

FWC

Division of Law Enforcement Weekly Report



June 22, 2018 through June 28, 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

BAY COUNTY

While returning from a recreational fishing trip out of Mexico Beach, Lieutenant Wass de Czege saw six individuals with numerous fish laid out on the fuel dock at the Mexico Beach Marina. Seven of the fish were triggerfish for which the season is currently closed. Lieutenant Wass de Czege contacted local Officer McMillion and asked him to come handle the violations. When Officer McMillion arrived, he interviewed the six individuals. The captain of the vessel took responsibility for the fish and received a citation for the violation. The fish were seized and donated to a local charity.

ESCAMBIA

Officer Land received a complaint regarding a Facebook post with photos of stone crab claws. Stone crab season is closed May 16 – October 14 each year. Officer Land contacted the individual who posted the photo of the stone crab claws. The individual admitted to harvesting the crabs during the closed season. The appropriate action was taken for the violation.

FRANKLIN COUNTY

Officer Travis was on patrol near the John Gorrie Bridge and saw several subjects returning from fishing to their vehicles. Officer Travis conducted a resource inspection and found the subjects were in possession of eight undersized seatrout and one undersized bull shark. The fish were seized and two subjects were cited.

LEON COUNTY

While on patrol in the Highway 20 Tract of the Talquin State Forest, Officer Wilcox and Lieutenant Wass de Czege contacted two individuals who were driving through the area. During the encounter, the officers saw a small bag of white crystals fall out of a mask the male driver had in his hand. Further investigation revealed a larger bag of white crystals, a loaded syringe, and drug paraphernalia consisting of an empty syringe and two syringe caps with cotton in them – all in the possession of the female passenger. All items tested positive for methamphetamine and the two individuals were booked into the Leon County Detention Facility.

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Officers Pifer, Matechik, and Jarvis were on vessel patrol when they stopped a vessel in violation of the idle speed/no wake zone near Crab Island. During the vessel stop, the operator showed signs of impairment and admitted to consuming several alcoholic beverages. Officer Pifer administered standardized field sobriety tasks. Based on observations of the vessel in motion, personal contact with the operator, and the operator's performance on the field sobriety tasks, Officer Pifer placed the operator under arrest for BUI. The operator agreed to provide a breath sample and the results were 0.169 blood alcohol content and 0.173 blood alcohol content. The operator was transported to the Okaloosa County Jail where the intake process was completed.

Officers Bartlett and Pifer were on vessel patrol in the Crab Island area and saw a 25-foot pontoon boat in violation of the idle speed/no wake zone. The officers stopped the vessel to address the violation. During the safety inspection, Officer Bartlett instructed the operator to locate and retrieve the required life jackets. The operator hesitated to the response and had a hard time maintaining his balance while walking around the pontoon vessel. In communication with the operator about his daily activities, Officer Bartlett saw he had slurred speech and continued to have a delayed response while answering simple questions. The operator agreed to perform field sobriety tasks (FST). The results from the FST showed indicators of impairment. The operator was arrested for BUI. The operator agreed to provide a breath sample and the results were 0.164 blood alcohol content and 0.153 blood alcohol content. The operator was transported to the Okaloosa County Jail where the intake process was completed.

Officers Corbin and Henderson were on vessel patrol when they stopped a personal watercraft (PWC) for careless operation and violation of the idle speed/no wake zone at Crab Island. The PWC was operating without due regard for the other boating traffic and swimmers. Officer Corbin determined the PWC was a rental. The operator was unable to locate the required safety equipment for the PWC. While speaking with the operator the officer detected a strong odor of an unknown alcoholic beverage coming from his breath. Based on the operation of the PWC, operator unable to locate safety equipment and the apparent consumption of an alcoholic beverage, Officer Corbin asked the operator to perform field sobriety tasks (FST). The operator had indicators of

impairment from the FST and was arrested for BUI. The operator refused to provide a breath sample. The operator was transported to the Okaloosa County Jail where the intake process was completed. This individual had two prior DUI arrest/convictions in 2015.

Officer Corbin and Henderson received information of a hit and run boating accident in Shalimar from the U.S. Coast Guard Station Destin. Information received indicated a vessel struck a neighbor's dock and left the scene. Officer Jarvis went by land to interview the witness and obtain a sworn statement. Officers Corbin and Henderson arrived on scene by vessel. Within a short period of time, the officers began to hear a loud vessel motor being revved up nearby. They began to travel toward the sound when they saw a red navigational light on a vessel not moving. They continued to hear the vessel's motor rev up to the point it sounded like it was going to combust and traveled toward the red navigational light. They could also smell a strong odor of burnt gasoline and oil. The officers pulled alongside the vessel and saw one single occupant/operator on the boat. Also, they saw a fresh striking mark (damage) and missing chrome trim on the port bow of the vessel. Further, numerous items in the vessel were scattered across the deck and inside the cuddy cabin. Throughout Officer Corbin's communication with the operator the operator showed indicators of impairment. The operator refused to perform field sobriety tasks and was arrested for BUI. The operator was transported to the Okaloosa County Jail where the intake process was completed. The boating accident is still under investigation.

Officers Bartlett and Pifer were on vessel patrol conducting boating safety inspections at Crab Island. The officers saw a double decker pontoon being operated in violation of the idle speed/no wake zone. A vessel stop was conducted for a safety inspection and to address the violation. There were 13 people onboard. During Officer Bartlett's communication with the operator he saw indicators of impairment with his speech and movement around the vessel. The operator agreed to perform field sobriety tasks (FST). The results of the FST showed indicators of impairment. The operator was arrested for BUI. The operator provided a breath sample resulting in 0.150 blood alcohol content and 0.150 blood alcohol content. The operator was transported to the Okaloosa County Jail where the intake process was completed.

Officer Pifer was on vehicle patrol conducting fisheries inspections at Marler Park. The officer saw an individual in the process of trailering his vessel. In communication with the individual the officer determined there were harvested fish on the boat. The fisheries inspection revealed an undersized red grouper, an undersized red snapper and undersized vermilion snapper. The individual was cited and issued a notice to appear citation for the undersized red grouper and written warning for undersized red snapper/vermilion snapper.

Officers Corbin and Henderson were on vessel patrol in the Destin Pass conducting boating safety and resource protection inspections. The officers saw a boat returning from the Gulf of Mexico displaying rods and reels. The officers stopped the vessel and conducted a safety inspection. During the inspection, the officers determined the vessel

was returning from fishing trip. The fisheries inspection revealed an undersized cobia. The operator was cited and issued a notice to appear citation.

WAKULLA COUNTY

Officers Hughes and Korade were on water patrol in federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico south of Wakulla County when they saw a fishing vessel approximately 9.5 nautical miles offshore. They made contact and conducted a resource inspection and found them in possession of an undersized gag grouper. The subject was advised that a summary settlement would be filed against him with NOAA for the violation.

Officer Schulz was on foot patrol at the St. Marks Lighthouse when he saw several subjects wade fishing from the jetties. He met with them as they were walking back to their vehicle and conducted a resource inspection, which revealed an oversized red drum. The subject that claimed ownership of the fish was cited for possession of oversized red drum.

WALTON COUNTY

Officer Tison received a complaint of an individual killing an alligator. There were two witnesses who provided statements explaining that they had seen a man kill an alligator the previous weekend. The suspect was not personally known by the witnesses, but they had heard someone call him by his first name. A week-long investigation ensued, and through social media, the suspect's identity was revealed. An interview of the suspect was conducted and he admitted to killing the alligator and also provided a sworn written statement stating that the witness's accounts were true. The subject was charged for illegally killing an American alligator.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

JACKSON

On Thursday, members from the Northwest Region attended the landowners conference in Marianna held at Chipola College. Major Duval and Captain Lee gave a presentation on services provided by the Division of Law Enforcement, along with the contact information of local supervisors and officers from the area. Approximately 60 landowners from six counties in the Northwest Region attended the workshop. Lunch was provided by Farm Credit of Northwest Florida and members had the opportunity to sit with stakeholders over lunch to discuss all things FWC.

WALTON COUNTY

Officer Tison conducted a public outreach event at the First United Methodist Church of DeFuniak Springs. There were about 15 people in attendance and Officer Tison

provided information on boating safety, legal updates regarding recreational saltwater fishing, and a basic overview of the daily duties of an FWC officer.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROL FEDERAL WATERS

While aboard the offshore patrol vessel Fincat, Officers Cushing, Clark, Canfield, Garrison and Land proactively patrolled federal waters conducting numerous offshore patrol missions. Over several days and numerous inspections, the team documented many violations highlighted by two cases of over the daily bag limit of red snapper, two cases of failure to land red snapper in whole condition, possession of undersized red drum and harvest of gray triggerfish during closed season.

While aboard the offshore patrol vessel Intrepid, Lieutenant Marlow, Investigator Weis, Officers Nelson and Ramos patrolled federal waters throughout the week conducting numerous offshore patrols. The team discovered multiple violations to include two cases of over the bag limit of red snapper, two cases of undersized red snapper, two cases of using reef fish as bait, two cases of harvesting greater amberjack during closed season, harvesting gray triggerfish during closed season, undersized vermilion snapper and a charter fishing vessel operating without a valid reef fish permit and no charter permit.

While aboard the offshore patrol vessel Intrepid, Lieutenant Marlow and Officers Boyd, Nelson and Richardson were on patrol in federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico south of Gulf County. They received information of a commercial longline vessel fishing in a restricted area for reef fish harvest. The officers travelled 70 miles and located the vessel in the restricted area fishing. The vessel had a significant amount of reef fish aboard. The fish, gear and venue were documented and federal and state officers met the vessel at the dock the following day to further document their reef fish harvest. The fish were seized by the federal officer.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

JEFFERSON COUNTY

Lieutenant Wass de Czege participated in two summer camp events at the Beau Turner Youth Conservation Center. He taught the laws portion of the subject safety course to the 15 youths in attendance. After the law presentation, he went to the fish camp area and gave a talk about boating safety to the 15 kids present.

Officer Stefanie Wilcox and Lieutenant Albert Wass de Czege participated in the 68th annual Watermelon Festival Parade in Monticello. They pulled an airboat through the parade and threw candy to awaiting children along the route. The Watermelon Festival takes place annually on the 3rd weekend in June. The weeklong event includes pageants, a car show, a rodeo, booths and several other events.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

CASES

SUWANNEE COUNTY

Officer Boone received information and located a 6-foot alligator in Branford Springs at Ivey Park that showed signs of being fed. The alligator had little fear of Officer Boone and approached him several times while working the area. Officer Boone contacted a local trapper and obtained a permit through SNAP. Officer Boone and the trapper removed the alligator from the area. Officers continue to investigate the illegal feeding of this alligator.

TAYLOR COUNTY

Taylor County officers worked a target enforcement patrol (TEA) along the Taylor County Coastline. Aviation assisted with a helicopter due to heavy weekend boating activity for the scallop season. Officers targeted boating safety, divers down device violations, and resource inspections. Officers addressed numerous boating safety and divers down device violations. Several resource cases were made to include scallop double-dipping, filleting trout at sea, and offshore reef fish violations. Five resource citations, 5 uniform boating citations and 28 written warnings were issued.

Officer Wilder was on patrol in Keaton Beach when he approached a vessel with two occupants on board actively fishing. They were found in possession of five spotted sea trout. Four of the trout were undersized and neither person had a valid fishing license. Citations were issued.

UNION/BRADFORD COUNTY

Officers Burnsed and Fanelli were working a hunting club targeting illegal deer dog running. After hearing a dog race, they located the owners of the hunting dogs. The subjects caught the dogs as they came out onto a hunting club road behind fresh deer tracks where deer had just crossed the road. The officers found where the owners had put the dogs out on fresh deer tracks on another road. Both subjects were cited for running deer during the closed season.

Lieutenant Douglas, Officers Burnsed, Fanelli, Izsak, Lee, and Bryan responded to a call for assistance regarding an escaped inmate from New River Institution. The officers provided ATV patrol, as well as foot patrol in helping with locating the escaped prisoner. The escaped prisoner was found the next day.

GILCHRIST COUNTY

Officer Sheffield received information that a subject picked a gopher tortoise up from the side of a road in Gilchrist County. Officer Sheffield contacted the subject and discovered

he was in possession of a gopher tortoise. The subject was subsequently issued a notice to appear for the violation and the tortoise was returned alive to the wild.

NORTHEAST REGION

CASES

BREVARD COUNTY

Officers Eller and Hallsten were on federal water patrol outside of Port Canaveral. While offshore, they approached a vessel being operated in an unusual manner. As the officers got closer they noticed one male and two females onboard along with an assortment of dive and spear fishing gear. When the occupants noticed the officers, the male signaled something to one of the females and she threw a towel over a large fish box on the bow and sat on it. Officer Eller boarded the vessel to conduct a fisheries inspection and he asked the captain if they had any fish onboard the vessel. The captain pointed to three mangrove snapper lying on the back deck of the vessel and insisted that was all they had. When Officer Eller asked if there were any fish in the fish box on the bow both female occupants immediately turned and stared at the captain in silence. The captain was extremely hesitant to answer. Officer Eller eventually lifted the lid of the fish box and discovered a very large spiny lobster. Officer Eller continued to search through the fish box and at the bottom, underneath all the bags of ice he also retrieved two red snapper. Both species are out of season during this time of year. The captain of the vessel was charged accordingly.

Officers Eller and Hallsten were making their way back to Port Canaveral after working offshore. As they approached Port Canaveral, both officers identified a vessel full of fishing equipment moving extremely slowly back to port. Noticing that the vessel did not have any lines in the water, this behavior appeared out of the ordinary. A salt water fisheries inspection of the vessel revealed an undersized cobia onboard. It is illegal to land or possess a cobia in Florida waters less than 33 inches. The subjects were interviewed and the individual who caught the fish was identified. He was cited accordingly.

Officer Eller was on his way to Port Canaveral to go on water patrol when a pickup truck on Interstate 95 swerved multiple times to either side of its lane of travel. Officer Eller saw the truck swerve to its left going over the alert strips and then again back to its right, crossing three lanes of traffic and sending the other unsuspecting vehicles into Officer Eller's direction. As the pickup truck made it into the far-right lane it merged into another vehicle causing it to be sent off the roadway and into the grass. Officer Eller immediately conducted a traffic stop. Upon stopping the vehicle, the occupant began throwing empty beer cans out the passenger window. The occupant displayed several cues of heavy intoxication and performed poorly on standard field sobriety exercises. He was arrested and cited for driving under the influence (DUI) and numerous traffic violations.

Officer Hallsten was conducting patrols within Port Canaveral when he conducted a fisheries inspection on a commercial fishing vessel returning to the port. He discovered 16 sharks that had their fins removed prior to being landed. He was able to ascertain that the sharks were taken lawfully and the remains of the sharks were also on board. Citations were issued accordingly for failure to land in whole condition.

Officers Balgo and Humphrey received a complaint about an individual in possession of alligator at a residence. After a short interview with the man, he admitted to having the alligator. The man further stated he caught the alligator and then transported it to his residence. The alligator was removed and relocated. The subject was issued a citation for possession of American alligator.

Officers Dubose and Matthews conducted surveillance on a group of men fishing at Sebastian Inlet State Park late at night. They saw fish being taken, bagged, and placed into the rocks. While Officer Dubose approached the men to conduct a resource inspection, Officer Matthews stayed concealed to observe them. After being alerted to Officer Dubose's presence, one of the men threw two bags into the Sebastian Inlet. Other bags next to the men were recovered and revealed two snook taken out of season. After speaking with the men and issuing them citations for the take of snook out of season, the four men refused to sign their citations. All four were then placed under arrest for the take of snook out of season, refusal to allow inspection, and refusal to sign their citations.

LAKE COUNTY

Officers Dias and Fahnestock were patrolling the Ocala National Forest when they saw three subjects riding ATVs on a closed road. They conducted a stop and a subsequent consensual search of the subjects. The search revealed less than 20 grams of cannabis and drug paraphernalia. The subjects were cited appropriately for the violations.

ORANGE COUNTY

Officers Teal and Fahnestock were conducting resource inspections at John's Lake where they encountered a man fishing. A resource inspection of the subject's cooler revealed four black bass over the 16-inch maximum size limit. The subject was cited appropriately and the oversized fish were returned to the water.

MARION COUNTY

Officers conducted proactive bear patrols in neighborhoods that generate a high volume of calls for service. The officers were passing out information pertaining to living with bears and checking for compliance of securing attractants in a neighborhood in the south end of the county. Officers Rice and Fahnestock were approaching a house to contact the residents when they saw a car in the yard that was running and had an occupant in the driver seat. When the officers approached the vehicle, the occupant

exited the car. The officers could smell a strong odor of cannabis coming from the vehicle when the driver got out. A search of the vehicle revealed a plastic bag with cannabis and crack cocaine that was packaged in ten individual small bags. The subject was arrested and booked into the jail for possession of cannabis under 20 grams and possession of cocaine with the intent to sell.

While on water patrol on Lake Weir, Officers Rice and Fahnestock stopped a vessel for a safety inspection. The vessel had nine persons on board and was not displaying a boating safety decal. During the stop, the officers detected the odor of an alcoholic beverage coming from the operator and saw signs of impairment. Officer Fahnestock administered field sobriety tasks and determined that the operator's normal faculties were impaired. The operator was arrested for boating under the influence (BUI) and transported to the Marion County Jail. At the jail, the subject refused to provide a breath sample.

VOLUSIA COUNTY

Officers Goodreau and Malicoat were on water patrol in Oak Hill conducting resource inspections of recreational and commercial fishing activities. One adult male was issued a criminal notice to appear for possession of under the legal-size limit of spotted seatrout. Another adult male was issued a criminal notice to appear for possession of egg bearing blue crabs. Other violations consisted of restricted speed zones violations, improperly marked recreational blue crab traps and possession of out of season stone crabs.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

VOLUSIA COUNTY

Northeast Region officers responded to assist with a search and rescue in Tiger Bay State Forest when a female called 911 and reported her vehicle had become stuck and she was lost in the forest. FWC patrol officers, the Northeast Region Special Operations Group (NESOG) team and K9 units assisted the Volusia County Sheriff's Office and the Volusia County Fire Department in the four-day search. The subject was found alive and taken to a local hospital for evaluation.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

BREVARD COUNTY

Officer Hallsten conducted an outreach at a local church's vacation bible school. He showed the school-aged kids and staff a live alligator. Topics of discussion included alligator growth rates, the harmful effects of feeding wild alligators, and how to properly interact with alligators in the wild. There were approximately 300 people in attendance.

Port Canaveral conducted its first Port Canaveral Subjects Workshop at Seafood Atlantic in the Port. FWC Biologist Hart, NOAA Officer Boots, FWC Captain Bowlin, FWC Lieutenants Bonds and Lee, and FWC Officers Eller and Hallsten facilitated the event. Local stakeholders from the fishing industry also assisted in the workshop by providing the venue, advertising, and facilitation. Over 45 stakeholders attended and engaged in the meeting. Multiple Port Canaveral issues were discussed to include state and federal law enforcement efforts, health of the fishery, licensing issues, federal rules and allocation, and best management practices. This meeting will be held quarterly at the request of the fishing industry in Port Canaveral to continue to build relationships and address hot topics and rule changes.

SOUTHWEST REGION

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

While on water patrol at the Port Tampa Bay spoil islands, a Critical Wildlife Area (CWA) for nesting shorebirds that is posted “No Trespassing,” Officer Wilkins saw two men walking along the spoil island and approached them to address the violation. He told them they were not allowed to be on the island and pointed out the signs designating it as a no trespassing area. The men stated they saw the signs and knew they weren’t supposed to be there, but were looking for fossils. Officer Wilkins cited both men for trespassing and escorted them off the island.

Officer Godfrey was patrolling the Alafia Banks CWA, also known as Bird Island, and saw two subjects who had entered the restricted area with their vessel. The subjects had passed numerous signs warning not to enter and entered the area which has an abundant number of nesting shorebirds. The subjects were cited accordingly for their violations.

Lieutenant Van Trees and Officer Wilkins had two jet skis stopped at the Courtney Campbell Causeway boat ramp when another boat violated the slow speed zone and waked the officer’s vessel. Lieutenant Van Trees contacted the subject, who had now docked his vessel, to address the slow speed violation and the issue of waking the officers while they had other vessels stopped. The operator of the vessel apologized for the violation and tried walking away with a beach bag in his hand. The operator was extremely nervous and kept asking to leave to retrieve his registration from his car. Lieutenant Van Trees asked the subject if he had anything illegal in his bag and if he could look inside. The operator opened the bag and quickly closed it, but Lieutenant Van Trees saw a jar of marijuana inside. Officer Wilkins conducted seated field sobriety exercises with the subject due to the subject’s behavior. The operator performed poorly and was subsequently arrested. He was booked into the Hillsborough County Jail for felony possession of marijuana, possession of drug paraphernalia, failure to transfer title, boating under the influence and cited for refusal to submit to breath/urine/blood sample.

While on land patrol near the Hillsborough River, Officers Martinez and Litherland conducted a resource inspection on two subjects who were fishing the river bank. At the completion of the inspection, the officers found that one subject possessed an out of season soft shell turtle. The subject was cited accordingly for the violation.

Officers Martinez and Litherland were on land patrol at Bullfrog Creek when they stopped three subjects to conduct a resource inspection. The individuals stated the only fish they had were in the back of a car and showed the officers a bucket of legal fish. While the officers were checking the fish, Officer Martinez heard fish flopping around in the center part of the car. Officer Martinez found two undersized snook hidden in the car. After being read their Miranda Rights, one subject admitted to cast netting the snook. The subject was cited for possession of undersized and out of season snook and taking snook by illegal method.

While on patrol at Williams Park Boat Ramp, Officer Rorer saw a vessel approach the docks. The operator of the vessel appeared to see Officer Rorer and switched vessel operation with one of the other occupants. At the dock, Officer Rorer introduced herself as a FWC Officer and told the vessel occupants she was going to conduct a boating safety inspection. The operator advised he was dropping one of the occupants off so they could back the trailer down the ramp. Officer Rorer advised the operator they could load the vessel before she conducted the safety inspection. After they dropped one of the occupants off at the dock to back the trailer in, the vessel exited the area and headed east on the Alafia River away from the boat ramp. The individual that was dropped off got in their vehicle and left the boat ramp. FWC Officers Messman, Caldwell and Rorer searched the area by land and from a patrol vessel and located the vessel, truck and occupants at a local bar east of the boat ramp. Since the operators of the vessel and truck were not free to leave because Officer Rorer advised them she would be conducting a boating safety inspection, they were cited for interfering with the duties of a FWC Officer. The operator of the vessel admitted to leaving the boat ramp to avoid the boating safety inspection and a possible BUI investigation. He was arrested and transported to the Hillsborough County Jail.

LEE COUNTY

Officer Bell and Officer Stapleton conducted a fisheries inspection on a chartered vessel approximately 13 miles off shore of Sanibel. During the inspection, it was discovered the charter captain did not have a valid federal reef fish permit for keeping mangrove snapper. NOAA was notified and charges are pending.

Officer Winton and Lieutenant Spoede stopped a vessel violating a manatee zone. It was determined that the vessel did not have a hull identification number (HIN) and was improperly titled/registered. An investigation was conducted, at which time the officers discovered additional violations. Officer Winton recently concluded the investigation and is charging the defendant with violations relating to title fraud, operating a vessel with no HIN, purchasing a vessel without a title, improper use of a transporter license plate, and misuse of 911.

Officers Winton and Hazelwood were on late night vessel patrol in the Charlotte Harbor Buffer Preserve State Park when they discovered two subjects camping on an island, a violation of state park rules. Upon contacting the subjects, the officers noted suspicious items around the campsite and asked for consent to search the tents. The search revealed drugs including crack cocaine, marijuana, prescription drugs, and drug paraphernalia. It was also determined that the female subject had provided a false name and had an active arrest warrant out of Lee County. The subjects were arrested and booked into the Lee County Jail on multiple felony and misdemeanor charges.

Officer Winton was on land patrol in North Fort Myers late at night when a vehicle passed him with no headlights on at a high rate of speed. As the vehicle approached an intersection, it attempted to turn at approximately 45 miles per hour, causing it to spin out of control and strike a pedestrian crossing signal, throwing the signal into oncoming traffic. The vehicle attempted to leave the scene, at which time Officer Winton conducted a traffic stop. A DUI investigation revealed that the subject's normal faculties were impaired and he was placed under arrest. Officer Perry responded to the scene to assist with the investigation. The subject repeatedly disobeyed officers' commands and struggled with officers as they tried to lead him into the jail. The subject was cited for DUI, DUI property damage, and resisting an officer without violence.

Officer Winton was on marine fisheries patrol in Matlacha when he saw a fishing vessel returning to the boat ramp. Officer Winton approached the vessel to conduct a fisheries inspection, at which time the sole occupant of the vessel began throwing fish out of the boat. Officer Winton commanded the subject to stop, but he continued to throw fish into the water. The subject was detained and was found that he still possessed two undersized mangrove snapper. The subject was issued a notice to appear for possession of undersized mangrove snapper and obstructing an FWC inspection.

Officer Winton was on patrol at a boat ramp in Matlacha when he saw a vessel being loaded onto a trailer. Officer Winton noticed that the subject had difficulty loading the vessel, causing damage to both the vessel and the trailer. Once the vessel was pulled out of the water, a BUI investigation was conducted. It was determined that the subject had been operating a vessel while his normal faculties were impaired, for which he was placed under arrest. At the jail, the subject, who was under 21, refused to provide a breath sample. The subject was booked into the Lee County Jail on charges of boating under the influence.

MANATEE COUNTY

Officers Gonzales, Dalton and Lieutenant Hinds were on water patrol in the area of Long Boat Pass when they noticed a vessel operating with what appeared to be a child under the age of six not wearing a life jacket. The officers stopped the vessel to perform a boating safety inspection and confirmed the child was only five. The officers then noticed the operator of the vessel may be under the influence of alcohol. Officer Gonzales investigated further to determine the operator's level of impairment and

concluded that he was under the influence of alcohol. The operator was placed under arrest for boating under the influence and taken to the Manatee County Jail.

PASCO COUNTY

Officer Specialist Balfour and Lieutenant Parisoe were on water patrol in the Gulf Harbors area when they saw a person snorkeling in the water. The officers did not see a divers down device displayed, so they approached the individual to discuss the violation. During the conversation, Officer Balfour determined the individual was spear fishing the area. A resource inspection revealed the diver was in possession of numerous sheepshead. Several of the sheepshead were found to be under the legal-size limit. The diver received a citation and several warnings for the violations and the fish were seized as evidence.

PINELLAS COUNTY

While on water patrol, Officers Bibeau and Martinez saw an individual actively fishing from a vessel underneath a bridge. The officers stopped the vessel to conduct a fisheries inspection. They asked the individual if he had caught any fish and he told the officers that he had caught some grunts. Officer Bibeau conducted the fisheries inspection and located 2 undersized gag grouper, 3 undersized mangrove snapper and an undersized sheepshead. Officer Bibeau issued the individual a misdemeanor citation for possession of undersized gag grouper and warnings for the other fisheries violations.

While on land patrol, Officer Bibeau and Officer Litherland saw an individual actively fishing from the shoreline. The officers watched the individual fish from a concealed location and contacted him as he was preparing to leave the area. Officer Litherland conducted a fisheries inspection and located 14 mangrove snapper, 5 of which were undersized. He issued the individual a misdemeanor citation for harvesting over the daily bag limit of mangrove snapper and a warning for the other fisheries violation.

While conducting resource inspections at the North Skyway Fishing Pier, Officer Pettifer saw an individual close a cooler in the bed of a truck as he approached. The individual said he only caught some Spanish mackerel. An inspection of his cooler revealed a 14-inch undersized gag grouper in a plastic bag. The individual was cited for possession of undersized gag grouper.

Lieutenant Laskowski, Investigator Dallarosa and Officer Pettifer responded to the report of a hit and run single vessel accident with injuries in Boca Ciega Bay. Officer Pettifer located the injured victim at a local hospital based on information provided by the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office. He was able to determine the address and location of the vessel and the operator. Investigator Dallarosa and Lieutenant Laskowski responded to the address and interviewed the operator and other occupant of the vessel. The operator stated he lost steering and struck a bridge. Both the operator and injured occupant were ejected from the vessel. A good Samaritan transported the

injured occupant to the hospital. The operator recovered his vessel and drove it to his house and did not report the accident. He was cited for leaving the scene of an accident involving property damage and injury.

SARASOTA COUNTY

Officer Nicholas Ridgway was on water patrol in the area of the Siesta Key Bridge. He performed a fisheries inspection on a vessel that was tied to the fender system of the bridge. During the inspection, he saw signs indicating that the captain of the vessel may be under the influence of alcohol. Officer Ridgway investigated further to determine if the captain was impaired and upon the conclusion of his investigation, the captain was placed under arrest and taken to the Sarasota County Jail for boating under the influence.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROLS

PASCO COUNTY

A multi-agency detail was completed with the Pasco County Sheriff's Office and Tarpon Springs Police Department. The agencies were targeting boating under the influence violations. During the detail, Officer Specialist Pulaski saw a vessel violate an idle speed zone. He conducted a vessel stop and noticed indicators of impairment by the operator. The subject was arrested for BUI and later provided a breath sample of .156 / .153. The joint detail resulted in two arrests for BUI, one warrant arrest, and one medical emergency response.

SOUTH REGION A

CASES

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officer Brodbeck was on patrol when a complaint was received by FWC dispatch regarding several individuals cast-netting snook at the Jupiter Inlet. Officer Brodbeck, along with Officers Godward and Pecko responded to the area and conducted surveillance. Subjects matching the provided description were observed and contact was made when they returned to the parking area. Two undersized and out of season snook were found along with a cast net. One subject received two misdemeanor citations for possession of undersized snook and snook out of season. A second subject received a citation for no valid saltwater shoreline license. The fish were photographed for evidence and returned alive to the water.

Officer Brodbeck was on patrol at Phil Foster Park late at night conducting surveillance. The officer saw a boat with fishing equipment in plain view return to shore and drop an individual off with a large backpack. Officer Brodbeck contacted the individual as well as

the vessel operator. Inside the backpack were 15 snapper of several species, including 7 undersized mutton snapper. The operator took responsibility for the undersized fish and spontaneously stated that he had an upcoming court date for the same violation. Officers Spradling and Godward arrived on scene to assist. The undersized fish were photographed and seized for evidence. The operator of the vessel was issued a misdemeanor citation for possession of undersized mutton snapper.

Officer Brodbeck and Officer Stone were on patrol in the J.W. Corbett WMA when they saw a vehicle driving erratically. They stopped the vehicle to determine if the occupants had a day use pass. Open containers of alcohol were in plain view in the vehicle. During an inspection of the vehicle, Officer Stone located marijuana in two bags totaling 30 grams. Both subjects were issued misdemeanor citations for possession of marijuana and possession of alcohol by a person under the age of 21. The drugs were photographed and seized for evidence.

Officer Brodbeck was on patrol in Loxahatchee when he saw a suspicious vehicle with an expired tag. When checked through law enforcement databases, the tag came back to a different vehicle. A traffic stop was initiated, but the vehicle continued another two miles down the road before stopping. Officer Brodbeck saw marijuana scattered throughout the vehicle. The driver had a revoked license with habitual status as well as 10 prior convictions for driving while license suspended or revoked. Additionally, the driver had a local warrant for failure to appear for DWLSR. During a search of the vehicle, a bag containing oxycodone pills was located. The subject was placed under arrest and transported to the Palm Beach County Jail for felony DWLSR, possession of a controlled substance without a prescription, possession of less than 20 grams of marijuana, attaching tag not assigned, as well as the active warrant.

MAJOR WILDLIFE ASSISTANCE

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officer Schroer responded to a caller advising he found an injured Coopers hawk under a tree in his front yard. The hawk was active and appeared to have an injured right wing and was unable to fly away when approached. Officer Schroer retrieved the hawk and transported it to a local rehabilitation center for treatment.

Lieutenant Hankinson and the Loggerhead Marine Life Center transported a rehabilitated leatherback sea turtle offshore. The leatherback sea turtle was released back to the wild in a favorable environment.

SOUTH REGION B

CASES

MIAMI DADE COUNTY

While on land-based water patrol near the entrance of Black Point Park, Officer Cartaya and Officer Fernandez saw a subject walking out of the park with a bucket, cooler and fishing poles. They approached the subject to conduct a saltwater fisheries inspection and discovered 4 schoolmaster snapper and 1 barracuda which were undersized. The subject was cited accordingly.

While on water patrol, Officer Blanco and Lieutenant Reynaud stopped a vessel to conduct a safety inspection. The operator had watery glassy bloodshot eyes, was drooling and spitting while he talked and had a strong odor of an alcoholic beverage emitting from his breath. He was also yelling insults at the officers and behaving in a disorderly manner. The officers requested the operator to board their vessel to conduct standard field sobriety tasks (SFSTs). After conducting SFSTs, the defendant was placed under arrest for boating under the influence and disorderly intoxication. The subject unsuccessfully attempted to push Officer Blanco off the patrol vessel into the water. The subject was cited for assault on a law enforcement officer and boating under the influence. He provided two breath samples of .178 and .174.

Officer Perez and Officer Gomez were on water patrol when they saw a vessel with fishing rods actively fishing. A resource inspection revealed possession of multiple undersized mahi.

MONROE COUNTY

Investigator Mattson and Officer Rhoda were on water patrol working a BUI detail around Whale Harbor Sandbar in Islamorada. They saw a man jump off a 15-foot skiff in the congested channel. They approached the vessel to check on the welfare of the occupants who appeared extremely impaired. The operator agreed to field sobriety tests after showing signs of impairment and performed poorly. He agreed to submit to a breath sample which resulted in .139 BAC & .126 BAC. He was arrested and taken to the Plantation Key Jail.

The Interceptor team patrolled from Snake Creek to Carysfort Reef in the Upper Keys. Officers saw a large supply vessel operating very close to the reef line and marked the vessel on the radar inside of the FKNMS ATBA boundary line. The crew investigated and confirmed the vessel was being operated within the FKNMS. The captain of the vessel was contacted and informed of the violation. All required information for the ATBA violation was obtained and documented. A citation was written and the case is being turned over to NOAA.

Officers Conrad, Garcia, and Petru were patrolling around Hen and Chickens Sanctuary Preservation Area. They saw a vessel inside the SPA fishing, which is prohibited. Upon inspection, the subject was found to be in possession of 13 undersized yellowtail snapper, 1 undersized queen snapper, 3 undersized gray triggerfish, and two different species of marine life not landed alive. The subject was also found to be over the aggregate bag limit for snapper, which is 10. The defendant was cited accordingly.

COLLIER COUNTY

Officers Arbogast and Kleis, along with Lieutenant Sushil were patrolling Collier County's local waterways participating in Operation Dry Water, focusing their enforcement efforts on BUI violations. While assisting the USCG with engine problems on the side of a channel, both patrol vessels' blue lights were on to encourage passing boaters to slow down. A vessel with one male occupant onboard passed in close proximity without slowing down, producing a large enough wake to disrupt the mechanics on the USCG vessel. The officers initiated a vessel stop to conduct a boating safety inspection. During the vessel inspection the operator exhibited signs of impairment and approximately 14 empty beer cans were scattered around the vessel. Officer Arbogast administered SFSTs on the operator and placed the operator under arrest for BUI. The operator was booked into the Naples Jail Center and provided two breath samples of .145 and .158.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROL

MONROE COUNTY

Officers Richards, Foell and Way aboard FWC Offshore Patrol Vessel Trident patrolled South Atlantic federal waters from Key West to the Dry Tortugas. While on patrol, the officers conducted marine fisheries inspections and discovered violations on two commercial snapper-grouper vessels. Upon inspection, the first vessel was found to be in possession of an undersized black grouper and was using yellowtail snapper, not in whole condition, as bait. The second vessel contained approximately 700 pounds of reef fish species. Upon inspection, the vessel contained 19 mutton snapper, putting them over their three person commercial trip-limit. The product was seized, sold and all subjects were cited accordingly.