

2004-2005

Florida Hunting Incident Reports

Last hunting season Florida noted only eight hunting incidents. This tied the lowest season ever recorded, 2002-03; however, unlike 02-03 one of this year's incidents resulted in a fatality. By following the rules of safety stressed in Florida's Hunter Safety Course, none of these accidents would have happened.

November 7, 2004, Baker County, Deer

While attempting to climb a pine tree with a cable-type sit-and-climb treestand, the hunter flipped backwards out of the stand while his feet stayed strapped to the foot platform. The tree stand was approximately six feet from the ground. The hunter managed to free his left foot but remained hanging by his right. He fired two shots from his muzzleloading rifle to alert other nearby hunters. The victim remained hanging by one foot for approximately one hour before two other hunters located and freed him. The hunter's right calf and ankle suffered suspected muscle and nerve injury. The victim was not using a safety strap. Examination of the treestand revealed no apparent defects.

November 10, 2004, Hamilton County, Duck

While duck hunting in the PCS Phosphate duck area, two hunters set up two small boats about 40 yards apart and placed decoys out in front of each boat. There was a moderate amount of cattails between the two boats, but with effort the hunters were able to see each other. The shooter wounded a duck that landed on the water. The shooter focused on the duck and shot it again as it swam between the two boats. The hunter located in the other boat was hit by one pellet in the upper left chest. The victim was taken to the hospital where a doctor examined the injury. The wound was determined to be non life-threatening. The doctor was unsuccessful in removing the pellet but treated the wound and released the victim.

November 25, 2004, Clay County

Thanksgiving morning, a 33-year-old man decided to check for game at a pile of corn that had been placed in a wooded area north of his father's house. The corn was placed on the ground several days before in hopes of luring a deer or turkey to the area. The man left his father's house to check the corn pile without letting anyone know where he was going. Shortly thereafter, his father exited through the back door and either saw or heard movement in the wooded area where the corn was. He ran in the house and grabbed his 12-gauge over-under shotgun and six shells. He fired one round of 00 buckshot towards the pile of corn without verifying his target and re-loaded his shotgun.

When the father walked into the wooded area to see what he had shot, he saw his son lying facedown on the ground. He noted the seriousness of the injury and ran back to the house and yelled to his wife that he had accidentally shot their son and to call for help. The father then ran back into the woods, removed his shirt and attempted CPR on his son. When his son did not respond, the father placed his shirt over his son's head and sat down beside him. Before the emergency medical team arrived, the father died of a heart attack.

November 28, 2004, Walton County, Deer

At approximately 7:30 a.m. a father and son were deer hunting with dogs on an unnumbered road in Eglin Air Force

Base. The father dropped his son off at a deer stand and proceeded approximately 500 feet north to the next stand. He heard his son's gun fire and went to investigate. When he arrived, he found that his son had shot himself in his right foot with his 20-gauge shotgun. When the son's boot was removed, it was revealed that the shot had severed the toe next to the big toe. He was transported to the hospital where surgeons amputated the toe. The victim stated that he loaded his gun with one shell prior to leaving the house that morning. He stated to investigators that he remembered hearing the dogs barking and recalled resting the barrel of the gun on his foot, but he did not remember removing the safety on the gun. The firearm was inspected by an armorer and determined that the safety mechanism was in proper working order.

January 2, 2005, Lafayette County, Deer

Dogs were chasing a deer east toward a woods road where a mother, father and son were exiting their vehicle. The 13-year-old son moved south on the road while the mother stayed approximately 30 feet from Brushy Hammock Road. The son was directed by his mother to move further south on the woods road. He stopped approximately 267 feet beyond his mother. When the mother heard a deer approaching, she moved to the west of the road into the brush. The deer crossed the woods road between the two, approximately 90 feet from the son. The son shot as the deer crossed the road. Immediately after the shot, the mother stepped back to the woods road and said she had been struck in the calf of her right leg by one pellet of 00 buckshot. The pellet passed through her leg. She was rushed to the hospital where she was treated for her injuries.

January 7, 2005, Pasco County, Deer

The shooter and victim were hunting deer with dogs in Richloam WMA. The shooter shot at a deer as it crossed the road, not noticing the victim downrange. One 00 buckshot hit the victim in the abdomen. The victim was transported to St. Joe's Hospital where his injuries were treated.

January 29, 2005, Walton County, Deer

The shooter and victim were hunting deer with dogs in Eglin Air Force Base. The shooter shot at a deer and the victim was struck on his left thigh with one 00 buckshot pellet which passed completely through his thigh. The victim was transported to Twin Cities Hospital where his injuries were treated.

February 5, 2005, Hendry County, Pheasant

A father and son were participating in an annual continental pheasant shoot when the hunt master sounded an air horn two times, the signal to stop shooting and move to the next shooting station. As they were gathering their equipment to move, the father stumbled and fell forward causing his 12-gauge shotgun to fire. The son was hit in the lower left leg between the knee and ankle with one round of #5 shot. The shot shattered his leg bone and caused massive tissue damage.