encountered a duck hunter who taken two blue wing teal. A second duck hunter arrived on foot and had taken one teal and two mottled ducks, which exceeded the one per day limit for mottled ducks. He was issued a citation for the violation.

Officers Fijalkowski and Allen found a camp in Chandler Slough in a prohibited area. The man who had put up the camp did not have a camping permit and had an outstanding warrant with no bond. He was arrested and taken to the Okeechobee County Jail.

Pilot Simon, Officers Brodbeck, Fijalkowski, Allen, Dial, Worrell, Davis and Hausler assisted the Glades County Sheriff's Department with a search and rescue near Indian Prairie Canal and SR 78. A subject who had been trespassing and hog hunting on private property had been missing for nearly two days. The man was picked up in a marked construction area near the private property by his wife and mother-in-law. They attempted to flee to Okeechobee and were apprehended by FWC units and GCSO deputies. The three subjects were arrested for trespassing in a construction area and transported to jail by the Glades County Sheriff's Office.

RESCUES

HENDRY COUNTY

In the morning hours of January 4th, two fishermen departed the C. Scott Driver boat ramp located on the Kissimmee River in Okeechobee, Florida. Preliminary information indicates that a brief time after their south bound departure from the boat ramp, the vessel encountered rough waters, subsequently ejecting the passenger. The operator was unable to recover his passenger due to possible engine damage and water conditions. A multi-agency search and rescue ensued over the course of approximately 6 days. The passenger was located deceased on January 10, in the Clewiston area of Lake Okeechobee. The FWC is currently investigating the incident.

MAJOR WILDLIFE ASSISTANCE

BROWARD COUNTY

Lt. McDonald and Officer Holcomb received a complaint that there was a burrowing owl stuck inside of an abandoned store and could not get out. Lt. McDonald and Officer Holcomb responded and observed the owl inside the store. An electrical worker in the area was able to allow them access into the store and they were able to successfully catch & release the owl.

Officer Delatorre responded to a call of an injured hawk in Davie. Officer Delatorre was able to successfully capture the osprey that was unable to walk or fly. The osprey was transported to the South Florida Wildlife Center for treatment.

SOUTH REGION B

CASES

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

A Field Training Officer was on water patrol recently with a new officer/trainee when they conducted a vessel stop near Sands Cut. A subject on board was actively fishing

so the officer/trainee elected to conduct a fisheries inspection. The officer asked the subject if he had caught any fish but his responses were somewhat evasive, as if he didn't want to reveal exactly what he had caught. The officer checked the subject's live well and discovered a total of fourteen mangrove snapper, eleven of which were undersized. The officer cited the subject for possession of over-the-limit and possession of undersized snapper.

MONROE COUNTY

Officers Mobley, Carroll, Powell, and Alvarez were on patrol on the gulf side of Marathon and during a commercial vessel stop, discovered that the commercial craft was carrying 165 short lobsters, and three out of season and undersized hogfish. The vessel was escorted back to the dock it had launched from by the officers and once on land, another inspection was performed on the vessel and its traps. All 173 of the traps had violations with buoy numbers that resulted in more charges. At the end of the investigation the captain of the vessel and the three crewman were arrested and are charged with multiple felonies and misdemeanors. The vessel was seized and all the contraband was documented and put into evidence.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

MONROE COUNTY

Officer Dube represented the FWC at the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary's 51st Change of Watch Ceremony at the Pilot House Marina in Key Largo. Officer Dube was one of the special guests in attendance for the long-standing tradition of the Change of Watch.

Officers Dube and Petru along with Investigator Smith assisted FWC Staff at the Exotic Pet Amnesty Day in Collier County. The amnesty event was held at the Naples Zoo and there were numerous exotic species that were surrendered to the FWC staff. At the conclusion of the event the animals were adopted by registered applicants that were pre-approved.