

FWC

Division of Law Enforcement Weekly Report



July 27, 2018 through August 2, 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

Officers Hayes and Scott were on vessel patrol in St. Andrews Bay when they checked a vessel coming in from offshore. The officers found that the operator was in possession of three undersized triggerfish during the closed season. Citations were issued for the violations.

JACKSON COUNTY

Lieutenant Allen was on patrol near a landowner's cornfield when he heard a shot from the roadway at the other end of the field. He headed toward the sound of the shot and as he neared the road, he saw an 8-point buck running from the direction where the shot was heard. Once Lieutenant Allen reached the roadway, he saw a truck driving very slowly. He contacted the driver who said, "I just shot at a deer." Officer Little responded to assist. The officers interviewed the driver who stated he was driving down the road when he saw the deer, pulled out his pistol and shot at it. The officers seized a .380 pistol and cited the subject with attempting to take deer during the closed season and road hunting.

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Officer Clark and Investigator Molnar conducted a vessel stop on the east side of Crab Island for violation of the idle speed zone. When the officers made contact, the operator stated he consumed 12 beers throughout the day. The operator agreed to perform field

sobriety tasks and at the conclusion of the tasks, Investigator Molnar arrested the operator for BUI. The operator was booked into the Okaloosa County Jail. He was also issued citations for refusal to submit a breath sample, insufficient number of PDF's and violation of the idle speed zone.

FWC received a complaint from Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office regarding an individual in violation of Destin Executive Airport's airspace near Henderson Beach State Park. Officer Wilkenson and Okaloosa County deputies responded. It was determined an individual in the park had launched and landed his power paraglider from within the state park. The individual was cited for the state park violation of launching/landing an aircraft in a state park. Destin Executive Airport tower was also provided the subject's information for possible FAA violations.

Officers Pifer and Brooks were on vessel patrol when they were notified by FWC dispatch of a hit and run boating accident in the Destin Pass near Norriego Point. The officers located the victim vessel/operator who provided a picture of the vessel/operator who struck him. The registration on the suspect vessel returned to a livery in the Destin Harbor. The officers contacted the employees of the livery who advised the operator returned the personal watercraft (PWC) and left. The employees advised the operator did not mention being in an accident. A large crack in the hull of the PWC was located and an employee called the operator and instructed him to return to the livery because of the damage. When the operator returned, he denied striking another vessel but stated he hit some rocks. The operator of the victim vessel provided a name and phone number for a Destin lifeguard who witnessed the accident. The lifeguard was contacted who later provided a written statement, which was consistent with the victim's statement. Based on all information gathered, the operator of the at fault vessel was cited for leaving the scene of an accident.

Officers Pifer and Clark were on vessel patrol when they saw a vessel traveling on plane in the idle speed zone across the north channel and failing to give way to vessels traveling within the channel. The vessel nearly caused a collision with a center console vessel. The officers initiated a vessel stop to address the violations. During a boating safety inspection, the operator showed signs of impairment and Officer Clark administered standardized field sobriety tasks. While the operator was boarding the officer's vessel, the operator attempted to use a styrofoam cooler as a step crushing the cooler lid. Based on observations of the vessel in motion, personal contact with the operator, and the operator's performance on the sobriety tasks, the operator was placed under arrest for BUI. The operator agreed to provide a breath sample and the results were 0.155 blood alcohol content and 0.154 blood alcohol content.

Officers Corbin and Long were on vessel patrol at Crab Island conducting boating safety and resource inspections. The officers saw a vessel leave Crab Island which had its motor trimmed up and was being operated in circles. The officers stopped the vessel to conduct a boating safety inspection and ensure the vessel was in good operating condition. As the officers pulled alongside, they advised the operator to put his vessel in neutral. He was slow to respond both vocally and physically. The operator turned to look

in the officer's direction, turned away to avoid eye contact, and continued operating the vessel in a circle. Again, the operator was instructed to place the vessel in neutral and he complied. The operator continued to avoid eye contact with the officers. During the safety inspections, Officer Corbin saw signs of impairment from the operator. The operator agreed to perform field sobriety tasks. Based on the operation of the vessel and the field sobriety tasks, the operator was arrested for BUI. The operator provided a breath sample, resulting in 0.149 blood alcohol content and 0.150 blood alcohol content. The operator was transported to the Okaloosa County Jail.

Officers Corbin and Pifer were on water patrol at Crab Island in Destin conducting boating safety and resource inspections. The officers saw a vessel traveling toward Crab Island with eight individuals on board. All eight subjects appeared to be under the age of 30, including the operator, which would require one of them to have a boater education card. A vessel stop was conducted to check for a boater's education card and to conduct a boating safety inspection. When the operator was asked if he possessed a boater's education card, he stated no. The boating safety inspection revealed that the vessel had an insufficient number of life jackets. Also, alcoholic beverage (beer) was on board the vessel and all individuals were under the age of 21. The operator and a passenger were cited and issued a notice to appear citation for possession of alcohol (under 21). Also, the operator was issued a citation for insufficient number of life jackets.

Officer Wilkenson responded to a complaint involving two unidentified individuals spearfishing under the dock at Marler Park on Okaloosa Island. The complainant stated that he saw the subjects spear several blue crabs and had a stone crab in their possession. After arriving, Officer Wilkenson saw several individuals at a picnic table who were wet and wearing swimming attire. There were two sets of masks on the table along with two homemade spears. There was also a cooler near the picnic table. The officer asked the group if anybody been fishing and they said yes. Upon consent to inspect the cooler/catch, it was determined that all six blue crabs were speared, one of which was an egg-bearing female. The stone crab's claws were detached, and the body was also kept. The stone crab was also determined to be an egg-bearing female. One individual was cited and issued a notice to appear citation for possession of whole stone crabs, harvesting stone crab out of season, and a written warning for removing stone crab claws from an egg-bearing female. The second individual was issued a notice to appear citation for the use of illegal gear (spearing) to harvest blue crabs and for the harvest and possession of an egg-bearing female blue crab.

Officer Pifer conducted a saltwater fisheries and license inspection on a charter fishing vessel that returned to the Destin Harbor. The fisheries inspection revealed six spotted seatrout and one redfish in a fish box. All six-spotted seatrout measured over 20 inches in total length. Each harvester can possess one spotted seatrout over 20 inches. The officer determined there were three paying customers on the fishing trip. The charter boat captain was issued a resource citation for harvesting/possessing over the allowed limit of spotted seatrout over 20 inches in total length.

Officers Corbin and Long were on vessel patrol in the Destin Pass conducting boating safety and resource inspections. The officers saw a vessel returning from offshore into the Destin Pass with fishing equipment displayed and conducted a vessel stop to perform a resource inspection. Officer Corbin asked the operator if they caught any fish. The operator said yes and the fisheries inspection revealed two gray triggerfish were harvested. The operator was cited and issued a notice to appear citation for possession of gray triggerfish out of season.

Officer Maltais was at a local marina and saw a boat return to the dock. The officer saw two male individuals carrying a silver metal cooler from the vessel. Officer Maltais approached the men and asked if they had returned from fishing and they said yes. With consent Officer Maltais lifted the lid and found the contents to be a plastic grocery shopping bag filled with unidentified fish, vermilion snapper and one spade fish, and a layer of ice cubes at the cooler bottom. The officer asked if there were any other fish and both individuals pointed back to the vessel. He located and opened a bag to find six undersized red snapper. The operator was issued a notice to appear citation for possession of red snapper during closed season.

Officer Jarvis was on vessel patrol in the Destin Pass when he saw an Okaloosa County Sheriff's deputy on vessel patrol at the East Jetty. Officer Jarvis saw three males exiting the water with snorkel equipment and climbing up on the jetties. The deputy told Officer Jarvis he just saw all three males spearfishing in the water at the East Jetty. The three males, along with their dive gear and spears, were being detained on the beach by another Okaloosa County Sheriff's deputy. Officer Jarvis determined that one of the individuals was using a five-pronged gig as his spear and the other two were using Hawaiian slings (spears). All three subjects did not have a saltwater fishing license and did not display the required diver's down flag. All three subjects were cited for no fishing license and spearfishing near a jetty. Spearfishing within 100 feet of a jetty less than 1500 yards long from shore is prohibited.

SANTA ROSA COUNTY

Officer Ramos saw a man fishing along the Santa Rosa Sound in Navarre. Officer Ramos saw the subject place something inside his vehicle and then returned to fishing. Officer Ramos conducted a resource inspection, but the man only had a bag of hermit crabs with him. When asked if he had anything in his vehicle, the man said yes and showed the officer some legal fish in a cooler inside his SUV. Officer Ramos saw the edge of a plastic bag protruding from under a blanket inside the subject's vehicle. When Officer Ramos asked what was in the bag the man removed the blanket and several crabs were located, including stone crab. Officer Ramos issued the subject a citation for the taking or possession of stone crab during the closed season.

Officers Lewis, Ramos, and Roberson assisted the Santa Rosa County Sheriff's Office with an aggravated assault that occurred inside Blackwater State Park. Two park patrons got into an argument and one pulled out a pistol and fired a bullet into the ground. The officers assisted in the investigation by collecting evidence and statements

from witnesses of the crime. The Santa Rosa County Sheriff's Office arrested the subject after the investigation.

Officer Hutchinson and K9 Zara responded to a request for help from the Santa Rosa County Sheriff's Office (SRSO) regarding tracking a suspect who ran from a stolen vehicle when deputies attempted to pull it over. Officer Hutchinson helped track the suspect to a residence where the suspect was seen by a citizen leaving the area on foot. Officer Hutchinson and another deputy apprehended the suspect and he was placed under arrest by the SRSO deputy.

WAKULLA COUNTY

Officers Swindell, Hughes and Korade were on water patrol near St. Marks when they saw a vessel returning from fishing offshore. They stopped the vessel and the operator said they had caught a lot of fish and pointed out the compartment where they were located. An inspection of the compartment revealed a total of 50 black sea bass, 46 of which were undersized. The officers also located two undersized gag grouper and one undersized red grouper in the compartment. Officer Hughes also located a bucket near the back of the vessel which contained a shark that had been filleted for bait. All the undersized fish and the shark were seized, and the occupants of the vessel were issued citations for the violations.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

CASES

DUVAL COUNTY

Officer Culbreth was on vessel patrol on the St. Johns River in Duval County when he conducted a boating safety inspection and fisheries inspection on a vessel with three occupants. One of the occupants on board had given Officer Culbreth a fictitious name. After further investigation, it was discovered that this subject had a revoked fishing license. There were also multiple boating safety and vessel violations. The subject was issued a misdemeanor notice to appear for fishing with a revoked fishing license. The subject was also issued a uniform boating citation for no vessel registration on board, and written warnings for failure to transfer registration, expired fire extinguisher, being moored to a navigational marker, and improper display of registration.

ALACHUA COUNTY

While Officer Stanley was working in the Florida Keys he saw a man snorkeling for lobster in the bay off Harbor Cut Bridge. Officer Stanley contacted the man and asked to see the lobster in his bag. Officer Stanley saw four lobster with puncture holes and one lobster under the three inch minimum size. Officer Stanley issued a criminal citation for

illegal method of harvesting lobster and one citation for possession of undersized lobster.

Officers Johnston and Cline provided ground support during a marijuana eradication flight with members of the North Florida HIDTA Task Force. The officers and task force members received information from FWC Officer Troiano regarding an outdoor grow operation in a rural area at the Gilchrist/Alachua County line. With assistance from spotters in an aircraft, Officers Johnston and Cline were able to successfully locate and eradicate roughly 28 marijuana plants from the location provided by Officer Troiano.

Officer Troiano and Officer Drew assisted FHP with four individuals who ran into a wooded area off south Hwy 441 near Micanopy. The individuals fled on foot after crashing a vehicle that was later found to be stolen out of the Gainesville area. After an intense search for several hours the individuals were apprehended walking down a dirt road in the south end of the county.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

DUVAL AND ST. JOHNS COUNTY

Lieutenant Arkin and Officer Schirbock provided a presentation on FWC law enforcement responsibilities, fishing and wildlife to the Aberdeen Homeowners Association. There were approximately 30-35 homeowners in attendance.

NORTHEAST REGION

CASES

PUTNAM COUNTY

Officers Jones, Bernard, and Lieutenant Dickson conducted seafood dealer inspections. This detail concluded with one shop being warned for no freshwater dealer's license, one shop being warned for a recently expired saltwater retail license, and one shop being cited for never having a saltwater retail license, freshwater dealer license, and not maintaining proper records.

VOLUSIA COUNTY

Officers Presser and Sapp were performing resource inspections in New Smyrna Beach when they encountered a man fishing from the shore in the Intracoastal Waterway. The man told the officers all he had caught was a catfish. A resource inspection of his bucket revealed a 16-inch snook that had been scaled and gutted. He was cited for possession of snook during the closed season.

Officers Presser and Sapp stopped at Sunrise Park in Holly Hill to perform a safety inspection on a vessel they saw approaching the public boat ramp from the Intracoastal Waterway. During the safety inspection the operator exhibited signs of impairment. After a boating under the influence (BUI) investigation he was arrested and booked into the Volusia County Jail. The operator refused to provide a breath sample.

BREVARD COUNTY

While on foot patrol at Sebastian Inlet State Park, Officer Dubose saw a man fishing in a remote area of the park. After watching the subject for some time, the officer saw a mesh bag hanging from a tree with several fish inside. The subject admitted that the bag was his and stated that he had an undersized fish inside that he needed to throw back. An inspection revealed one undersized black drum. A citation was issued for the undersized black drum.

Officers Kearney and Matthews were on late night patrol of Sebastian Inlet State Park when they saw a group of men fishing in an area known for snook. After lengthy surveillance the group exited the water and prepared to leave. Officer Kearney approached and conducted a resource inspection. The inspection revealed one twenty-inch out of season snook and two undersized sheepshead. A citation was issued to one man for possession of snook out of season and to the other man for possession of undersized sheepshead.

While on late night patrol at Sebastian Inlet State Park Officer Matthews saw a man running down the north jetty pushing a cart towards the parking lot. The officer revealed himself and asked if he had caught anything. The subject admitted to having a snook in his cart. A citation was issued for possession of snook out of season.

During mini lobster season, Officer Humphrey was working the Port Canaveral boat ramp area when he saw a vessel come into the dock with six men on board and diving gear. A resource inspection of the vessel revealed one egg bearing lobster. One of the divers admitted to taking the lobster and was issued a citation. The lobster was returned to the water alive.

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

Officers Cybula and Johnson were on water patrol in the Sebastian Inlet when they saw a vessel on full plane in a manatee zone. They conducted a vessel stop to address the violation. During the encounter the operator showed several signs of impairment. After performing standardized field sobriety tasks, the operator was arrested for operating a vessel while normal faculties were impaired and was issued a citation for refusal to submit a sample of his breath.

Officer Matthews saw an offshore vessel returning to a boat ramp. He met the vessel at the ramp and conducted a resource inspection. The four men on board the vessel said they were in possession of several spiny lobster due to the mini sport season. An

inspection revealed the men were in possession of thirty legal lobsters and a small bag containing two wrung lobster tails. A citation was issued for possession of wrung tails.

Officers Hallsten and Delano were on vessel patrol near Sebastian Inlet when they conducted a resource inspection on a vessel returning from offshore. During the inspection the operator stated to the officers that his vessel was sinking so he could not stop. One of the officers boarded the vessel as they continued towards land. During the travel to land, an inspection revealed two egg bearing lobsters and one undersized lobster. The officers issued citations for possession of egg bearing and undersized lobster. No signs or evidence of the vessel "sinking" were seen during the contact.

Officer Marroquin was conducting foot patrol along Vero Beach searching for individuals participating in the state lobster mini season, when he saw four individuals smoking cannabis on the beach. Officer Marroquin contacted the individuals and a subsequent search found one of the individuals in possession of another controlled substance without a prescription. An additional individual in the group was also found to have a warrant out of Indian River County. Both subjects were transported and booked into the Indian River County Jail.

Officer Loeffler was conducting fishery inspections during mini lobster season on a vessel returning to Sebastian Inlet. During the inspection he discovered an egg bearing lobster. A citation was issued for possession of egg bearing lobster.

OSCEOLA COUNTY

Captive Wildlife Investigator Saunders received a Wildlife Alert complaint of a subject in possession of an American alligator and a Burmese python in his apartment. The anonymous complainant showed pictures of the animals to Investigator Saunders. Lieutenant Trusley and Investigator Saunders responded to the apartment and the subject admitted to having a small alligator but denied having a python. When confronted with the fact that Investigator Saunders had seen pictures of the snake in the apartment, the suspect admitted to having one and retrieved it from where it was hidden in a pillow case under the bathroom sink. A second alligator was discovered in an aquarium during the inspection. Investigator Saunders issued the subject three misdemeanor charges for possession of an American alligator (times two) and possession of a conditional species without a permit. The subject was also issued five written warnings for sanitation and caging violations.

SOUTHWEST REGION

CASES

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

FWC dispatchers received a call from a person in Manatee County stating he witnessed a subject load an extremely large snook into a red minivan with a yellow canoe strapped to the top and leave the South Skyway rest area. Officer Gonzales from Manatee County called Officer Martinez in Pinellas County, and told him to be on the lookout for the vehicle along the interstate. Officer Martinez checked the vehicle registration from the license plate that was provided to FWC dispatch and learned the suspect lived in Hillsborough County. Officer Martinez called Lieutenant Van Trees and provided Lieutenant Van Trees with a possible address for the suspect. Lieutenant Van Trees arrived at the residence but did not see the red van, so he checked the back yard and saw the van matching the description that was given by the witness. The suspect was unloading his fishing equipment and dive gear when Lieutenant Van Trees approached and introduced himself. The subject said he knew why Lieutenant Van Trees was there and went inside his house and brought out a snook that was over 38" long. During an interview, the suspect told Lieutenant Van Trees that he had shot the snook with his spear gun, and after being questioned by another person, realized the fish was out of season. The subject was cited for possession of an oversize snook, possession of snook out of season, and taking snook by illegal method. He was warned for not having a snook permit.

LEE COUNTY

Officer Winton was on water patrol off the coast of Sanibel when he saw a fishing vessel returning from offshore waters. He conducted a vessel stop and discovered that the operator was in possession of 20 lobster tails that had been wrung, no longer in whole condition, as well as, mahi-mahi that was not in whole condition. Since he was the only person onboard the vessel, he was over the bag limit. The operator of the vessel was cited accordingly.

Officer Winton and Lieutenant Spoede were on federal water patrol when they saw a commercial fishing vessel returning from offshore waters. They conducted a vessel stop and it was determined that the subjects were in possession of one undersized red grouper and lane snapper not in whole condition. The operator of the vessel admitted that he had been using the lane snapper for bait, a violation of federal regulations. The operator of the vessel was cited for the violations.

MANATEE COUNTY

Officer Gonzales was on land patrol around the South Skyway Fishing Pier State Park when he performed a fisheries inspection on a man fishing from the pier. The man stated that he had only caught porgies, but when Officer Gonzales conducted his inspection he found that the subject had 9 mangrove snapper, and eight were undersized. The subject was cited criminally for possession of undersized and over the bag limit of mangrove snapper. He will have to appear in court for his violation.

Officer Davidson was on water patrol around the Palmetto boat ramp. He conducted a boating safety inspection on a vessel returning to the boat ramp. During the inspection,

Officer Davidson noticed that the captain of the vessel seemed to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Officer Davidson performed an investigation to determine the captain's level of impairment. At the end of the investigation, the subject was placed under arrest for boating under the influence of alcohol and taken to the Manatee County Jail.

Officer Dalton was on land patrol around the King Fish Boat Ramp when he stopped and performed a fisheries and boating safety inspection on a vessel returning to the ramp. During the inspection, the subjects on the vessel tried to conceal a 14-inch red grouper on board. After the inspection was over, one of the subjects aboard the vessel was charged criminally with possession of undersized red grouper and will have to appear in court for his violation.

Officers Dalton and Gonzales were on water patrol around Long Boat Pass. They performed a boating safety inspection on a vessel near the pass. During the inspection, the officers felt as though the operator may be under the influence of either drugs or alcohol. Officer Dalton performed an investigation into the level of the operator's impairment and when the investigation was complete, the subject was placed under arrest for boating under the influence. The subject was taken to jail and will have to appear in court for his violation.

PINELLAS COUNTY

Lieutenant Van Trees received a complaint from a citizen who reported that his neighbor was gill netting fish in a freshwater pond behind his house. Lieutenant Van Trees met with the complainant and discovered the subject wasn't gill netting but was stop netting a choke point in between two ponds. Lieutenant Van Trees could see that the suspect's yard backed up to the choke point and saw a green net stretched across the width of the water. He made his way to the suspect's home and was advised by another neighbor that the suspect wouldn't be home for quite a while, but he knew where he could be found. Lieutenant Van Trees went to where the suspect worked and had the man accompany him back to his house to discuss the violation. Once in the back yard, Lieutenant Van Trees saw the stop net and numerous other traps placed in the water. Additional officers arrived to help with evidence and to photograph the scene, and discovered the man had illegally harvested freshwater turtles, freshwater game fish, and freshwater eels. A search of the back yard also revealed the man had two mottled ducks with an egg and had caged them. The subject was cited for numerous different resource violations. A few days later Lieutenant Van Trees took local code enforcement to the residence where they found violations which included altering the terrain of a waterway and building within a waterway. Code enforcement will be citing the subject accordingly for the violations.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROL

LEE COUNTY

Officer Price conducted speed enforcement in the Lee County panther zone. Throughout the evening, Officer Price educated several drivers for speed related violations, including three different drivers for speeds of 86, 99 and 107 miles per hour in the 45 mile-per-hour zone. One driver said they were driving so fast because they had no cell phone signal and were afraid. A second driver said they were in a hurry to get home and use the restroom. The third driver had no excuse as it was his sixth citation for speed related violations in the panther zone. All three drivers received mandatory court dates for the excessive speed.

SOUTH REGION A

CASES

BROWARD COUNTY

Officer Delatorre and K9 Diesel were working the 15th Street boat ramp during the spiny lobster mini season. Officer Delatorre made several resource cases on several different vessels and subjects for harvesting egg bearing lobster and undersized lobster. All subjects were issued misdemeanor citations which require a court appearance and in all cases the lobster were photographed and returned to the water alive.

During the spiny lobster mini season Officer Armstrong was checking night time beach divers in Fort Lauderdale. He found one subject in possession of undersized spiny lobster. A misdemeanor citation was issued, the lobster was photographed and returned to the water alive.

Lieutenant L. McDonald, Reserve Lieutenant P. McDonald, and Officer Armstrong were checking vessels at the Mizell Johnson Marina enforcing boating safety regulations and conducting marine fishery inspections during the spiny lobster mini season. One subject was in possession of undersized spiny lobster. A misdemeanor citation was issued, and the lobster was photographed and returned to the water alive. They also checked beach divers in Fort Lauderdale during the spiny lobster mini season. Two subjects were in possession of undersized spiny lobster. Misdemeanor citations were issued to both subjects and the lobster was returned to the water alive.

Officers Grant and Brock were on water patrol offshore of Fort Lauderdale when they saw a vessel with divers in the water. The divers got back onto the vessel and started to leave the area. The officers saw lobster harvesting gear on board and stopped the vessel to conduct a saltwater fisheries inspection. During the inspection, five egg bearing spiny lobster were found in the live-well. Three individuals received criminal notice to appears (citations) for harvesting egg bearing spiny lobster. The egg bearing lobsters were returned to the water alive.

Officer Grant was patrolling the beachfront in the Ft. Lauderdale area. She conducted a marine fisheries inspection on an individual diver that had just exited the water. The

individual was in possession of undersized spiny lobsters and was given a criminal notice to appear for the violation. The undersized spiny lobsters were released back to the water alive.

Officers Brock and Grant were on vessel patrol in the Intracoastal in central Broward County and conducted a marine fisheries inspection on a vessel. The individuals onboard the vessel had ten undersized yellowtail snapper and one undersized mutton snapper. The individuals were issued criminal notices to appear for the undersized yellowtail snapper and a warning for the one mutton snapper. One mutton snapper was returned to the water and ten dead yellowtail snapper were seized as evidence.

Officer Lopez was on patrol at the marina in Mizell-Johnson State Park. He saw a personal watercraft pull into the dock. The PWC had fishing gear displayed. Officer Lopez conducted a marine fisheries inspection. The individual was given a criminal notice to appear (citation) for possession of undersized black grouper. Two dead undersized black grouper were seized as evidence.

Officer Lopez was on patrol in Mizell-Johnson State Park. He encountered an individual that had an active warrant out of Santa Rosa County. The individual was placed under arrest and transported to the Broward County Jail.

MARTIN COUNTY

Officer Rogers was on water patrol at Sandsprit Park boat ramp. He conducted multiple fisheries inspections on numerous vessels in the area. He measured the lobster on one vessel and he noticed one was an egg bearing lobster. Officer Rogers educated all parties on board and the subjects were cited accordingly.

Captive Wildlife Investigator Toby recently completed an investigation regarding a capuchin monkey bite at a restaurant. The investigation revealed that a couple that was licensed to possess and exhibit the monkey would often frequent an area restaurant with it and would allow the public to interact with the animal. A juvenile was bitten on the finger by the monkey. Four misdemeanor citations and two warnings were issued to the owners of the monkey regarding this incident.

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officers Hudson and Trawinski were patrolling offshore of Delray Beach around midnight on the opening night of lobster mini season. The officers saw a dive boat with divers in the water. The officers boarded the dive boat and waited for the divers to come up and inspected the lobsters that they brought onto the boat. The officers found three separate divers with undersized lobsters. The divers were issued citations for undersized lobster.

Officer Hudson and Officer Trawinski where patrolling offshore when they located a dive boat returning from a dive. The officers boarded the vessel and located an undersized

lobster. The subject said that he had measured it with his gauge and that it was legal. The officers then used his (the diver's) gauge and measured the lobster. It was still short. The subject was issued a citation for undersized lobster.

Officers Hudson and Trawinski were conducting land patrol when they saw a vehicle swerve multiple times and not maintain its lane. The vehicle took a left turn and crossed into the oncoming traffic lane before over-correcting back into its lane. The officers conducted a vehicle stop and as they approached the vehicle, smoke was pouring out of the window. The officers located a bag of marijuana in the vehicle and a marijuana cigarette in the ashtray. Officer Hudson conducted field sobriety tasks on the operator and found the operator to be driving under the influence. The operator was arrested for driving under the influence and possession of cannabis less than 20 grams.

ST. LUCIE COUNTY

Investigator Patterson and Officer Shermetaro were patrolling local boat ramps during lobster mini season. While conducting a resource and license inspection on a vessel operator, they found multiple egg bearing stone crabs located in a bucket on the vessel. The stone crabs were in whole condition and most of the claws and crabs were undersized. The owner of the vessel was issued multiple citations. The crabs were seized as evidence, photographed and released alive back to the water.

OKEECHOBEE COUNTY

Captive Wildlife Investigator Toby responded to the report of an escaped fox. Upon arrival, he found an arctic fox and a red fox free roaming a property. With the help of local law enforcement and animal control, he was able to capture the animals. Two misdemeanor citations and one warning were issued regarding this incident. The foxes were seized and placed at a licensed facility.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officers Boyd and Loach were on water patrol in Boynton Beach during the lobster mini season. They were heading south from the Boynton Inlet when they spotted a diver caught in a strong current. The diver was waving both arms as a sign of distress. The officers safely rescued the diver who was almost exhausted. The diver pointed out two other divers from his party drifting in the current and the officers rescued them as well. All three divers were safely transferred to their original vessel.

Officers Hudson and Trawinski were patrolling approximately a mile offshore Delray Beach, around 3 a.m., when they noticed a faint green light in the distance with no vessels anywhere nearby. The officers went to the green light and found a diver who was over two miles away from his vessel. The officers got the diver out of the water and returned him safely to his vessel.

Officers Hudson and Trawinski were patrolling offshore of the Lake Worth Inlet when the officers were approached by a vessel. The operator of the vessel said that he had two divers in the water that he had lost, and that they should have been up approximately 30 minutes ago. The officers began to search the area based off the current and were able to locate a diver which was left behind by a separate vessel. The officers returned that diver to his vessel and continued to search for the original two divers. The officers found the two divers just before sunset several miles away from the area.

MAJOR WILDLIFE ASSISTANCE

MONROE COUNTY

Officers Schroer and Boyd deployed to Key West for a lobster season special detail. While conducting fisheries inspections near Big Pine Key, they were dispatched to a nearby residence where a caller advised there was a Key deer stuck in the fence. With assistance from the home owner, Officer Schroer was able to free the Key deer which walked away under its own power.

BROWARD COUNTY

Officers Holcomb and Armstrong assisted the South Florida Wildlife Care Center in releasing a rehabilitated a flesh-footed shearwater bird back into the wild, approximately 5 miles offshore. It is a pelagic bird that lives most of its life out at sea and on remote islands to breed.

SOUTH REGION B

CASES

MIAMI DADE COUNTY

While on water patrol around Key Biscayne, Officers Saavedra and Dominguez saw a vessel displaying fishing equipment. A resource inspection revealed 14 undersized mahi in the vessel's fish box. The subjects were cited accordingly and educated on proper measurement and regulations.

While on water patrol around Key Biscayne Officers Saavedra and Dominguez saw two occupants on a vessel actively fishing. A resource inspection revealed 2 undersized mutton snapper in a cooler. The subjects were cited accordingly and educated on the regulations.

While assisting with a BUI detail at the 79th Street boat ramp, Officers Saavedra and Dunn saw fishing equipment on a vessel. A resource inspection revealed a queen conch in one of the vessel compartments. The operator stated he found the queen

conch at a sandbar and wanted to take it home for decoration. The subjects were cited accordingly and educated on the regulations.

While assisting with a BUI detail at the 79th Street boat ramp, Officers Saavedra, Camejo, and Dominguez saw a vessel entering the marina making wake. The vessel was stopped and when asked if there were weapons on board, the operator and occupants said no. While conducting a boating safety inspection the operator appeared to be impaired. Officer Dominguez noticed a clear bag containing cannabis which one of the passengers tossed into the water. Officer Saavedra noticed a bulge in one of the passenger's pocket when they were asked to exit the vessel, so the officers could conduct a search. A search of the passenger revealed a magazine in his pocket and .45 caliber handgun in his waistband underneath his sweater. The passenger was cited for a third-degree felony for possession of a firearm and transferred to North Miami Police Department for questioning. The operator was cited for BUI and taken into custody.

Officers Sample and Perez were on water patrol in the Miami River. They saw a vessel heading north with 4 individuals and multiple fishing rods and reels on board. They initiated a stop on the vessel to conduct a resource inspection. When asked if they had caught any fish, the operator stated that they caught one big red grouper. Upon inspection, the fish was identified as a Nassau grouper, a prohibited species in Florida. One subject stated that he caught the grouper and claimed possession of the fish. The subject was cited accordingly and educated on proper fish identification and regulations.

Officers Perez and Sample were on water patrol in the Miami River. They saw a vessel making a large wake in a posted no wake zone. They initiated a stop on the vessel to conduct a boating safety inspection. Upon making contact, the operator displayed many signs of impairment. The subject was belligerent and using profane language and refused to comply with the officers' commands. After performing standardized field sobriety tasks, they determined the subject's normal faculties were impaired. They attempted to place the subject in handcuffs, at which point he actively resisted, forcefully attempting to break free from their restraint. The officers used physical control techniques and nonlethal weapons to subdue the subject and place him in custody. He was given the opportunity to provide a breath sample, which he refused. The subject was cited for violation of manatee zone, refusal to submit to breath test, BUI and resisting law enforcement.

MONROE COUNTY

While preparing to pull his vessel from John Pennekamp State Park, Officer McKay saw 2 PWCs being operated by 2 young males in the marina. One operator did not have his lifejacket zipped up. The other PWC was missing registration letters. Both PWCs were making slow speed donuts in the marina. The operators came to the dock where Officer McKay learned that the 15-year-old did not have a boater safety education ID and the other male was only 12 years old. The father was called over from another dock and said that he was aware 12-year-old was not permitted to operate a PWC as he owns

and runs a livery. The father/registered owner was issued a notice to appear for permitting the underage operation and the youth were given numerous warnings.

Investigator Mattson was on unmarked water patrol around White Marlin Beach in Islamorada. He saw a PWC being operated by a young boy. The boy was operating the throttle and steering with his mother on the back of the PWC. An inspection revealed an expired registration as well as failure to transfer ownership. The mother was cited for allowing underage operation of a PWC and an infraction for expired registration.

Investigator Mattson was on water patrol when he saw a SCUBA diver surface around Channel 2 Bridge in Islamorada. The diver handed up a catch bag to the boat. An inspection revealed the diver was in possession of over the limit of spiny lobster and had an undersized lobster in his bag. The diver was cited for the violations.

Investigator Mattson was on unmarked water patrol with Investigator DallaRosa and Lieutenant Van Trees around Channel 5 Bridge Oceanside. They saw men snorkeling on the rocks. The men were about 1,000 feet away from their dive flag. When they identified themselves as law enforcement one of the men who was holding the catch bag dropped it to the bottom of the channel. Lieutenant Van Trees instructed him to go get it. An inspection of the catch revealed the subjects were in possession of nine undersized lobster. Each subject was cited for the misdemeanor violations, three infractions for no fishing license, and too far from dive flag.

COLLIER COUNTY

Officer Yaxley was on water patrol with Marco Island Police Department Officer Ferris when they came across a commercial vessel operating without hull identification numbers. Upon inspection it was found that the company had been operating two large commercial vessels over 12 tons on the waters of the state for years without inspection or registrations. Officer Yaxley cited the company accordingly.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

COLLIER COUNTY

Lieutenant Bulger responded to a distressed manatee call in Rookery Bay Preserve. A concerned citizen spotted the manatee near the Shell Island Road boat ramp. When Lieutenant Bulger and a Collier County Marine deputy arrived on scene the manatee was in obvious distress and having trouble breathing. With the help of citizen, they were able to get the manatee into shallow water. Manatee biologists responded and transported the manatee to a rehabilitation center.