

FWC
Division of Law Enforcement



Weekly Report
July 14, 2017 through July 20, 2017

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 Land was conducting a fishery inspection of a commercial fishing vessel in Pensacola. The vessel had multiple ice boxes filled with fish. Officer Land located two greater amberjack among the catch on the vessel. It is currently illegal to possess greater amberjack and the commercial size limit for greater amberjack is 36 inches. Both fish were undersized and were seized. The captain of the vessel was given a notice to appear for the violation.

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Officers Pifer and Bartlett assisted special agents from the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation's Division of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco (ABT) with a detail at Crab Island targeting illegal alcohol sales from food vendors anchored on the island. A total of eight vendors were contacted by the officers, special agents and ABT investigative aid working in a plain-clothes capacity. Of the eight vendors contacted, an employee from two separate vendors served alcoholic beverages to the investigative aid despite checking the aid's driver's license. Citations were issued to the two individuals for serving alcohol to a person under 21 years of age.

Officer Pifer was on routine land patrol and saw three individuals actively fishing from shore. While watching the individuals from his vehicle, one lit the end of a device commonly used to smoke cannabis, then passed it to another individual. Officer Pifer

approached the individuals and could smell the odor of burnt cannabis. After noticing Officer Pifer's presence, one of the individuals made obvious movements to conceal the smoking device. Officer Pifer asked the individual where the pipe was and he stated he threw it in the water. The smoking device was retrieved and the individual initially stated he had nothing illegal in his car, but later told Officer Pifer there was cannabis inside the driver's door. After securing the cannabis, Officers Corbin and Pifer searched the car and located 15 Hydrocodone pills in a cigarette pack in the center console. The individual was arrested for possession of a controlled substance, possession of cannabis less than 20 grams, and drug paraphernalia. The individual who had the smoking device passed to him was discovered to have an active warrant out of Okaloosa County and was placed under arrest. That individual was also charged with possession of drug paraphernalia.

Officer Corbin was conducting resource inspections when he saw two subjects actively fishing from shore. Officer Corbin asked if they had caught any fish today and they stated "no." Neither of the subjects possessed a valid fishing license and when asked for their identification, only one subject could produce any. Officer Corbin conducted a record check through FWC dispatch revealing that one of the subjects had an active warrant for violation of parole. He was placed under arrest and transported to the Okaloosa County Jail.

Officer Corbin received information from a NOAA officer that a charter captain was in possession of undersized king mackerel. The NOAA officer saw the vessel's catch displayed on the dock and the captain claimed only shark bait was left on the vessel. The NOAA officer conducted a resource inspection and saw the undersized king mackerel concealed under numerous other fish in a fish box. When asked if he caught the fish in federal or state waters, he answered "state waters." Officer Corbin met the captain and issued a citation for possession of undersized king mackerel.

Officer Corbin was dispatched to a single vessel accident in the ICW between Destin and Fort Walton Beach. Officer Corbin arrived on the scene with USCG Station Destin and Tow Boat US who had made several attempts to stop the vessel, which was still underway going in small circles. The operator of the vessel had made a sharp evasive maneuver to avoid an accident and was thrown from the vessel. The operator was picked up by a Good Samaritan and only suffered minor injuries.

SANTA ROSA COUNTY

Officer Roberson was patrolling the Pensacola Pass when he conducted a fisheries inspection on a vessel with two individuals who had two red snapper and a mahi-mahi. He asked who had caught the snapper, and one of the individuals responded that he did. Both snapper were undersized and the individual was issued a misdemeanor citation.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

CITRUS COUNTY

Several officers assisted the numerous boaters on the water during the second week of scallop detail. There were 29 boating safety citations, 119 boating safety warnings, 32 dive flag citations and 110 dive flag warnings issued over the three-day detail.

Officers Browning and Crane were on water patrol in the north end of Citrus County late Sunday night when they saw a boat using lights to gig. The two officers watched for a while and eventually stopped the boat for a resource inspection. The officers found the subjects in possession of seven black drum that had been gilled. Of the seven, four of them were over the 24-inch maximum length limit. The operator was cited for over the bag limit and was given warnings for two undersized black drum.

COLUMBIA COUNTY

Local officers and several members from the North Central Region Special Operations Group (SOG) team conducted a detail in Itchetucknee Springs State Park targeting alcohol violations and drug use. Thus, five written warnings for consumption of alcohol in a state park were issued, two misdemeanor citations for possession of cannabis less than 20 grams and possession of drug paraphernalia were also issued. The officers also assisted a female who was having trouble breathing by providing first responder care until EMS arrived.

Officer McDonald responded to Itchetucknee Springs State Park regarding an intoxicated female. Officer McDonald arrived on the scene a short time later and located the female who was also present with an additional female and male. They had lost the keys to their vehicle and were waiting on a locksmith. Officer McDonald could smell the odor of alcohol on the subjects. With the male's permission, Officer McDonald searched a small ice chest that the subjects had taken on the river. Officer McDonald found a small amount of cannabis in a cigar package in the cooler. After the vehicle was opened by the locksmith, Officer McDonald also conducted a consent search of the vehicle. Officer McDonald found over 16 grams of cannabis and six hydrocodone pills that were in a prescription pill bottle with the label removed. The male subject who was the owner of the vehicle was arrested for possession of a controlled substance and possession of drug paraphernalia. The two females admitted to ownership of the cannabis and were cited for possession of cannabis under 20 grams.

DUVAL COUNTY

Resource Protection Officer Sweat along and Investigator Holleman saw a man empty the contents of a blue crab trap into his vessel. When he approached, the man stated that he was baiting his traps; however, the information on the traps were not consistent with his information. The man later admitted he was checking his and his wife's traps. After pulling the traps, it was discovered that the man was working fourteen traps as a

recreational trapper. He was issued three warnings on trap requirements and a citation for harvesting blue crabs as a recreational trapper with more than five traps.

Environmental Investigator Terrones was contacted by the Duval County Health Department (DOH) for assistance after they found illegally disposed of bio-medical waste in two dumpsters rented by two businesses located on either side of a tattoo shop. The waste included bloody paper towels, disposable razors, ink bars, disposable gloves and ink caps. The owner of the tattoo business blamed the illegal disposal on a recently fired employee. In the tattoo shop, the DOH found additional bio-medical waste stored in improper bags and a further investigation revealed that the business did not possess a permit to generate bio-medical waste and neither the owner or fired employee were licensed to perform tattoo's. Appropriate citations were issued and the business owner was required to hire a licensed bio-medical waste transporter to dispose of the waste in both dumpsters. The DOH will follow up with administrative penalties as well.

LAFAYETTE COUNTY

Officer Ransom saw a black Chevrolet pickup travelling in an oncoming traffic lane. The pickup then continued onto the right shoulder and back into the oncoming lane, coming to a complete stop. Officer Ransom stopped the vehicle and determined that the operator of the vehicle was driving under the influence and his normal faculties were impaired. The operator was arrested and charged with driving while license suspended, refusal to submit to test of breath and DUI.

NASSAU COUNTY

While patrolling the waters of the Nassau Sound, Officer Sweat saw a man fishing from the shoreline near the George Crady Fishing Bridge. The man was carrying a stringer with several fish. His inspection revealed the man did not possess a valid fishing license, and he stated nobody would sell him a fishing license because of his child support problems. Officer Sweat discovered that the man's fishing privileges had been suspended since July 2016. After a notice to appear was issued, the fisherman stated "I thought if I ever got caught, it would be just for a fishing license ticket."

Officer Barry encountered a vessel in Cumberland Sound and a resource inspection revealed that the two men on board were over-the-bag limit and in possession of undersized cobia. They had 10 cobia on board and six of them were undersized. Both anglers were issued misdemeanor citations and eight fish were seized.

SUWANNEE COUNTY

Officers Drew, Cline, Johnston and Lieutenant Humphries responded to a complaint of a physical domestic disturbance at a local boat ramp. Upon their arrival, a large group of people had gathered as a subject was yelling and screaming obscenities at the crowd while attempting to fight several people. After the officers defused the situation, it was

determined that the subject had physically assaulted his former wife and the crowd witnessed this event as it took place. The subject was arrested for domestic battery, resisting arrest and disorderly intoxication.

RESCUES

HAMILTON COUNTY

Lieutenant Humphries was approached by a concerned citizen about a woman lost in the Pot Springs Area. Lieutenant Humphries found the woman who had been lost for two days in the woods along the river, sleeping in deer stands and drinking river water. She suffered numerous insect bites, but had no injuries beyond first aid. The woman was delivered to the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office where she was reunited with her family.

NORTHEAST REGION

CASES

BREVARD COUNTY

Officers Hadwin and Graves were on patrol in Sebastian Inlet State Park when they saw two men with cast nets. As the men started to leave, they spotted the officers' patrol truck and turned to walk the other direction. The officers stopped the men, conducted a resource inspection and found the men to be in possession of one, out-of-season snook. One of the men was issued a citation for possession of snook out of season, and the other was issued a citation for no fishing license.

While on late-night patrol on the St. Johns River, Lieutenant Lightsey saw a vessel with no navigation lights displayed. After conducting a vessel safety inspection, the officer noticed several signs of impairment. The operator was asked to participate in standardized field sobriety tasks and performed poorly. The operator was placed under arrest for operating a vessel while normal faculties were impaired and issued a citation for refusal to submit to a sample of his breath.

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

While on patrol at Sebastian Inlet State Park, Lieutenant Lightsey and Officer Dubose saw two men fishing from an area known for undersized snapper. Officer Dubose conducted a resource inspection of the men's bait bucket. The inspection revealed the men were in possession of thirteen mangrove snapper, six undersized and three over the legal bag limit. Both men were issued citations for possession of undersized mangrove snapper, over the bag limit of mangrove snapper and a warning for no fishing license.

SEMINOLE COUNTY

Lieutenant Tye, Investigator Douglas and Officer Hastings were on patrol at Wayside Park. Lieutenant Tye and Officer Hastings saw a vessel come to the ramp and Officer Hastings conducted a vessel safety inspection. During the inspection, Officer Hastings noticed the operator showing signs of impairment and had the subject perform seated standardized field sobriety tasks. Subsequently, the subject was arrested for BUI and later blew a 0.141 breath sample at the jail.

Lieutenant Tye, Investigator Cogburn and Officer Hastings were on water patrol waiting out a storm at Mullet Lake Park. They watched as a subject walked across the parking lot to the pavilion they were under. As the subject walked right past them, he spoke to them and they noticed his speech was slurred and he was unsteady on his feet. Officer Hastings was also able to smell a strong odor of alcoholic beverage coming from the subject. The subject then walked off to a remote area of the park and could no longer be seen. Minutes later, the subject returned driving a vehicle and parked the vehicle in a handicapped parking space. Investigator Cogburn and Officer Hastings confronted the subject who was about to load a young child into the vehicle. Officer Hastings asked him to perform seated standardized field sobriety tasks and then arrested him for DUI. The subject was then transported to the jail.

Investigator Douglas and Officer Hastings were on water patrol on the St Johns River when they saw a vessel being operated with no navigational lights. They stopped the vessel and conducted a vessel safety inspection. Officer Hastings saw the operator showing signs of impairment. During that vessel stop, an airboat that was also operating with no navigational lights came within feet of their vessel and Investigator Douglas stopped that vessel as well. The operator of the airboat also showed signs of impairment. Investigator Douglas had the airboat operator perform seated standardized field sobriety tasks and the other operator refused to do the standardized field sobriety tasks. Both subjects were placed under arrest for BUI and were transported to the jail.

Officers Tavano and McKee were on water patrol on the St Johns River. They stopped a vessel that was improperly displaying its navigational lights and Officer Tavano noticed the operator showing signs of impairment. Officer Tavano also saw the subject in possession of a glass pipe and cannabis. Officer Tavano had the subject perform seated standardized field sobriety tasks and subsequently placed the subject under arrest for BUI and possession of cannabis and drug paraphernalia.

VOLUSIA COUNTY

Officers West and Malicoat were on water patrol in the Port Orange area of the Halifax River. During a vessel stop, an investigation began of the adult male operator for BUI. Officer West arrested the subject for BUI issued him a citation for refusal to submit to a breath test. He was transported and booked into jail.

SOUTHWEST REGION

CASES

HIGHLANDS COUNTY

The Southwest Region Dive Team deployed to assist the Highlands County Sheriff's Office with an ongoing investigation. The dive team, using a sector scan sonar and divers, cleared a large lake to ensure no evidence was discarded during the crime.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

Officers Martinez and Gonzales were on water patrol on the Alafia River. They stopped and performed a boating safety inspection on a vessel transiting the river. During the inspection, the two officers had probable cause to believe the operator of the vessel was under the influence of alcohol. After performing some field sobriety tasks, the two officers arrested the operator for BUI and he was taken to the Hillsborough County Jail.

Officer Martinez was on patrol near the Alafia River when he saw two subjects fishing under the US 41 bridge. When Officer Martinez encountered the two subjects, they stated they did not catch any fish. Officer Martinez questioned them about a stringer he saw one of them using prior to making contact. Upon inspection, citations were issued for possession of undersized black drum and warnings were issued for undersized sheepshead and mangrove snapper.

While on water patrol, Lieutenant Laskowski and Officer Pettifer saw two jet skis operating at a high rate of speed doing doughnuts in a boating safety slow speed zone near the Courtney Campbell Boat Ramp. The officers approached the jet skis to initiate a vessel stop. Upon approach, one of the operators was seen drinking a bottle of beer. Through the course of the vessel stop, signs of impairment were noted. Lieutenant Laskowski initiated field sobriety tasks. Halfway through the tasks, the operator said he could not complete the tasks and refused to finish the battery of tasks. Based on the officers' observations, that individual was arrested for BUI and transported to the Hillsborough County jail where he refused to provide a breath sample.

LEE COUNTY

Officer Price was on plain-clothes patrol when he saw two fishermen along a beach. After watching the men fish for a while, he conducted a fisheries inspection near their vehicle. The inspection revealed that the men were in possession of two undersized snook and an undersized pompano. While trying to identify the men, one of them gave Officer Price a name which came back as bad information. Officer Price used his assigned electronic fingerprint identification system and discovered the man had an active warrant. The second man also had an active warrant out of Indiana. Both men were arrested for the warrants and charged for illegal method of taking snook,

possession of undersized snook, possession of snook out of season, possession of undersized pompano, and providing false information to a law enforcement officer.

Officer Winton was on nighttime water patrol near Fort Myers Beach when he saw a boat operating without the required navigation lights. Officer Winton conducted a stop on the vessel to address the violation. During the stop, signs of impairment were detected and field sobriety tasks were performed. Officer Winton determined the operator's normal faculties were impaired and placed him under arrest for BUI. Officers Fogle and Hazelwood also responded to assist with the investigation.

Officer Hardgrove was on land patrol in Cape Coral when he saw an SUV parked next to a bridge and knew that area was a popular fishing location. As he approached the bridge, he heard the distinct sound of a cast net being thrown from the seawall under the bridge. He saw a subject throwing and retrieving the cast net several times and putting his catch into a bucket next to him. Officer Hardgrove looked through the windows of the SUV and noticed that there was another bucket in the rear cargo area that contained a snook. The snook appeared to have been recently caught as it was still flopping around. Officer Hargrove approached the subject as he was pulling in his net and asked him if he had any luck. The fisherman explained that he had caught some sand brim and showed him the bucket next to him. The officer asked if he had caught any other fish and the subject answered that he had not. Officer Hardgrove then asked the subject to unlock the rear door to the SUV as he already knew there were snook in the back. Upon opening the door, the subject began saying he was sorry and that he wouldn't do it again. The subject was issued a notice to appear for possession of out-of-season snook, possession of undersized snook, and harvesting snook by illegal method. A citation was issued for harvesting snook without a snook stamp. The snook died and was seized as evidence.

While on land patrol, Officer Hargrove saw three subjects fishing near a weir. He approached on foot and hid in the bushes. While watching all three subjects actively fishing, Officer Hardgrove noticed one individual catch a bluegill and put it in a bucket next to him. After approximately 10 minutes of observing, Officer Hardgrove announced himself and approached the subjects. He asked them if they had fishing licenses and only one could produce a valid saltwater license. He then asked if they had caught anything and was told "No, nothing". Officer Hardgrove asked one subject to go back down and bring the bucket. The subject returned with the bucket and placed it on the ground. Inside the bucket were three undersized and out-of-season snook and three bluegill, all deceased. Officer Hardgrove asked who had caught the snook and no one would answer. Instead, they were speaking to each other in Spanish. The snook were measured at 13 ¼, 15, and 15 ¼ inches on the FWC-issued measuring device. All three subjects were issued a notice to appear for possession of out-of-season snook and possession of undersized snook. They were all also issued citations for harvesting snook without a snook stamp and no fishing licenses. The snook and bluegill were all seized as evidence.

Investigators with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) and Lee County Sheriff's Office served a search warrant on an individual suspected of dealing in stolen property. This individual was charged with Dealing in Stolen Property, Motor Vehicle Title Fraud and Possession of a Vehicle with Altered Numbers. While serving the search warrant, they discovered 5 Northern Cardinals held captive illegally in the defendant's back yard. Captive Wildlife Investigator Gregory assisted and will be issuing 5 counts of violation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act/illegal capture and possession of migratory birds.

MANATEE COUNTY

Officers Bibler, Dalton and Rivard were on water patrol near the Cortez Bridge when they stopped and performed a boating safety inspection on a vessel transiting in the intracoastal waterway (ICW). During the inspection, the officers began to suspect that the captain of the vessel was under the influence of alcohol. After performing some tasks to gauge the operator's impairment, the officers placed the captain of the vessel under arrest for BUI and he was transported to the Manatee County Jail.

Officer Dalton was on water patrol around Long Boat Pass when he stopped and performed a boating safety and fisheries inspection on a vessel coming in the pass. The inspection revealed that the captain of the vessel had caught and kept four undersized American red snapper. The subject was given a criminal citation for possession of the undersized snapper and must appear in court for his violation.

Officers Rivard, Bibler and Dalton were on water patrol near Jew Fish Key. Officer Rivard stopped a vessel departing from a sandbar for a boating safety inspection and noticed the operator was exhibiting signs of impairment. He conducted field sobriety tasks and the operator performed poorly on all tasks. The operator was then arrested for operating under the influence and transported to the Manatee County Jail where he refused to provide a breath sample.

PINELLAS COUNTY

While on land patrol near the Gandy Bridge, Officer Bibeau saw three individuals fishing from the shoreline. He watched the individuals fish from a concealed location and waited for them to pack up their belongings before making contact to conduct a fisheries inspection. During the inspection, Officer Bibeau located a 13-inch red drum. One of the individuals admitted to catching the red drum and was cited appropriately.

Officer Martinez was on patrol on the South Skyway Fishing Pier and approached a fisherman who stated he had caught a fish. Officer Martinez discovered the subject was in possession of a 7-inch gag grouper and stated he knew it was a gag and was planning on using it for bait. The subject was issued a citation for possession of undersized gag grouper.

While on patrol, Officers Messman and Caldwell saw an individual spearfishing under the Courtney Campbell Bridge. They saw a yellow bucket and the individual confirmed it was his. A fisheries inspection revealed 21 undersized sheepshead and one undersized black drum in the bucket. The individual was cited for possession of undersized and over the bag limit of sheepshead, and possession of an undersized black drum.

POLK COUNTY

Officers Young and Earls were conducting vessel patrol on the Winter Haven Chain of Lakes when they saw a vessel with an improperly displayed registration. The officers encountered the operator and noted signs of impairment during a boating safety inspection. Officer Young conducted field sobriety tasks and determined the operator was BUI. Officers Young and Earls transported the operator to jail where he provided a breath sample of .236. The operator was charged with felony BUI as this was his 4th BUI/DUI.

Officers Tyer and Earls responded to a complaint of night hunting when they saw a vehicle displaying a light in a manner of disclosing wildlife from a county road. The officers conducted a vehicle stop and saw hog dogs in the bed ready to be deployed. Post Miranda, the two subjects stated they were looking for hogs to hunt. Officers Tyer and Earls also found a small quantity of a green leafy substance that tested positive for marijuana. The two subjects were charged with attempting to hunt from a road right of way and possession of marijuana.

SARASOTA COUNTY

Captive Wildlife Investigator O'Horo received information that a marmoset had escaped its primary enclosure. Investigator O'Horo traveled to the licensed facility and was able to determine that a marmoset had in fact escaped. The animal was recaptured and appropriate citations were issued pertaining to the escape and caging.

RESCUES

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

Officers and investigators responded to the Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park where a person accidentally shot himself with a handgun and sustained a gunshot wound to the leg. Both the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office and Fire Department responded to the scene and the subject was transported to Lee Memorial Hospital. This is an ongoing hunting accident investigation.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

Lieutenant Laskowski, Lieutenant Holcomb, Lieutenant Mack, Investigator Freemon, and Officers Boogaerts, Messman, Caldwell, Deerborn, and Rivard responded to a PWC accident in East Lake, Tampa. The operator and passenger of the PWC were

seen maneuvering in circles on the lake. The operator, who was not wearing a personal flotation device, and the passenger were ejected from the watercraft. The passenger returned to the PWC but the operator did not resurface. Lieutenant Brooks, Officer Bibler, Investigators Buckson and Cooke of the dive team, responded to aid in the search for the missing boater. On the second day of the search, FWC dive team members located and recovered the body of the operator.

PINELLAS COUNTY

Lieutenants Mack, Laskowski, Investigators Schefano, Dellarossa, and Officers Boogaerts, Lehman, Ludtke, Pettifer and Messman responded to a single vessel boating fatality near the Courtney Campbell Boat Ramp. The vessel was traveling along Rocky Point channel when it made an abrupt turn ejecting both male and female passengers; neither of them were wearing a life jacket. The vessel continued in a circular motion striking the male passenger in the water, resulting in his death. The female passenger was rescued.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROLS

PINELLAS COUNTY

Officers Ludtke and Pettifer were conducting manatee zone enforcement within Pinellas County when a vessel violated the zone. Upon contacting the operator, the officers noticed several open containers of alcohol, and a subsequent boating safety inspection revealed signs of impairment. Officer Ludtke conducted standardized field sobriety tasks and determined the individual was operating his vessel while impaired. While completing the investigation, a second vessel approached the officers and stated the individual had just stolen property from them. The officers located the stolen property on the vessel and returned it to the owner. The individual was taken to Pinellas County jail where he provided a breath sample revealing he was over three times the legal limit. The individual was charged with grand theft and BUI.

SOUTH REGION A

CASES

MARTIN COUNTY

While conducting coastal land patrol, Officer Morrow saw a vehicle driving carelessly and failing to maintain a lane. Upon conducting a traffic stop, the driver was found to have a suspended driver's license. The driver was issued a citation for driving while suspended without knowledge and given a warning for failure to maintain a lane. The vehicle was turned over to a licensed driver without incident.

OKEECHOBEE COUNTY

Officer Allen was on foot patrol during the night-time hours at E-Lock on the Kissimmee River when he heard two subjects talking. Soon after, two men were seen walking up the canal bank from their boat moored near E-Lock. The subjects then walked onto the lock structure itself where entry is prohibited. They were detained and given notices to appear in court for trespassing on a South Florida Water Management District water control structure.

Lieutenant Dugan, Investigator Ervin and Officer Allen were conducting helicopter patrol on the Kissimmee River and saw a subject operating his airboat in an area posted as a river restoration construction site. After signaling for the subject to stop, the officers landed and the man was informed he was trespassing. The subject was issued a citation for not having mufflers as well as two boating-related warnings. The state attorney's office will be contacted for a possible trespass charge on the subject.

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Captive Wildlife Investigator Howell received a report of a child being injured by a pet cockatoo parrot. His investigation revealed that an individual brought his pet bird into a coffee shop and placed the bird on a table unsecured. The bird flew over to the child and bit her on the face, requiring one stitch. Investigator Howell identified and located the owner of the bird, and issued the owner a misdemeanor citation for allowing his pet cockatoo to injure another. Investigator Sierra assisted with this incident.

ST. LUCIE COUNTY

Officer Payne received some information from an anonymous complainant that a subject was selling "food grade" shrimp from his home. Further investigation revealed that the subject would come to Fort Pierce and purchase large quantities of shrimp directly from the shrimp boats docked at the port. He would then repackage the shrimp into smaller quantities and sell to the public from his home, meeting orders that had been placed on his social media page. Officer Payne located the subject at the port making a large purchase. Interviews of the vessel crew member and the subject revealed that neither individual was licensed by the state to sell saltwater resource. Both individuals were issued criminal misdemeanor citations for failure to possess a saltwater retail license.

Officer Fretwell was conducting license and resource inspections. While traversing the Fort Pierce South Bridge, he saw a vessel with two people on board that were fishing. As he continued his approach towards them, the male subject was seen picking up a plastic bag and dumping its contents overboard. As Officer Fretwell neared the vessel, he saw two small mutton snapper floating towards him. His contact with the occupants revealed that the male subject was aware that the fish were undersized and wanted to dispose of them before the officer approached. The subject was issued a citation for possession of undersized mutton snapper and for interfering with an FWC officer. One of the recovered snapper, seized as evidence, measured 12 inches.

SOUTH REGION B

CASES

COLLIER COUNTY

Officer Plussa was conducting water patrol near Hurricane Pass and Keewaydin Island, off of Marco Island, when he saw a vessel failing to display any kind of registration decal. An inspection revealed the operator had safety violations and failed to carry the registration certificate. The operator stated he was the owner and had been for three years. An investigation revealed that the operator had failed to transfer the vessel registration or apply for the title in his name within 30 days. The vessel was found to be expired since 2013. The operator admitted that he had “never been called out for it before.” Officer Plussa issued him a civil citation for operating a vessel with an expired registration and two criminal notices to appear for failing to transfer the registration and title. He received four other warnings.

Officer Curbelo was conducting resource inspections on subjects fishing on Lake Trafford when he saw a subject packing up his cast net. Officer Curbelo followed the subject to his car to check his catch. The subject showed Officer Curbelo several legal fish in a bucket, and stated he did not have any other fish. Officer Curbelo saw a similar bucket in the subject’s car and asked if there were fish in that bucket as well. The subject admitted that there were fish in the bucket, and the officer discovered 2 largemouth bass and 1 bluegill. The subject admitted he had caught the bass and bluegill with his cast net and was issued the appropriate citations.

Officer Yurewitch was conducting land-based water patrol on Randall Boulevard in rural Golden Gate Estates when he saw two individuals fishing a canal bank near a pickup truck. The officer contacted the two individuals to conduct a fishing license check and resource inspection. He saw a cooler in the bed of the individual’s truck containing 20 butterfly peacock bass, 16 over the legal bag limit. Both individuals admitted to catching the fish. Officer Kleis arrived on the scene to assist with the investigation. The individuals were each issued the appropriate citations.

MONROE COUNTY

Officers Rubenstein and Piekenbrock were on water patrol along the 7-mile Bridge for slack tide divers when they saw a local commercial fisherman with divers in the water and no divers-down flag displayed. Officer Rubenstein conducted a resource inspection of the vessel and found an out-of-season permit that had been speared in the Special Permit Zone and an undersized mutton snapper. The individual admitted to spearing it in the channel and was cited accordingly.

Officer Martino was on patrol when he was dispatched to a house in Key West in response to an anonymous tip regarding a group of people in possession of Queen Conch. Officer Martino arrived and saw a female in plain view with 3 plastic containers and a water hose in the driveway of the residence with the Conch. The woman from Texas was in possession of 40 Prohibited Queen Conch. The Queen Conch were

harvested by several minor children along with the subject. The woman took responsibility for all the Queen Conch and Officer Martino collected the Queen Conch, photographed them for evidence, and returned them back to the water (most of them were still alive). The woman was arrested and cited for possession of Prohibited Queen Conch and booked into Monroe County Detention Facility.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROL

COLLIER COUNTY

Officers Plussa, Osorio and Lieutenant Mahoney conducted a focused enforcement effort in Delnor-Wiggins Pass State Park over the weekend, addressing multiple violators amongst the crowds. They issued over a dozen citations and 45 warnings for violations of state park rules including consumption of alcohol in a state park, unsafe speed, operating/landing a vessel within a swim area, fishing in a swim area, swimming in a fishing area, attempted evasion of entrance fees, and failure to adhere to park staff directions or other regulations.