



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.

Almost sunk

Officers Ed Chambers and Baryl Martin were on water patrol offshore when they observed a sinking vessel being towed by another vessel. In inclement weather and rough waters, Officer Chambers was able to board the vessel and assist while Officer Martin escorted it. The officers' quick actions resulted in the boaters receiving no injuries and the vessel being raised enough to be fully recovered.

Rattled

Officer Jeff Gier responded to an anonymous call regarding a subject in possession of a venomous reptile. The complainant alleged a man was keeping a rattlesnake in his home while small children were present. The suspect was interviewed and an inspection revealed an improperly-caged rattlesnake. The suspect could not produce the appropriate permit to possess the reptile and was issued two citations and a warning for the violations. The snake was released unharmed into the wild.

Fatal crash

Investigators Bruce Cockcroft and Jason Boswell responded to a vessel crash in which two men died and a third was critically injured. At approximately 11 p.m., a vessel traveling at high speed hit a dock – ejecting a passenger. The vessel continued on, striking a second dock and became wedged under a boatlift. The ejected passenger and the operator died at the scene. The third occupant was critically injured and was airlifted to a hospital. Lieutenant Gary Klein and Officer Chip Butler assisted the investigators at the scene. The investigation is continuing and alcoholic beverage-impairment is suspected as a contributing factor in the crash.

Waitin' on the levee

While on water patrol, Officer J.W. Armstrong observed two male juvenile subjects steal a bulldozer and damage a portion of the pavement on top of a levee. He beached his patrol vessel and pursued the subjects on foot. The Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office arrived to set up a perimeter. The two subjects were captured and transported to the Juvenile Assessment Center for processing on charges of grand theft, criminal mischief and resisting arrest without violence. The bulldozer was the property of a contractor doing work on the Herbert Hoover Dike for the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers.

"Hudson" the turtle

Officers Jackey Angelis and Donald Jones were on water patrol when they observed a juvenile loggerhead sea turtle swimming on the surface of the water. The turtle appeared injured, so the officers approached for a closer look and were able to see a propeller cut on the turtle's head. They loaded it into their patrol vessel and transported it to shore. The turtle was released to Ronda Bailer, FWRI sea turtle coordinator and then taken to the Florida Aquarium and given emergency treatment by the aquarium staff who expect it to fully recover.

Fire and water

Officer Jeff Beal was on water patrol when he noticed smoke coming from a shoreline residence. He had an individual place a 911 call and responded in his patrol vessel. Upon arrival, he located a resident and confirmed no one else was inside. The resident had oxygen bottles stored inside which were at risk of exploding. Officer Beal, with assistance, carried the homeowner a safe distance from

the fire and returned to help extinguish the flames which were affecting nearby structures.

Talk about weeds

In search of turkey bait, Officer Travis Hooker was patrolling on foot when he discovered approximately 25 marijuana plants hidden among palmetto bushes. Officer Hooker coordinated surveillance efforts for several days. Officer Robert Johnston was on surveillance when he heard an ATV drive up to the area and stop. A man walked up to the plants with a bucket and began to water them. Approaching the subject, Officer Johnston identified himself. After a short foot pursuit, the subject was arrested on felony cultivating charges. The marijuana plants, an ATV and the watering bucket were seized as evidence.

Quick response

Officer Jeff Babauta's patrol boat was tied up to a boat ramp from which a person was throwing a cast net. Officer Babauta saw the cast-netter fall backwards into waist-deep water, realized the person was having a seizure and jumped into the water and pulled the person safely to shore. EMS evaluated the person who appeared to be in stable condition.

Once an officer...

A retired FWC officer was checking mounds at the Aucilla Management Area when he observed two people digging. The former officer photographed the subjects and called into dispatch to file a complaint. Officers Dale Wilcox and Stefanie Wilcox interviewed the retired officer and had the film developed. The two subjects were located, cooperated fully and were cited for damaging Suwannee River Lands.