

FWC

Division of Law Enforcement *Weekly Report*



January 26, 2018 through February 1, 2018

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

Patrol, Protect, Preserve

NORTHWEST REGION

CASES

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

Officer Long checked a subject as he returned to the Heron Bayou Boat Ramp. While speaking to the individual, Officer Long noticed that both the vehicle and vessel the individual had been operating had expired registrations. A criminal history on the individual revealed he had an active warrant in Escambia County for violation of probation.

Officer Manning received information that an individual in McDavid was keeping an eastern screech owl as a pet and attempting to sell the owl. The owl was seized and turned over to a wildlife rehabilitator and the subject was issued a notice to appear citation.

FRANKLIN COUNTY

While conducting land patrol near Apalachicola Bay, Officers Nelson and Carr conducted a resource inspection of two individuals fishing from a bridge. During the inspection, it was discovered the individuals were in possession of 13 red drum located in a cooler in the bed of their pickup truck. The officers measured each fish and determined that of the 13 fish only one met the minimum size requirement of 18 inches, with 12 of the fish being undersized. The fish were returned to the water alive and appropriate citations were issued to the individuals.

Officer Kossey and Reserve Officer Martin were targeting undersized oysters in the Eastpoint area. They conducted a resource inspection at the Eastpoint Boat Ramp. During the inspection, they determined that the subject was in possession of undersized oysters. After checking a bag of oysters for size tolerance, they determined the bag contained 42% undersized oysters. The subject was cited and 120 undersized oysters were returned to the water alive.

LEON COUNTY

Officer Brower was on land patrol at the Lake Miccosukee Boat Ramp and observed a vessel approach the ramp from the lake. A boating safety inspection revealed that the vessel operator did not have any personal floatation devices on board. The operator was issued a citation for the violation.

OKALOOSA COUNTY

While on water patrol on Yellow River, Officer Rockwell checked on a bait site he found earlier in the week. A boat was tied off near the bait site and he contacted the subject who was hunting the baited area. The subject admitted to placing the bait. The subject was issued a notice to appear citation for placing bait on Eglin Wildlife Management Area.

Officer Maltais was contacted by Eglin Air Force Base Range Patrol personnel concerning two subjects that were observed exiting a closed area and in possession of a buck. The complainant stated the subject's vehicle was parked and blocking an access gate. Officer Maltais arrived on scene and saw a six-point buck in the bed of the subject's vehicle. Further, both subjects were found to be in possession of rifles and a semi-automatic pistol. When Range Patrol arrived to address the vehicle blocking the access gate, they observed the subjects exiting from a clearly posted closed area. One of the subjects did not have a state hunting license and the other subject did not have an Eglin permit. Both subjects were issued citations for no hunting licenses and hunting in a closed area.

Officer Arnette received information that a subject had shot a deer while dog hunting that did not meet the horn restriction rule of at least three points on one side or a main beam of ten inches. Officer Arnette located the subjects and found a short-horned buck along with a hunting dog. He determined that one of them had killed the deer and issued a notice to appear for taking an antlered deer that did not meet the antler restriction rule.

SANTA ROSA COUNTY

Officer Hutchinson and Investigator Hughes received a call from a complainant who informed them that he saw a truck drive up to the edge of a field, two teenagers exit the vehicle, and one of them fired a rifle in his direction at a deer. After missing the deer, the teens drove off. The complainant said the following day, the same truck was seen again

at the field after more shots. The complainant identified one of the subjects. The officers drove to the field and located evidence from the incident. The following day, Officer Hutchinson located both subjects at their residence and interviewed them. One of them confessed to shooting at the deer from the right of way and trespassing. The firearms used to commit the violation were seized as evidence and charges were filed with the State's Attorney Office for attempting to take deer from a right of way.

Officers Hutchinson, Long, and Clark were working late at night targeting night hunting. Officer Hutchinson saw a truck shining the field he was watching and conducted a traffic stop on the vehicle. While speaking with the three subjects, he discovered that the driver was the father of the other two subjects. All three subjects admitted to shining several fields that night to try to shoot a deer. The shotgun and the spotlight were seized and the subjects were cited appropriately.

Officer Hutchinson saw a vehicle travelling towards him while shining a field with an LED light bar mounted on the vehicle. He watched the vehicle turn towards the field a couple of times and sweep the light across the field attempting to locate deer. As the vehicle approached Officer Hutchinson's location, it stopped. A loaded hunting rifle was in the front seat. While interviewing the subjects they admitted to shining the field to look for deer. The firearm was seized and the driver of the vehicle was charged with night hunting.

Officers Lewis and Jernigan received a complaint regarding someone illegally camping in a non-designated camping area in Blackwater River State Forest. Camping in the forest is only allowed in designated areas. When the officers arrived at the site, there was no one in the area. The area was in disarray, with trash and camping supplies consisting of propane bottles, a grill, soda cans, papers, and alcoholic beverage containers strewn about. The debris extended into a nearby creek. Various trees had been cut down. The officers identified two individuals from articles that were left behind. The officers contacted the subjects who cooperated with the officers and gave them the names of seven other subjects that camped in the area. The subjects were juveniles and young adults. The officers individually interviewed the subjects at their residences. Each of the subjects admitted to various crimes and, in total, 25 citations and three warnings were issued to the nine subjects.

Officer Ramos discovered several large piles of yard waste, construction debris, fencing materials and insulation that had been illegally dumped on a county road. An investigation led to a nearby home which was undergoing an extensive remodel. The homeowner advised he paid a man to take the debris to the county landfill for proper disposal and that the man even asked for extra money for landfill fees. With the cooperation of the homeowner, Officer Ramos, along with FWC Investigations, set up a second job for the suspect to return to the property and haul off more debris a couple of days later. When the suspect arrived, he loaded a flatbed trailer full of debris and was paid to deliver it to the landfill. Officer Ramos and the FWC investigator followed the suspect covertly when he left the home. The suspect drove directly to the same dumpsite as before and quickly offloaded the debris on the county road. The officers

revealed themselves and the suspect was placed under arrest. He was transported to the county jail and faces multiple counts of felony and commercial dumping.

Officer Hutchinson was on patrol when he observed a truck parked in the middle of a paved road. He pulled up to the vehicle and saw a man slumped over in the driver seat. He attempted to get his attention and when he did the man sat up in the seat and drove off. The truck swerved off the roadway and into the other lane several times. Along with a Santa Rosa County Sheriff's deputy who was patrolling the area, the vehicle was stopped and the man was placed under arrest for driving with a suspended license and driving under the influence of alcohol.

WAKULLA COUNTY

While patrolling the area of Dickerson Bay, Officer Nelson observed an individual harvesting oysters from a prohibited area. A resource inspection revealed that the individual did not possess either a commercial or recreational fishing license and had harvested over the recreational bag limit of oysters in the prohibited area and possessed undersized oysters. The appropriate citations were issued to the individual and the oysters were returned to the water alive.

Officer Carr and K9 Officer Simpson were working a multi-agency detail in the Apalachicola National Forest, which involved approximately 20 officers. The focus of the detail was to conduct resource inspections for violations throughout the forest and hunt camp checks. The officers pulled up to a hunting camp located at Forest Roads 309 and 360 to inspect the camp. Officer Simpson went to a camper that had an ice chest sitting right beside the door. Officer Simpson asked the owner if he could look in the cooler, which he gave permission to do so. Upon inspection, Officer Simpson located deer meat in a black garbage bag that was untagged and absent of sex evidence. While Officer Simpson was talking to the subject, the camper door opened and the subject's spouse was standing in the doorway and, when asked, stated she was just washing up the dishes. The officers immediately smelled cannabis coming from inside the camper as the door opened. Officer Simpson asked the subject's spouse if she could explain why there was the smell of marijuana coming from inside the camper. She stated that there was no marijuana in the camper and that she didn't know why there was a smell and gave permission to search. K9 Officer Anderson assisted with the search, which yielded less than 20 grams of cannabis and paraphernalia. The subject was issued the appropriate citations, given a property receipt and the evidence was placed in the evidence facility.

WALTON COUNTY

Lieutenant Hollinhead worked duck hunting activity to ensure compliance and enforcement of migratory bird hunting regulations. Numerous shots were heard at daylight around a small body of water on private property. Officer Letcher was contacted and responded to assist. An inspection of the subjects leaving the area revealed the subjects were in compliance with their hunting equipment, licenses, and bag limits. The

area they were hunting from was checked and Officer Letcher determined the area had been baited with cracked corn. One of the subjects stated he had put the bait out prior to hunting. All three subjects were cited for hunting migratory game birds over a baited area.

Lieutenant Hollinhead, Officers Letcher and Tison located a duck hunt on private property. Nine subjects were observed hunting from blinds. When they completed hunting, Officers Letcher and Tison made contact with them and observed a small amount of bait in their vessel. When questioned, one of the subjects stated he had baited the pond weeks prior to them hunting. Lieutenant Hollinhead and Officer Letcher inspected a portion of the pond in front of a blind they were hunting from and documented two types of grain present in the water. All nine of the subjects were cited for hunting migratory birds over a baited area.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

LEON COUNTY

Lieutenant Wass de Czege participated in the Skills Day portion of the online Hunter Safety Course which covers the knowledge, skills and attitude needed to be a safe hunter. Lieutenant Wass de Czege taught the laws portion of the course to six students in attendance.

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Officers Nichols and Wilkenson provided security and support to the park staff and Gulfarium personnel at Henderson Beach State Park. The Gulfarium released nine rehabilitated sea turtles that were affected by the recent freezing temperatures. The park staff estimated 1,600 people attended the turtle release.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

CASES

DUVAL COUNTY

A resource protection squad member cited a subject for stone crab violations at Sawpit Boat Ramp. An inspection of a commercial blue crab boat revealed 10 undersized stone crab claws concealed between two five-gallon buckets that had been stacked together. The subject claimed to have no by-catch onboard until the crab claws were found.

SUWANNEE COUNTY

Officer Mobley was on foot patrol on a local landowner's property when he observed an individual dragging a deer through the woods. The subject continued to drag the deer to

a nearby tree where he hung the doe deer up and began to skin it. Officer Mobley approached the subject who admitted to killing the doe deer earlier that day and had just returned to field dress the deer in the cover of the woods. The subject was issued a citation for taking doe deer during closed season.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

SUWANNEE COUNTY

While on patrol, Officer Boone noticed a fire on a local landowner's property. After taking a closer look and contacting the landowner, Officer Boone determined it was a wild fire that had just started. He quickly alerted Fire and Rescue as well as Department of Forestry who responded quickly and contained the fire from neighboring land, structures and homes.

Officers Boone and Colasanti spoke with approximately 100 students at the Branford Elementary School career day event. They spoke about the many possibilities of a career within FWC and incorporated a boating safety demonstration.

NORTHEAST REGION

CASES

MARION COUNTY

Officer Rice was on patrol at Silver Springs State Park when he came across a silver truck parked along a closed boundary of the state park. After a short surveillance, an adult male subject was seen carrying a rifle and two traps on the park property. The subject admitted to trapping and taking two raccoons on state park property. The two raccoons and four additional box traps were recovered. The subject was issued a notice to appear for hunting/trapping on the state park without a permit.

LAKE COUNTY

Officers Teal and Shaw received information of illegal duck hunting in the Emerald Marsh WMA. They located an open gate on private property adjacent to Emerald Marsh where they heard shots occurring. Three subjects were found in a duck blind. Further investigation revealed there was cracked corn spread out in the area. One of the subjects admitted to placing the corn and stated his two other friends did not know the corn was present. It was also discovered that the same subject was hunting with an unplugged shot gun. The subject was cited appropriately for the violations.

BREVARD/VOLUSIA COUNTY

Senior Federal Wildlife Officer Phil Amoroso with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and FWC Officer Lejarzar coordinated a season-long joint duck detail under the direction of FWC Lieutenant Bonds and Supervisory Federal Wildlife Officer Jane Whaley. The detail, named "Duck Under Cover," spanned the entire season and included officers from Volusia and Brevard Counties with some extra help from FWC K9 Officer Simpson and K9 Moose. Plain clothes officers posing as duck hunters and bird watchers operated in unmarked mud boats, kayaks, and canoes. The officers worked with marked units to get close enough to identify violations that had been repeatedly reported by the public, but were difficult to address using traditional patrol efforts. The detail resulted in more than 50 State and Federal citations including; hunting over bait, lead shot violations, illegal entry, over the bag limit of waterfowl species, no permit, attempt to take outside of legal shooting hours, interference with hunters, early entry, unplugged shotguns, as well as multiple boating and refuge-specific rule violations. The detail spanned from November 2017 through January 2018 and more than 300 hunters were contacted.

BREVARD COUNTY

Officer Lejarzar was working the Merritt Island Wildlife Refuge when he noticed two separate hunting parties enter one of the impoundments illegally. During surveillance, they were seen taking over their limit of bluebill ducks. When the subjects returned, they only showed Officer Lejarzar their daily bag limit after the initial inspection. A further inspection revealed that one of the subjects had hidden the remaining bluebills. The subjects were cited appropriately.

While on patrol at Sebastian Inlet State Park, Investigator Horst observed multiple subjects fishing. As the subjects returned to their vehicle, a resource inspection was conducted which revealed that none of the subjects were in possession of their fishing licenses. A records check indicated that one of the subjects had an active warrant out of St. Lucie County for failing to appear for a fishing violation. The subject was taken into custody and transported to the Brevard County Jail.

VOLUSIA COUNTY

A burglary was reported at DeLeon Springs State Park in the last week of December 2017. A tip was received a few weeks later identifying a possible lead in identifying the suspects. The investigation involved conducting multiple interviews, executing multiple search warrants on cell phones, social media, and a residence by FWC officers and investigators, with assistance from the Volusia County Sheriff's Office detectives. The resulting investigation by FWC led to the main suspect being arrested and charged with burglary, grand theft less than \$5,000, grand theft of a motor vehicle, and dealing in stolen property.

Investigator McKinney responded to a boating fatality that occurred on Lake Woodruff. A 63-year-old male fell overboard. The operator threw a life jacket and the man in the water held onto it. The operator moved the vessel to the man and reached out with a

landing net and brought him alongside. The victim held on to the side of the vessel, but could not get on board with the help of the operator. The victim lost consciousness while a nearby vessel came to assist, but was held above water and then brought aboard. The victim was not breathing and had no pulse. CPR was performed and the victim was taken to Highland Park Fishcamp where he was pronounced dead. This boating accident is currently under investigation.

SOUTHWEST REGION

CASES

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

Officer Zampella put together an enforcement detail to target vehicles operating off-road in the Webb Management Area. Officers identified a group of individuals operating on closed roads and driving off-road in the wetlands. Officer Thompson observed one of the operators doing doughnuts and damaging management area lands. The group continued to another wetland area and began driving through the ponds. When officers arrived on scene, there were 14 vehicles driving in the wetlands. Operators from each vehicle received citations for the violations, and one of them received a misdemeanor for destruction of state lands. The group was gathered together, educated on the proper use of the management area, and given a chance to ask any questions.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

While on patrol Officers Messman and Rorer were dispatched to a complaint of people keeping illegal snook. During a resource inspection, it was determined both individuals were in possession of snook during a closed season. In addition, the snook were harvested by cast net which is a prohibited method of take. While on-scene a third individual brought two more snook to the officers and advised he saw one of the individuals hide them under a car. During a post Miranda interview, one of the individuals admitted to hiding the snook when he saw the officers drive up. The individuals were cited for possession of snook during a closed season and illegal method of take. The individual who hid the snook was cited for interfering with the duties of a FWC officer by attempting to prevent the officers from conducting an inspection of his catch by hiding it when he saw them.

While on water patrol on the Hillsborough River, Lieutenant Laskowski and Officers Rorer, Pettifer, and Fagan conducted a boating safety inspection on a vessel. Through the course of the inspection, the officers detected signs of alcohol impairment coming from the operator. Officer Rorer administered standardized seated field sobriety tasks. Based on the operator's performance on the tasks, it was determined the operator was impaired to the point where his normal faculties were affected. The operator provided a breath sample which was above the legal limit of Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)

.08. He was arrested for boating under the influence of alcohol and transported to the Hillsborough County jail.

While on water patrol in the Seddon Channel in Tampa, Investigator Prouty and Officers LaRosa and Lehman conducted a boating safety inspection. Through the course of the inspection, signs of impairment were observed coming from the operator. Officer LaRosa administered standardized seated field sobriety tasks. Based on the officer's observations and the operator's performance on the tasks, it was determined he was impaired by alcohol to the point where his normal faculties were affected. The operator refused to provide a breath sample. The operator was arrested for boating under the influence of alcohol and issued a \$500.00 civil penalty for refusing to provide a lawful breath sample. He was transported and booked into the Hillsborough County jail.

While on patrol near the Courtney Campbell Causeway, Officer Pettifer observed an individual fishing from land. He initiated a resource inspection and found the individual to be in possession of three undersized spotted seatrout and four undersized mangrove snapper. The individual was cited accordingly.

On four separate occasions, Officers Grenz, Dalton, Davidson and Gonzales each were working water patrol at the Gasparilla Festival in the Seddon Channel. While on patrol, they each stopped and performed a boating safety inspection on a vessel participating in the festivities. During the inspections, the officers got some indications from the boat captains that they may be under the influence of alcohol and not fit to be operating a vessel. After performing field sobriety tasks on the captains to gauge their level of impairment, the four subjects were placed under arrest for boating under the influence and taken to the Hillsborough County jail.

Lieutenant DeLacure and Captive Wildlife Investigator Hough arrested two subjects regarding the unlawful taking and possession of indigo buntings and a northern mockingbird which were trapped illegally. The subjects were also charged for tampering with evidence since they attempted to conceal and flee with several birds.

LEE COUNTY

Officer Hazelwood approached two people fishing from the shoreline to conduct a fisheries inspection. He discovered that neither of the two had a valid shoreline fishing license. He checked the bucket that was between the two on the seawall and found 13 mangrove snapper, 10 of which were undersized, and one undersized sheepshead. Appropriate citations were issued.

Officer Winton was on patrol in Matlacha when he located two subjects fishing in a secluded location. He approached the subjects and conducted a resource inspection, which revealed that the subjects were in possession of 48 mangrove snapper, 46 of which were undersized. Additionally, Florida Law states that each fisherman can only harvest five mangrove snapper, meaning that 38 of the snapper were taken over the

bag limit. It was also discovered that neither of the subjects had a valid fishing license. The individuals were cited appropriately.

Officer Winton was on offshore vessel patrol in the Gulf of Mexico when he saw a commercial stone crab vessel transiting back inshore. A resource inspection revealed that the occupants were in possession of 11 undersized stone crab claws. A check with FWC dispatch revealed that the captain had multiple previous warnings and citations for violation of stone crab regulations. The captain was issued a notice to appear for the violations.

Officer Winton was on patrol in Pine Island when he saw a fishing vessel tied up in front of a boat ramp. Officer Winton approached the subject to conduct a fisheries inspection. The occupant quickly threw out a whole stone crab and gag grouper, even though he was instructed not to. A resource inspection revealed six additional undersized gag grouper. The operator was placed under arrest for misdemeanor violations pertaining to whole stone crabs, undersized gag grouper, over-the-bag gag grouper, out-of-season gag grouper, and obstructing a FWC investigation.

Lieutenant Spoede and Officers Winton and Hazelwood worked a detail for Tampa's Gasparilla Parade utilizing Lee County's SAFE Patrol Vessel. During the operation, the officers maintained public safety and security and arrested an impaired boat operator for boating under the influence. In addition, while traveling to the detail offshore, Lieutenant Spoede heard a mayday call on the VHF radio and responded to the scene. He rescued two subjects from their sinking boat in rough weather. The rescue highlighted the SAFE Patrol Vessel's ability to perform public safety operations in hazardous weather.

Lieutenant Ruggiero and Officer Bell tracked some individuals they believed were possibly hunting in the Yucca Pens Management Area. Officer Bell saw one individual inside the Yucca Pens, and heard dogs barking and hogs squealing. When another individual saw Officer Bell, the entire group attempted to flee the area. The officers set up a perimeter and stopped four people. Two individuals were caught inside the management area with dogs and admitted to hunting hogs on the property. The officers identified the individuals who got away. Six misdemeanors, six infractions, and six warnings were issued. Additional charges may be pending.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROLS

LEE COUNTY

Officers Price and Stapleton did panther enforcement in the Lee County panther protection areas. During their detail, the officers stopped 11 vehicles for speed related violations. Ten traffic citations and six warnings were issued. During the stops, the officers sought to educate drivers about the importance of following the speed limit for the protection of panthers that may be in the area. The highest recorded speed was 83 miles per hour in the 45 miles per hour posted speed zone.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

Lieutenant Frantz and Officer Birchfield attended and spoke at a Charlotte Harbor fishing seminar. Among the guest speakers were a charter captain and a CCA representative. There were approximately 150 attendees.

SOUTH REGION A

CASES

GLADES COUNTY

Officer Brodbeck was on vessel patrol on Fisheating Bay when he received a report of a boating accident involving two vessels participating in a bass tournament out of Clewiston. Two occupants of one vessel were ejected into the water. The two occupants of the second vessel were uninjured. Both boats sustained damage, but were able to continue to the Clewiston boat ramp. One subject with an injury was transported to the local hospital by EMS. Officer Brodbeck took photographs, collected witness statements and collected evidence relevant to the accident. The investigation is ongoing.

Officer Brodbeck was on vessel patrol in the Sportsman's Canal when he observed a vessel with a single occupant actively fishing. A vessel stop was initiated to conduct a boating safety and resource inspection. The subject then opened the lid to a cooler, and in plain view was a black crappie on ice. Officer Brodbeck told the subject that he needed to measure the fish. The subject reached into the cooler and Officer Brodbeck told the subject not to grab the fish and that it needed to be measured. The subject picked up the fish and Officer Brodbeck loudly told the subject to drop the fish back into the cooler. The subject threw the fish into the water. Officer Brodbeck issued the subject a notice to appear (citation) for failure to allow inspection by an FWC Officer.

Officers Dial and Brodbeck were conducting resource inspections at the Harney Pond Canal Boat Ramp. They observed a vessel coming to the ramp with several fishing poles visible. Once the vessel was at the ramp, a resource inspection was initiated. The subject was found to be in possession of several black crappie, two which were under the ten-inch minimum for Lake Okeechobee. The subject was cited for being in possession of black crappie less than ten inches in total length.

MARTIN COUNTY

Officer Willems was on patrol in the Dupuis Wildlife Management Area when he observed three individuals illegally camping. The individuals also had motorcycles in the beds of their trucks. The three individuals were issued infractions for illegally camping, and two warnings were issued for possession of unregistered motorcycles in the Dupuis

WMA. Later the same week, 4 individuals were observed with an illegal campsite at the Governor's House Picnic Area in the Dupuis WMA. Four infractions for illegal camping were issued along with 8 warnings for having an illegal fire and possession of alcohol in the Dupuis WMA. While on patrol after the camping incident, an individual was observed driving erratically with his passenger outside of the vehicle hanging on to the side of the vehicle. A traffic stop was initiated and the driver was issued a citation for careless driving. The parents of the driver and the passenger were called to inform them of the situation. Later that day, in the Allapattah WMA, an individual was observed in one of the parking areas with an ultralight aircraft strapped to his vehicle. When questioned, the individual stated that he was looking for a good place to take off. The individual was educated that aircraft of any kind, including model aircraft, are not allowed to be used in the Allapattah WMA.

MAJOR WILDLIFE ASSISTANCE

BROWARD COUNTY

Officers Vacin and Brock assisted on a manatee rescue. A manatee was tangled in a life jacket which made it difficult, if not impossible for the manatee to submerge. Officer Vacin guided a patrol vessel in proximity to the manatee so that FWC biologists could catch it with a hoop net off the front of his vessel. Once the manatee was on land, both officers helped with lifting, moving, and restraining the manatee so that the biologists could complete their work quickly and get the manatee back in the water. Everything went well and the manatee was released in good condition.

SOUTH REGION B

CASES

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

While on land patrol in a known bunting trapping area of Miami-Dade, an investigator and officer drove past a residence that had two trapping cages with indigo and painted buntings inside. The owner of the residence was contacted and another cage was discovered inside the yard containing migratory birds. The owner was charged with misdemeanor violations of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and nine birds were seized, along with one regular cage and two trapping cages.

MONROE COUNTY

Officers Wagner, Piekenbrock, Rubenstein, and Alvarez were targeting commercial shrimp vessels south of Key West. Upon boarding a shrimp vessel out of Texas, the captain and two mates stated that they had only shrimp and a few tuna onboard, no other resource. An inspection of the vessel's shrimp hold revealed three large freezer bags hidden deep behind trash bags and large sacks of shrimp. Post Miranda

interviews found that the two mates were responsible for 85 wrung lobster tails, 59 of which were undersized. The two mates were arrested and taken to Stock Island jail, while the Captain was cited for MSD violation in state waters. The targeted enforcement effort resulted in four MSD violations, and two warnings for illegal resource possession.

A boater was out fishing bayside of Islamorada when he found a body floating near the mangroves. Officers responded, recovered the body, and transported it to the FWC office nearby. Officers later recovered the deceased man's small skiff which was blown up into the mangroves from the high winds. The boating accident is still ongoing and the cause of death has not been determined.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

FWC officers met with youth from Miami Jackson Senior High at the SRB Office. Participating officers/investigators were matched with students in an Agricultural Science Academy within the school based on shared traits with students. They enjoyed breakfast and lunch together and taught them about unique duties as conservation law enforcement officers.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROLS

COLLIER COUNTY

Officers from Collier County conducted targeted patrols in the Picayune Strand State Forest to combat unauthorized use of the forest after hours and in areas closed to vehicle traffic. The two-night detail found numerous individuals operating vehicles in closed areas and in the forest after hours. In each case appropriate law enforcement action was taken.

MAJOR WILDLIFE ASSISTANCE

COLLIER COUNTY

Officer Knutson and Lieutenant Mahoney responded to the Faka Union Canal to provide transportation to the Manatee Rescue Team as they recovered two deceased manatees. While on scene, one field necropsy was performed and one recovery was conducted. As they were returning the manatee staff back to the boat ramp, they were notified of a manatee in distress nicknamed Sidewinder by the local boaters. They located the manatee and coordinated a capture effort for the following day.

The following day an additional manatee was discovered in distress. The manatee staff was able to place the manatee in a stretcher with a successful recovery. After completion, attention was turned to locating and capturing Sidewinder. After several hours, the capture team arrived and completed another effective capture.

