

FWC

Division of Law Enforcement Weekly Report



March 30, 2018 through April 5, 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

Officer Hayes located a baited area with cracked corn and bird seed. A few days later, the officer returned and saw an individual actively turkey hunting within 20 yards of the bait. The subject was charged with attempting to take turkey over bait.

Officer Baber located a baited area with cracked corn. A few days later, the officer returned and saw an individual actively turkey hunting within 10 yards of the bait. The subject was charged with attempting to take turkey over bait.

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

While working on the Pensacola Bay Bridge, Officer Cushing checked two subjects at the back of a pickup truck. The tailgate was covered with blood, guts, fish scales and a fillet knife was present. Both individuals had blood on their hands as well. One of the subjects stated that he had a small redfish. Officer Cushing located two fillets in a brown paper bag in the bed of the truck. A citation was issued for failure to land in whole condition.

FRANKLIN COUNTY

Officer Richardson and Reserve Officer Martin were working an oyster detail in the Eastpoint area. They saw a vessel returning from harvesting oysters to the Eastpoint Boat Ramp. Officer Richardson stopped the vessel and determined that the oysters

onboard were untagged. Officer Richardson cited the subject for untagged oysters. Both bags of oysters were seized and returned alive to the Apalachicola Bay.

GULF COUNTY

Officer Lipford was on water patrol when he stopped a vessel to perform a resource inspection. The vessel had one occupant and was returning from Lake Wimico. After Officer Lipford greeted the subject and asked him if he caught any fish, the man stated that he caught some shellcracker. After a visual inspection of the vessel's live well and cooler, Officer Lipford discovered the occupant had a few shellcracker, but also 20 black bass, 15 over his legal daily bag limit of 5. The individual was issued a notice to appear for the violation.

HOLMES COUNTY

Officer Yates completed an investigation stemming from information received from the Holmes County Sheriff's Office in January. During a warrant arrest, the Sheriff's Office saw a freshly killed doe deer at the address of the arrestee. Officer Yates documented the scene, recently completed an interview, and filed charges for possession of antlerless deer during closed season.

JACKSON COUNTY

Officer Little located and checked an individual actively turkey hunting within 30 yards of cracked corn and millet seed. The subject was cited for attempting to take turkey over bait.

Officer Forehand located a blind with cracked corn spread within 20 yards of the concealed location. A few days later, Officer Forehand watched a subject approach and enter the blind. A brief time later, a gobbler and hen turkey came into the baited area. The subject shot both turkeys and was subsequently charged with taking turkey over bait and taking hen turkey during closed season.

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Officer Pifer was called out to assist Eglin Range Patrol with a traffic stop they had conducted on a vehicle operating in the Eglin Wildlife Management Area (WMA) during prohibited hours. Eglin Range Patrol informed Officer Pifer that the occupants of the vehicle were in possession of drugs and firearms. A search of the vehicle revealed more than 20 grams of cannabis inside the vehicle in vacuum sealed packages, Alprazolam pills, two handguns (one of which was confirmed stolen out of Okaloosa County), ammunition, two scales, a vacuum sealer, numerous resealable bags and rubber bands. One individual was arrested for accessing the Eglin WMA during prohibited hours and for possession of a concealed firearm. The second individual was arrested for accessing the Eglin WMA during prohibited hours. During a search of the second

individual, half of an Alprazolam pill and \$1952 in cash was located. The second individual was additionally charged with possession of a controlled substance.

Officer Pifer was conducting fisheries inspections on the Okaloosa Island Fishing Pier when he contacted an individual who was actively engaged in fishing. A resource inspection revealed a total of 67 Spanish mackerel, six of which were undersized. The individual was fishing alone and claimed some of the fish were given to him by other individuals. State law prohibits the possession of more than 15 Spanish mackerel while on a pier. The individual was cited for possessing over the bag limit and possession of undersized Spanish mackerel.

Officers Pifer and Corbin were on water patrol when they saw two individuals fishing from shore at a county park. The officers beached their vessel to conduct a resource inspection. The two individuals were unable to produce saltwater fishing licenses. When asked, one of the individuals stated there was a cooler in the bed of the truck with fish inside. An inspection of the cooler revealed three undersized mangrove snapper. Officer Pifer cited the individual in control of the truck for possession of undersize mangrove snapper. Both individuals were warned for no saltwater fishing license.

Officer Corbin was on land patrol and responded to a complaint of a vehicle stuck in a wet weather pond on Eglin Wildlife Management Area. The officer arrived and saw a Toyota truck stuck with its frame sitting in wet mud in a closed area. Officer Corbin determined the driver was recreating in a closed area and damaging lands. The driver was issued a notice to appear citation.

Officers Pifer and Corbin were on vessel patrol conducting boating safety inspections in the Destin area. The officers saw a pontoon with seven adults and four children on board. Two children were not wearing the correct size life jackets and one child was not wearing a life jacket at all. All three of the children were under six years of age and required to wear life jackets while the vessel is underway. The officers determined the pontoon was rented. Officer Corbin contacted and met with the owners/renters of the pontoon. The livery inspection resulted in notice to appear citations to the owner for renting a vessel without the required boating safety equipment, boating safety information not displayed at livery location and person providing pre-ride/rental instructions not taking an approved boating safety course.

Officer Nichols was on land patrol and responded to Henderson Beach State Park regarding an individual who was harassing females. The subject was following them into the restrooms and saying obscenities. An Okaloosa County Sheriff's Deputy and Officer Nichols located the subject. During their communication, the subject had slurred speech and appeared very confused. The male subject stated he had consumed three bottles of cough medicine and requested medical attention. Officer Nichols contacted Emergency Medical Service personnel. The subject was issued a no trespass warning for Henderson Beach State Park and Rocky Bayou State Park.

SANTA ROSA COUNTY

While on vessel patrol in Escambia Bay, Officer Ramos saw a vessel operating in a restricted military zone. After conducting a vessel stop, he found the vessel to be lacking required safety equipment. A resource inspection was conducted and Officer Ramos determined that the two occupants had been commercial fishing, but only one man had the required saltwater products license (SPL). While inspecting the cooler of fish, a commercial quantity of mullet was found, in addition to a concealed undersized black drum measuring 10-1/2 inches, under the required 14 to 24-inch slot limit. The captain of the vessel was issued warnings for operating in a restricted zone, missing safety equipment and not having his SPL license available for review. He was issued a citation for the undersized black drum. The second man was issued a citation for engaging in commercial fishing without a saltwater products license.

Officer Ramos was on vessel patrol in the Santa Rosa Sound and conducted a boating safety inspection on a personal watercraft (PWC). The PWC's annual registration decal was unreadable and Officer Ramos determined that the registration had expired in June 2017. The operator of the PWC advised that he had rented the vessel from a nearby livery. Officer Ramos followed the operator to the livery and contacted management. The livery was issued the appropriate citation and took the vessel out of service pending compliance with state law.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Officer Gore was on patrol at Culpepper Landing on Holmes Creek when he was given information of a vessel being operated in a reckless manner. According to witnesses, the vessel came close to striking numerous kayakers and swimmers. A brief time later, a vessel matching the description was observed operating at a high rate of speed, weaving through and driving too close to swimmers and kayakers. The operator was cited for reckless operation of a vessel.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

BAY COUNTY

Officer Gore and K-9 Kane attended a public speaking event at Mowat Middle School. Approximately 85 people were educated on FWC law enforcement and outdoor safety.

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Officer Maltais provided presentation to 65 day camp attendees from local military bases. The students' ages ranged from 8 to 13 years old. The camp was hosted by the 4-H Camp in Timpoochee with assistance from University of Florida-Institute of Agriculture and Services Extension staff from Escambia County. They discussed marine conservation, how local FWC officers patrol and how to report marine or animal issues.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Officers Greene and Yates attended a Hunter Safety Education Class in Bonifay and instructed the law portion of the class. There were approximately 25 people in attendance.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

CASES

TAYLOR COUNTY

Officers Robson and Wilder were on patrol in a private hunting club when they saw fresh turkey scratch and feathers in the road. While inspecting the turkey feathers and scratch they were met by an individual who claimed he had taken a turkey there earlier that morning. After further inspection of the turkey scratch, Officer Wilder saw bird seed in the road and advised the individual of his findings. An interview was conducted with the individual and it was determined that the turkey was taken within 100 yards over a baited area. The individual received a citation for taking turkey over bait, the turkey was seized and donated to a local charity.

Officers Dasher and Albritton were working in a turkey hunting area when they encountered three individuals in possession of firearms. During an investigation the officers backtracked where the subjects had been and determined that they had been felony trespassing on private property. After further investigation the officers had enough information to direct file charges of felony trespass against two of the subjects and issue the third a written warning for misdemeanor trespass. One subject was booked into the Taylor County Jail on an active warrant.

On the opening day of Spring turkey season, Officers Dasher and Albritton located two baited blinds on private property in Taylor county. The officers saw turkey feathers lying in cracked corn about 10 feet from one of the blinds. The following weekend, Officers Albritton, Robson and Wilder returned to the property to check the baited sites. A subject drove to their location by ATV and began hunting from one of the baited blinds. The officers listened as he worked a turkey call from the blind and heard him shoot. Upon inspection the officers found that the subject had shot a gobbler as it was feeding on the corn in front of his blind but did not kill it. During an interview the subject admitted to the officers that he shot a gobbler out of the baited blind where the turkey feathers were located on opening weekend and produced a photo with him in possession of that turkey. The man was cited for attempting to taking turkey over bait as well as taking a turkey over bait on opening weekend.

Officers Robson, Colasanti and Wilder were on foot patrol on a private piece of land near County Road 14 and Highway 19. The officers were checking on a spot known to have cracked corn in a feeder that was positioned approximately 10-15 yards away from a blind. The officers heard a turkey call being worked from the direction where the blind

was located. The officers made contact with the adult and a juvenile in the blind and conducted an interview. The subject stated he knew he was hunting over bait. Officer Colasanti issued the adult subject a notice to appear for attempting to take turkey over bait.

ALACHUA COUNTY

Officers Stanley, Reith and Lieutenant Ferguson were all able to make charges on opening weekend for individuals attempting to take turkey over baited areas. Between the three officers, five different individuals were cited throughout the county.

CITRUS COUNTY

Officer Nathaniel Cheshire was scouting for turkey bait in Citrus County when he decided to check an old bait site from the previous year. He saw a game camera along with evidence that led him to believe the site was being used to hunt turkey over bait. Officers Cheshire and Reid returned to the site early the next morning and located two subjects set up near the baited area. The officers listened to the subjects calling for turkey using a turkey call. Upon further investigation it was discovered that a turkey had been harvested over the bait. The subjects were issued citations and the turkey was donated to a local charity.

Officer VanNess and Lieutenant Jones were patrolling the shrimp and stone crab separation zones offshore of Citrus County and tracked a four-trawl shrimp boat on their radar plotter that appeared to be fishing in a closed zone. The officers documented the shrimp boat's track as it continued to travel into Zone 4. Using the cover of darkness, the officers closed in behind the shrimp boat and positioned their patrol boat directly astern. As the officers observed the crew haul their nets out of the water they noticed that one of the crew members had exited the wheelhouse and crept out onto the outrigger. The officers could clearly see that the crew member was kicking a fouled stone crab trap off the shrimp trawl frame. The officers quickly recovered the trap from the water and recorded the number from the trap's buoy. The officers stopped the shrimp boat and Officer VanNess boarded the vessel. Officer VanNess found that the operator of the shrimp boat did not have the closed zones loaded into his navigation equipment. The same vessel had been involved in two similar incidents from 2015 to 2018. The operator was issued a citation to appear in Citrus County Court for the use of shrimp trawls in closed area.

Lt. Jones was patrolling offshore of Citrus County when he located a line of stone crab traps in Zone 5 of the Citrus-Hernando stone crab / shrimp zones. Zone 5 is closed to stone crab traps on March 1. A total of 52 traps were documented as being in the closed area. Officer Suttles contacted the trap owner to request the traps be moved and issued a citation. The traps were removed the following day by the owner.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

ALACHUA COUNTY

Officer Harris attended an outreach event at Talbot Elementary School. Over 100 students participated in the event throughout the day. Officer Harris spoke about the diverse responsibilities of an FWC Officer and how FWC's specialized equipment can be used to assist partner agencies.

Officer Stanley spoke to 140 students at the Micanopy Area Cooperative School. A small alligator provided the students an opportunity to enjoy a hands-on experience while they learned interesting safety and conservation facts.

Officer Stanley spoke to 15 students who were part of the PK Yonge Middle School Fishing Club about freshwater fishing rules and regulations, fish identification and boating safety.

SEARCH AND RESCUES

ALACHUA COUNTY

Lieutenant Ferguson and Investigator Bing responded to a call at Blue Springs State Park late Saturday afternoon. It was reported that two teenagers were missing on the Santa Fe River. The mother of the teenagers became worried after she was separated from them earlier in the day and called for assistance. The teens were located at the Highway 47 bridge along the Santa Fe River. Investigator Bing transported the teens back to Blue Springs State Park where their mother was waiting for their arrival. Lieutenant Ferguson and the state park manager retrieved the kayaks and returned them to the family.

CITRUS COUNTY

Officer VanNess responded to a search and rescue of an individual who had become lost while canoeing on the Chassahowitzka River. The last contact that was made by the canoer was several hours prior and he advised he was stuck in the mud. Officer VanNess located the missing canoer and transported him and his canoe back to the ramp.

NORTHEAST REGION

CASES

LAKE COUNTY

While on foot patrol conducting a turkey hunting detail on a private parcel of land in Groveland, Officers Phillips and Teal heard someone using a turkey call from the center of a pasture. They also saw two subjects dressed in camo leaned up against oak trees.

After hearing the turkey call again, the officers contacted the subjects. The subjects had turkey calls, shotguns and one bow and were within 26 yards of a feeder hanging in a tree with corn spread out on the ground. Both subjects were cited appropriately for the violations.

BREVARD COUNTY

Officers Balgo and Hallsten were conducting patrols in Merritt Island when they saw a repeat offender catch several oversized black drum. They saw the subject leave after dark with no navigation lights operating and run on plane through a slow speed manatee zone. The officers followed the subject to his vehicle and conducted a resource inspection. The subject did not have a fishing license, did not have a HIN on his vessel and had 10 oversized black drum. Due to the subject's extensive history in resource violations, the officers attempted to place the subject under arrest but he jumped into a residential canal. Shortly after, the subject was taken into custody without further incident and citations were issued for all violations.

While on patrol at Sebastian Inlet State Park, Lieutenant Lightsey and Officer Dubose conducted resource inspections on a group fishing near the back of the inlet. During the inspection the officers discovered two undersized mangrove snapper and found that they had been caught by an illegal method. A citation was issued for the size violations and a warning was issued for illegal method of take for reef fish.

VOLUSIA COUNTY

Officer North located a ground blind within 30 yards of a feeder and began working it on the second weekend of turkey season. He saw two individuals actively hunting turkeys from the blind. Both men were cited for attempting to take turkey within 100 yards of bait and one was also cited for no turkey permit.

PUTNAM COUNTY

Officer Haskins responded to a landowner complaint of someone hunting turkeys on fenced, posted property without permission. The officer located the individual and saw him in possession of a loaded shotgun and a pistol. The suspect had been legally hunting on Lake George Wildlife Management Area (WMA) adjacent to the property, but had climbed over a gate with no trespassing signs and entered the private property to hunt turkey. He was subsequently arrested for armed trespass. A search incident to arrest revealed a small amount of cannabis and a smoking pipe. The firearms, cannabis and pipe were seized as evidence and the suspect was booked into the Putnam County Jail.

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

Officers Marroquin, Platt, and Eller conducted airboat patrol on the East Marsh of the Upper Saint Johns Wildlife Management Area (WMA) during a weekend event that

attracts airboaters from across the area. Utilizing two patrol airboats, the officers conducted 19 vessel stops resulting in 36 boating safety warnings and 5 boating citations. Numerous boaters voiced their appreciation for seeing FWC patrol the area during the event.

While on patrol of Sebastian Inlet State Park Officer Dubose saw a vehicle parked on the sidewalk and pulled over to address the violation. As the officer approached he saw that the man had a fishing pole and was actively fishing. After speaking with the man about his expired fishing license, the officer smelled the odor of cannabis and asked where it was. The man retrieved a jar of cannabis weighing approximately ten grams. A Notice to Appear was issued for possession of cannabis under twenty grams and a warning for expired fishing license.

While on foot patrol of the Wabasso Causeway, Officer Dubose conducted a resource inspection of a man returning from fishing. During the inspection it was revealed the man was in possession of five mangrove snapper, three of which were under the legal minimum size limit of ten inches. A Notice to Appear was issued for the violation.

While on foot patrol of the Wabasso Causeway, Lieutenant Lightsey and Officer Dubose conducted a resource inspection of a man returning from kayak fishing in the Indian River. During their inspection it was revealed the man had an active federal felony warrant. Officer Dubose placed the man under arrest and transported him to the Indian River County Jail.

While on foot patrol at the SR 60 bridge, Officer Dubose conducted a resource inspection of three people fishing from the catwalk. During his inspection he discovered that one woman was in possession of six mangrove snapper. The legal bag limit for mangrove snapper is five per person, per day. Of the six mangrove snapper, only one was over the ten-inch legal minimum length. A citation was issued for possession of undersized mangrove snapper and a warning was issued for being over the daily bag limit.

While on patrol at Sebastian Inlet State Park, Officers Cybula and Kearney conducted resource inspections of anglers on the "T-dock." While they were approaching, a man reached into his cooler, pulled out a fish and placed it over the railing. The officers approached the man and asked what he was doing with the fish. Officer Cybula leaned over and saw a small black drum lying on the edge of the dock behind the railing. Officer Kearney retrieved the fish and issued the man a Notice to Appear for possession of undersized black drum.

OSCEOLA COUNTY

Officers Summers, Mendelson, and Stelzer were on foot patrol in Deseret Ranch. While conducting surveillance, Officer Summers witnessed two subjects packing up their morning turkey hunt and returning to camp. After investigation of their set up, the three officers found where the blind was set up, evidence of a turkey previously harvested,

and a feeder hidden in a cypress head 75 yards away. After interviewing the two subjects back at camp, they stated they were turkey hunting that morning in that location. One subject had knowledge of the feeder, his guest did not. Both subjects were cited for attempting to take turkeys less than 100 yards away from a game feeding station.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

PUTNAM COUNTY

Lieutenant Dickson, Lieutenant Dack, Investigator Wilkenson and Investigator Lasher, along with Officers Chriest, Guirate, Jones, Wester, Lawshe, Ramsey, and Meade responded to assist Putnam County Sheriff's Office with a search and rescue in Palatka. The search was for two children in a large wooded area. An FWC team found foot sign approximately one mile from the residence and waited for bloodhound teams to arrive before continuing the track on foot. Information was relayed to other teams so they could look for sign ahead of the track. This coordination led to a successful recovery by FWC and the children were turned over to Putnam County Sheriff's Office and Fire Department for medical evaluation and follow up.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

MARION COUNTY

Officers Dias and McGuire participated in the first Florida Forestry's Operation Outdoor Freedom Wounded Warrior Turkey Hunt on Sunnyhill Restoration Area. It was a one-day hunt with three wounded warriors participating. Officer Dias, along with folks from St. Johns River Water Management District, spent several mornings and evenings prior to the hunt scouting to make the hunt a success. Everyone's efforts paid off because all three wounded warriors were able to take trophy Osceola Turkeys. Officer Dias guided a wounded warrior on his first ever turkey hunt. He was able to take a turkey that weighed over 20 pounds, sported a 10.5-inch beard and impressive 1 3/8-inch spurs. The wounded warriors couldn't have been more thankful or appreciative.

OSCEOLA COUNTY

Officers Summers and Mclendon took the FWC wildlife trailer and small live alligators (securely taped for safety) to the Kenansville Swamp Cabbage Festival for public outreach. The officers met several land owners and constituents at the event and were able to answer questions of all varieties. The community showed a strong support of FWC and voiced their appreciation of FWC's support.

SOUTHWEST REGION

CASES

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

Officer Mitchell received information about a group of individuals causing problems in one of the wildlife management areas, so he coordinated some patrols to address the problems before they got worse. During the detail, officers conducted a coordinated patrol and addressed violations as they encountered them. There was also a county-wide burn ban in effect, so campers were educated about open fires and asked to put them out due to the high risk of major fires. The officers were able to address several individuals who admitted to coming into the management area to party while it was closed. One group attempted to present the officers with daily use permits that they claimed to have paid for, but later admitted they were lying and had not paid the required fee to enter the management area. The appropriate citations and warnings were issued.

HERNANDO COUNTY

Officer Canamero saw three subjects exit a vehicle each armed with a shotgun in Croom Wildlife Management Area (WMA). Officer Canamero contacted the subjects a short time later. They admitted to hunting hogs and squirrels. After further investigation the subjects were charged for hunting in a management area during a closed season.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

While on patrol, Officer Caldwell saw several individuals fishing under a bridge. A resource inspection revealed one of the individuals to be in possession of an undersized 12-inch snook. He was cited for the violation.

Officer Phillippi was on land patrol in when he was dispatched to a possible snook violation. Upon arrival he contacted a male subject matching the description provided by the complainant. After speaking with the subject, he told Officer Phillippi that he had indeed kept a snook. Officer Phillippi measured the snook which measured 23.5 inches. The subject was cited for possession of undersized snook.

While on land patrol at the 22nd St. Bridge in Tampa, Officer Martinez saw two male subjects loading a small jonboat onto the bed of a pickup truck. Officer Martinez approached the men and performed a resource inspection of their catch. Upon completing the inspection, he found them to be in possession of eight black drum, five of which were oversized (slot limit for black drum is 14-24 inches and you are allowed one drum over the slot). After interviewing both men one of them claimed to have caught four of the five over slot fish. Officer Martinez cited the man for being in possession of three over slot limit of black drum.

While driving on Interstate 4 in Tampa, Lieutenant Van Trees saw a vehicle that appeared to have been in an accident and was facing eastbound in the westbound lanes. Lieutenant Van Trees turned on his emergency lights turned around to assist the

vehicle. Fearing that the car was in a hit and run or someone was possibly hurt, Lieutenant Van Trees got behind the vehicle to make sure everything was okay. The driver initially refused to pull over, but eventually did. When the car was put into park, the male driver switched seats with the female passenger. Lieutenant Van Trees approached the vehicle and immediately smelled marijuana coming from the car. After making sure everyone was okay he asked the male for his driver's license. The subject stated he wasn't driving and didn't have a driver's license. After removing the male from the car, Lieutenant Van Trees told the female that he smelled and saw marijuana in the car and she needed to hand over any drugs in the car. The female subject then produced a bag of marijuana, two bags of cocaine, a bottle of Xanax, and a bottle of oxycodone. Officers Messman and Caldwell arrived to assist and after searching the vehicle, they found the two subjects had nearly \$10,000 in cash near where the drugs were initially hidden. After an interview, it was determined the drugs belonged to both subjects and that the female hid them when Lieutenant Van Trees was behind them. Both subjects were booked into jail.

LEE COUNTY

Officer Stapleton and Lieutenant Barrett were patrolling the waters of Pine Island Sound late at night when they spotted a vessel that was sitting still with its navigation lights off. As they watched people on the vessel occasionally turned on and off small flashlights. As the two officers moved closer to investigate, the vessel began heading back to the dock. The officers followed the vessel and stopped it for a boating safety and resource inspection. There were three adults and one juvenile onboard. The officers noted several indicators of impairment in the operator. Officer Stapleton conducted field sobriety exercises and based on his observations arrested the operator for boating under the influence.

Officers Winton and Fogle were conducting a targeted enforcement action (TEA) detail at Estero Bay Preserve State Park late at night when they noticed a suspicious vehicle pull into the entrance area even though the park was closed. The officers watched as both occupants used a lighter for an extended period. A stop was conducted and the vehicle was searched. During the search, the officers discovered crack/cocaine and paraphernalia. The driver of the vehicle was placed under arrest for the violations and transported to the Lee County jail.

Officer Winton conducted a marine sanitation device (MSD) inspection on a floating bait shop at the mouth of the Caloosahatchee River. The previous owner had been cited several months prior for MSD violations. During the inspection, Officer Winton discovered that the marine head was plumbed directly overboard. The owner was cited accordingly.

MANATEE COUNTY

Officer Davidson was on land patrol around Lake Manatee and State Road 64. While on patrol, he noticed two men fishing from the SR 64 Bridge that crosses a small portion

of Lake Manatee. A resource inspection revealed that the two men had caught and kept 56 striped bass. The two men were 16 fish over their combined bag limit, were issued citations, and will have to appear in court for their violations.

PINELLAS COUNTY

While conducting a resource inspection, Officer Pettifer noticed a mangrove snapper cut up in a manner that was consistent with it being used for bait. He asked the two individuals if they were using the snapper as bait. Both men denied the fish was theirs. Officer Pettifer had both men reel in their fishing lines. An inspection of the lines revealed one of the men had placed a large portion of the mangrove snapper on his hook. He was cited for failure to land mangrove snapper in whole condition.

While on patrol, Lieutenant Laskowski saw an individual in waders carrying a fishing pole emerge from a path in the mangroves. The man advised he did not catch any fish. Lieutenant Laskowski noticed the man had a hook affixed to his fishing pole used for live bait but was not carrying a bait bucket. When asked where his bait was the man admitted to hiding the bait bucket along the path. A fish bag containing five redfish was tied to the man's bait bucket. After locating the fish, Lieutenant Laskowski photographed them and walked the man down the path to release the fish. A second individual was observed wade fishing. An inspection of that individual revealed him to be in possession of four redfish. Both men were issued citations for possession of over the bag limit of redfish.

While on patrol at the North Skyway Fishing Pier, Officer Pettifer and Lieutenant Laskowski conducted several fisheries inspections. Two of the inspections resulted in two separate individuals each being cited for possession of five undersized mangrove snapper.

While on patrol, Officer Pettifer initiated a resource inspection on two individuals fishing from a rock jetty. The subjects advised they had only caught a puffer fish. Officer Pettifer identified a stringer tied to the rocks. One of the men admitted that he caught a grouper and put it on the stringer. An inspection of the stringer revealed one 19-inch gag grouper tied to it. The individual was cited for possession of an undersized gag grouper.

While on patrol at the North Skyway fishing area, Officer Pettifer conducted a resource inspection on two individuals fishing. Through the course of the inspection, Officer Pettifer discovered five undersized mangrove snapper, one undersized gag grouper, and two undersized sheepshead. The individuals were issued resource citations and warnings for the various violations.

While on patrol, Officer Enos received a complaint of a subject cast netting and keeping undersized snook. Officer Enos arrived in the area, observed the subject, and performed a fisheries inspection when the subject returned to shore. The inspection revealed an approximately 21-inch snook. The subject was cited for possession of

undersized snook and issued warnings for not having a fishing license, harvesting snook without a snook permit, and harvesting snook by illegal method.

Officers Bibler and Martinez were on water patrol in South Pinellas County when they saw multiple PWCs violating a manatee zone and a swim zone. As the officers approached, one person on a PWC immediately motored over to the beach near a large group of people. The subject appeared to be very young and pretended to act as if he was not just on the PWC. An interview of one of the PWC operators revealed that the young subject was 10 years old and that his father allowed him to operate the PWC. The father was issued a misdemeanor citation for allowing his son to operate a PWC under the age of 14.

Officer Bibler was on water patrol in South Pinellas County when he noticed a vessel trespassing at a local marina that was closed for the day. Officer Bibler conducted a vessel stop on the subjects who were actively fishing. A fisheries inspection revealed that the operator was in possession of an out of season and undersized gag grouper. The violator was cited appropriately for misdemeanor violations.

While on land patrol, Officer Martinez saw three subjects fish from a concealed location. Officer Martinez saw the men catching and keeping fish and approached them. One of the subjects saw him approaching, quickly reached into his pants and stuffed something into the car door pocket, locked the car, and walked away from Officer Martinez. Officer Martinez began a resource inspection with the subject and the other two males and found several undersized spotted sea trout. While looking through the vehicle to see if they had any more coolers or fish inside, Officer Martinez spotted a bag of marijuana. A search of the car revealed not only was there marijuana, but right where the first subject stuffed something into the door pocket were 16 individually packaged bags of cocaine. The first subject was arrested for possession of marijuana, possession of cocaine, and possession of cocaine with intent to distribute, and booked into the Pinellas County jail. Another subject was given a notice to appear for possession of undersized spotted sea trout.

Officers Ferguson and Phillippi were on park patrol at Honeymoon Island State Park when they contacted a subject to conduct a fishing license and resource inspection. The officers discovered the subject was in possession of two sharks not in whole condition, and the subject admitted to cutting up the sharks for bait. The subject was cited for possession of over the bag limit of shark and was given a warning for shark not in whole condition.

SOUTH REGION A

CASES

MARTIN COUNTY

While on patrol along the shoreline, Officer Morrow and Officer Pecko conducted saltwater fisheries inspections. Both officers located violations pertaining to pompano (over bag limit and undersized). The subjects were issued misdemeanor citations for their violations.

Officers Morrow, Rogers and Investigator Toby responded to a report of a subject catching and keeping wild northern cardinals. The officers located three caged northern cardinals. A small cage with a bowl of food and fishing line attached to the entry door was located. The subject was issued a misdemeanor citation for violation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the birds were released.

Officers Morrow and Pecko conducted saltwater fisheries inspections on a group of subjects participating in a local shark fishing tournament. A subject was found to have four bonnet-head sharks in his possession. Florida law permits a daily bag limit of one shark per person. The subject was issued a misdemeanor citation and the illegal sharks were seized and returned to the water.

Officer Morrow responded to a citizen advising that a severely intoxicated person was walking down the roadway. Upon locating the subject, Officer Morrow determined the subject to be a danger to herself. When asked to provide her name, the subject walked away from the officer. When Officer Morrow attempted to detain the subject for her own safety, the subject became combative. The subject was taken to the Martin County Jail and charged with disorderly intoxication and resisting arrest without violence.

Officer Willems noticed a large pile of household items dumped off the side of the road. He set up a motion activated camera to catch the violator. A few days later, Officer Gouveia found more garbage dumped in the same location. He worked with the Martin County Sheriff's Office to identify the subject found on the camera. Shortly after the identification was made, they saw him driving with a truck bed full of trash. They conducted a traffic stop and he was arrested for felony dumping.

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officers Norbrothen and Webb were patrolling an area of the L-8 canal that is off limits to unauthorized motor vehicles. The officers spotted two individuals operating off road vehicles on the canal levee and approached. Both subjects fled in their vehicles from the canal to private property when they spotted the FWC officers. A search of the public roads nearby located the two individuals. The vehicles were stopped and the operators were issued citations.

Officers Merizio and Norbrothen responded to a report of a subject in a residential community placing food out at night to feed wildlife. According to the neighbors, the food attracted a large group of raccoons and the raccoons have become aggressive. When officers arrived on scene they saw a water container and bread scattered around the subject's yard. Officers spoke to the subject and educated him on the negative impact of feeding wild animals. In Florida, intentionally placing food or garbage, allowing the

placement of food or garbage, or offering food or garbage in such a manner that it attracts coyotes, foxes, or raccoons and in a manner, that is likely to create or creates a public nuisance is prohibited. The subject was issued a warning.

While on ATV patrol, Officer Hankinson conducted a resource inspection on a commercial vessel at the Phil Foster Boat Ramp. Upon inspection of the vessel, Officer Hankinson saw numerous saltwater fish intended to be sold for public consumption. The fish were stored in a cargo box, containing no ice or adequate refrigeration. The subject was criminally cited for improper storage of commercial seafood, while in the act of harvesting or transporting.

Officer Hankinson saw two subjects fishing in Storm Treatment Area-1 East during a posted closed time. Upon inspection, one subject had an outstanding warrant. Officer Hankinson arrested the subject with the warrant and issued both subjects a citation for not having valid freshwater fishing license.

FWC officers patrolled the coastal beaches in Palm Beach and Martin Counties to educate fishermen participating in an advertised land-based shark tournament. Officers utilized ATVs, vessels and vehicles and made a variety of contacts. Shark Smart brochures were given to recreational fishermen. They also provided education and assistance with releasing of sharks.

Officer Mann responded to a call of a capsized vessel at Phil Foster Park. Upon arrival, the officer determined that no one was still on the vessel. The owner was contacted and a marine salvage company was contracted by the owner to float the vessel.

Officer Langley and Officer Loach were on foot patrol conducting fisheries inspections at the Boynton Beach Boat Ramp when they smelled an odor of marijuana. They noticed a vehicle in the adjacent parking lot with the windows cracked. While approaching the vehicle the odor got stronger and the occupants of the vehicle rolled the windows up. The officers investigated further and discovered half a pound of marijuana in a backpack and several Xanax pills in the possession of the front seat passenger of the vehicle. The subject was arrested and booked into the Palm Beach County jail.

SEARCH AND RESCUES

MARTIN COUNTY

Officer Rogers and Officer Carroll responded to a vessel that capsized in the St. Lucie inlet. The 13-foot vessel capsized in 3-5 feet seas during an outgoing tide. Due to the officers' quick response they were able to save the subject before he drifted through the inlet. Once the officers pulled the subject from the water and brought him on the patrol vessel, the officers navigated to safe waters and treated the subject for hypothermia.

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officer Webb saw a male juvenile riding a bicycle at the MO canal and Stumpers Grade in Corbett WMA. He contacted the boy and asked where he was going. The boy said he was going camping in Dupuis, but he had no supplies, limited water and food, and just a small blanket. Officer Webb asked if his mother knew where he was and he hesitated and said yes. The mother was contacted and was in a panic when she realized where he was going. The boy was reunited with his mother a brief time later.

FWC received a report from a concerned individual that she had not heard from her friend in over 24 hours. She stated her friend had been camping in the J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area and it was unusual to go so long without hearing from the friend. Officer Norbrothen responded by checking the camping areas in Corbett for either the individual or the vehicle. The officer found the individual cooking breakfast at a campsite. The individual was unharmed, in good health and good spirits. There was no cell phone service in the remote campsite for the individual to make a call so the officer had FWC dispatch relay the information to the reporting party.

MAJOR WILDLIFE ASSISTANCE

HENDRY COUNTY

Lieutenant Steelman was on patrol at night in south Hendry when she received a call regarding an osprey in distress in Clewiston. She contacted Officer Brodbeck and both met the complainant where the osprey was located. The bird had become tangled in its own nest material on the top of a nest platform and was unable to fly. Clewiston PD arrived on scene and was able to contact Clewiston City Utilities who brought a bucket truck to the location. Officer Brodbeck got into the bucket with a city utility employee and raised the bucket to the nest where they discovered there was also a hatchling osprey. Officer Brodbeck carefully freed the adult osprey, which appeared to be in good health, and cleared the nest of the plastic material which had caused the entanglement. The osprey flew several circles around the nest and once everyone had cleared the scene, returned to the nest and its hatchling.

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officer Mann assisted with the release of a manatee that was rehabilitated at the Miami Sea Aquarium. The manatee was released at Waterway Park in Palm Beach County. Officer Mann provided crowd control and answered questions from the public that had come to witness the release.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROLS

MARTIN COUNTY

Several officers concluded a month-long detail which targeted black crappie fishing. This resulted in highly visible proactive patrols with numerous fishermen being checked, most of them being in compliance. Officer Loach made a case which resulted in the

seizure of 66 under sized black crappie. He also made 4 felony arrests, issued 11 misdemeanors and 2 infractions to the 2 individuals involved in that case. Officer Loach also issued 10 misdemeanors for undersized black crappie during other user checks.

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officers Hankinson, Godward and Stone patrolled the shoreline with all-terrain vehicles from Jupiter Inlet to Lake Worth Inlet, to enforce state regulations during the shark tournament. Subjects were educated and violations were cited accordingly.

SOUTH REGION B

CASES

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

An officer stopped a vessel for a manatee zone violation. The officer discovered numerous boating safety and resource violations including no boater ID card, BUI, cannabis possession, drug paraphernalia possession, and undersized, closed season red grouper. The subject was also a repeat resource violator.

An officer stopped a vessel dockside at a boat ramp. While conducting a fisheries inspection he found in a red cooler containing following: 50 gray snapper, 4 undersized lane snapper, and 2 undersized mutton snapper. Three of the 50 gray snapper were undersized. Two persons on board verbally admitted to harvesting the snapper. The subjects were cited for the over daily legal bag limit of gray snapper and undersized lane snapper, mutton snapper, and gray snapper.

MONROE COUNTY

Officer Schroth saw a vessel approximately 4 miles offshore of North Sound Creek with divers in the water. Upon closer inspection, 3 divers in the water were actively spearfishing in a restricted area. Along with the violation of spearfishing in a restricted area, they had undersized, out of season hogfish, and undersized mutton snapper, fishing license violations, and boating safety violations. The stop resulted in (6) citations and (11) warnings.

Officers Mobley, Mason, Piekenbrock, and Wagner were on offshore patrol in the Dry Tortugas targeting violations in the Tortugas Ecological Reserves. Multiple vessel inspections occurred in the Dry Tortugas National Park and surrounding waters. One vessel inspection in Gulf state waters revealed five red grouper, three of which were undersized. One of the subjects claimed he harvested all the grouper and was cited for out of season and undersized grouper.

COLLIER COUNTY

Officer Yurewitch and Lieutenant Mahoney were conducting targeted enforcement of Delnor-Wiggins Pass State Park over the crowded Easter holiday weekend when they stopped a PWC that was violating the manatee wake zone adjacent to the park. After being provided incomplete identifying information from the subject, they found he had an active felony arrest warrant and was attempting to conceal his identity. The subject was arrested for the warrant and issued citations for the marine violations.

Officer Plussa and Knutson were conducting speed enforcement in the busy Delnor-Wiggins Pass State Park when they encountered several vehicles speeding nearly double the speed limit with heavy pedestrian traffic. Officer Plussa stopped the second vehicle and found the driver had no license in his possession, no registration, no insurance, did not know his address, and provided incomplete and inconsistent identifying information. An investigation revealed the subject's driver's license expired in 2009. Officer Plussa issued the subject a notice to appear for expired license, cited him for unlawful speed, and issued warnings for other violations. Another licensed driver took control of the vehicle.

Acting on a tip, investigators and officers from Collier County located a subject actively trapping and illegally keeping federally protected migratory song birds. The subject was discovered in possession of numerous species of migratory song birds, traps, and cages. In total the subject was issued 17 misdemeanor charges with additional federal charges pending.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

FWC took part in the inaugural Miami Dade College Green Fair where approximately 100 contacts were made. Officers discussed nonnative species and captive wildlife rules/regulations with the public. There were several contacts from students interested in getting involved with FWC.

On March 30, 2018, there was a Facebook live event on personal watercraft safety. Officers Moschiano and Washington worked with PIC Parrish and discussed manatee zones, boating safety, liveries and seagrasses. Questions were answered from the public. According to Facebook, over 12,000 users viewed the video.

MONROE COUNTY

Officer Dube along with PIC Parrish assisted "NBC Nightly News" staff with a post hurricane segment for their national news on Conch Key. Officer Dube took the camera crew on a FWC Patrol vessel to film the post "Hurricane Irma" marine debris clean-up and followed the efforts of a local lobster fisherman in retrieving his lobster traps that were entangled with other traps. The day concluded with several interviews with FWC staff and our stakeholders.

Officer McKay and Investigator Mattson met with 15 members of the Monroe County Police Cadets/Explorers at Planation Key School in Islamorada. They discussed their job duties including patrol, investigations, and the various specialty units and assignments in the agency. The youth paid close attention what FWC looks for in potential candidates and how background checks are carried out. An American Alligator was brought and shown to the cadets and other students and staff at the school.

Officer McKay brought an alligator and a California king snake to John Pennekamp State Park where he and 2 park service specialists spoke to over 250 park guests on the roles of the Park Service and FWC. All guests were allowed to interact with the reptiles.