



Field Notes

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission sworn personnel are fully constituted police officers with the authority to enforce all laws of the state, not just those relating to resource conservation.

Caught – one wandering tot

Officer Lee Hendrix had just left his sister's house when he noticed a 2-year-old child wandering down the roadway. He was able to locate the boy's parents, who were amazed that the child had climbed out of bed and left home.

I can't believe...

After officers Neil Goss and Nick Price set up a decoy deer, a man approached, manipulated his vehicle headlights on the decoy and discharged two rounds. When confronted, he admitted shooting the deer and stated, "I can't believe I'm that stupid." The suspect was cited for taking deer at night with the use of light and shooting from the right-of-way.

Caught over bait

For several months, FWC officers assisted USFW officers with surveillance of bait piles on a national refuge. One morning, Lt. Jeff Schremser stopped a man as he checked his bait piles. The man was found to be in possession of a loaded firearm, a violation in the refuge. The suspect is a habitual, felonious, multi-state offender who faces a minimum of 15 years in federal prison. Bail has been denied. Since he was with his wife, prints and DNA testing on his guns are being done prior to charging him with federal felony firearms possession.

Sensitive situation

Investigator William Trubey was at a residence, following up on a captive wildlife inspection, and had a short conversation with the elderly male homeowner. Investigator Trubey realized something was not right with the elderly man's demeanor and then the man described incidents of having been physically and mentally abused. Understanding the significance and sensitivity of the situation, Investigator Trubey contacted the local police department and assisted them with an investigation. The man's assailant, a younger male, was later arrested and charged with abuse of the elderly.

Possession without intent

Officer Jonathan Jacox responded to a complaint after a boater stated he was cruising 10 miles off shore in his tri-maran when a 300-pound spotted eagle ray launched out of the water and landed onboard. The man was unable to remove the large ray and returned to the dock. The captain reported the incident since he was concerned about being in possession of a prohibited species.



Gray wolves once roamed most of North America. Today, it's estimated less than 3,000 live in the United States, mostly in the Northwest.

Wolves without permits

Investigator Janice Jones, with the assistance of Investigator Mike Fischer, cited a man for possession of two wolves without proper permits. The case was referred to FWC by a county animal control office, after two wolves were observed being held in a small 4-foot by 6-foot portable kennel covered in feces. The man agreed to release ownership of the wolves, which were turned over to animal control to house until a permitted facility can be found.

Don't leave home without one

Officer Patrick Koch and Lt. Jeff Hudson were waiting for vessels to land at a boat ramp. There was only one vehicle left in the parking lot when the officers were approached by an individual wanting to know if they had seen the operator of that lone vehicle. The operator was an elderly man in his 70s and he was overdue by several hours. The

officers located the man, whose boat motor was not working. He stated, "I'm sure glad to see you." The officers were assisted by Seminole County's Marine Unit and Volusia County's Aviation Unit. The man is going to get a cell phone.

Bogie man

Investigator Jim Adams issued a notice to appear to a man for killing a Sherman's fox squirrel. The man killed the fox squirrel with a golf club, while playing golf. A witness to the incident called the FWC with a complaint, which led to the arrest of the man, who admitted to Investigator Adams he had hit the fox squirrel with a golf club, but did not mean to kill it.

Tip leads to big fine

On March 5, a Florida rancher was fined \$55,000 in federal court for two hunting charges made by state and federal wildlife officers last October. The subject was placed on one year's probation and sentenced to pay \$40,000 for baiting a field to take migratory birds for commercial purposes and \$15,000 for rallying migratory game birds. More than 50 hunters were on the leased dove field on opening day last season. This is believed to be the largest fine ever levied in a federal baiting case. A Wildlife Alert tip to a FWC officer led to the discovery of the baited field.

It's positive

Lt. David Lee used a new mobile computer terminal recently provided to North Central Region investigators to discover an active arrest warrant for a boater. Lt. Lee maintained surveillance for approximately an hour until the suspect began loading his boat. The man was positively identified and placed under arrest. Officer Cromwell Letcher assisted Lt. Lee transporting the suspect to jail. The mobile computing platforms are an asset that enable investigators in the field to check registrations and warrants as well as complete reports from their vehicles in the field.