



NJDEP Fish and Wildlife
Monthly Highlights
Bureau of Law Enforcement
August 21, 2024 to September 20, 2024

Frank Panico, Chief
Jason Snellbaker, Deputy Chief
Douglas Applegate, Deputy Chief
Joseph Soell, Captain - Administration
Vacant, Lieutenant - Administration
Robert Driscoll, Lieutenant - Training

Northern Region (908) 735-8240
Joseph Kuechler, Captain
Jordan Holmes, Lieutenant (District 1)
Brice Paey, Lieutenant (District 2)
Hannah Koch, Agency Services Representative

Central Region (609) 259-2120
Linda Quirk, Captain
Andrew Riviello, Lieutenant (District 3)
Sean McManus, Lieutenant (District 4)
Michael Anselmo, Agency Services Representative

Southern Region (856) 629-0555
Paul Toppin, Captain
Zane Batten, Lieutenant (District 5)
Craig James, Lieutenant (District 6)
Sue Canale, Agency Services Representative

Marine Region (609) 748-2050
Brian Scott, Captain
Chris Moscatiello, Lieutenant (District 7)
Ryan Harp, Lieutenant (District 8)
Chris Petrucci, Lieutenant (District 9) Noreen
White, Agency Services Representative

Conservation Officers report a total of 6,561.6 hours of duty (6,895.4 - 2023) These hours are charged to the following categories of duty:

	2024	2023
Law Enforcement	4,874.3	4,942.4
Fishing	960.7	969.2
Marine Resources	1,107.5	1,173.0
Hunting	227.9	121.1
Deer Hunting	414.1	429.9
Trapping	23.3	9.5
Wildlife Mgt. Areas	519.0	401.9
NG & Endangered Species	69.3	46.5
Court	61.0	42.4
Regional Meetings	45.3	0.0
Pollution Investigation	14.5	15.0
Training	743.3	1,641.4
Other Law Enforcement	1,194.6	691.8
Administration	1,562.2	1,750.9
Fish Management	2.0	7.0



Wildlife Management	32.6	69.4
Information & Education	7.5	53.9
Bear Control	3.0	0.0
Bear Patrol & Invest	40.0	13.0

During patrols, officers performed 2322 field inspections (2 9 6 3 - 2023) of hunters, fishermen or trappers and the resultant caseload is tabulated.

Law Enforcement Regions

	<u>North</u>	<u>Central</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>Marine</u>	<u>Admin</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>2023</u>
Summonses Issued	58	44	25	88	0	215	234
Criminal Arrests	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Warnings Issued	2	0	11	18	0	31	26
Bear Feeding Warns Issued	1	0	0	0	0	1	0

Field Inspections By Region

Administration	0
Northern Region	369
Central Region	359
Southern Region	274
Marine Region	1320
Total	2322

Field Inspections By Activity

Hunters	192
Freshwater Anglers	264
Trappers	2
Commercial Fishermen	33
Marine Rec. Anglers	1094
WMA non hunt/fish	328
Other	36

Listed below are the types of summonses issued:

	<u>North</u>	<u>Central</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>Marine</u>	<u>Admin</u>
Fishing	21	4	3	0	0
Hunting	3	0	0	0	0
Waterfowl Hunting	0	0	0	0	0
Deer Hunting	14	3	0	0	0
Trapping	0	0	0	0	0
WMA	1	30	21	1	0
Striped Bass	0	0	0	0	0
Shellfish	9	4	0	3	0
Marine-Commercial	0	0	0	1	0
Marine-Recreational	4	0	0	83	0
Nongame & Exotic	0	0	0	0	0
Title 58	0	0	0	0	0
Title 39	0	2	0	0	0
Other	6	1	1	0	0
Bear Hunting	0	0	0	0	0
Bear Feeding	0	0	0	0	0
Marine Striped Bass	0	0	0	0	0
Title 2C	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	58	44	25	88	0



Penalties collected during this report period by Conservation Police Officers: \$39,589.00

Call volume (reports of violations, general questions, requests for assistance, etc.) received at region offices:

North	218
Central	153
South	263
Marine	209
Total Calls Received	843

Bureau of Law Enforcement personnel status as of Sep 20, 2024

Administration - 8

- 1 Chief
- 2 Deputy Chiefs
- 1 CPO II Training
- 2 CPO I Training
- 1 CPO III Admin
- 0 CPO II Admin
- 1 CPO I Admin

Northern Region - 12

- 1 CPO III
- 2 CPO II
- 8 CPO I
- 1 ASR

Central Region - 11

- 1 CPO III
- 2 CPO II
- 7 CPO I
- 1 ASR

Southern Region - 12

- 1 CPO III
- 2 CPO II
- 8 CPO I
- 1 ASR

Marine Region - 14

- 1 CPO III
- 3 CPO II
- 9 CPO I
- 1 ASR

Special Investigations Unit - 3

- 1 CPO III
- 1 CPO II
- 1 CPO I

Total Employees: 60

Northern Region Highlights

On August 31, 2024, CPO Della Vella, CPO C. Sikora and CPO A. Sutton responded to the Delaware River in White Township, Warren County, for an illegal freshwater clamming complaint. On arrival, CPOs conducted surveillance on three individuals actively clamming the river. One 5-gallon bucket of freshwater clams was seized as evidence and ten summonses were issued for the incident including clamming in condemned waters, clamming without a commercial clamming license, possession of live exotic species and fishing without a valid license.

On opening day of the early fall bow season, CPO C. Sikora interviewed a hunter that registered an antlerless deer and an antlered deer Saturday morning in Lincoln Park Borough, Morris County. When asked to produce the antlerless deer's head, the hunter told CPO C. Sikora that the deer was at a friend's house. When CPO C. Sikora questioned the hunter for the friend's phone number and address, the hunter



admitted that he dumped the antlerless deer into the Pompton River before harvesting a large eight-point buck. The eight-point buck head was confiscated as evidence, and the hunter was issued summonses for wasting edible game meat, dumping animal parts, failure to produce deer head, and interference with the duties of a conservation police officer.

Central Region Highlights

On September 1, 2024, CPOs Rooke and Kuri were patrolling Assunpink WMA when they noticed a group of individuals walking in Assunpink Lake. They observed the people collecting something. An inspection determined they were collecting snails and freshwater mussels. They were issued the appropriate summonses for collecting protected indigenous wildlife.

On September 15, 2024, at 8:00pm, Lt McManus responded to a report for a vehicle in Lake Success at Colliers Mills WMA with multiple occupants trapped in the vehicle. Upon arrival he found that the driver was the only occupant, and he was safely out of the truck. He claimed that a deer ran out in front of him, and he drove into the lake as he swerved to avoid hitting the deer.

CPO Garofalo attended National Night Out at Pemberton Township. It was a very successful event and his presence was very well received.

CPOs Rooke, Garofalo, Bickerton, and Lt. Riviello patrolled Greenwood Forest WMA on multiple weekends for illegal off-road activity. Numerous violators were apprehended. Summonses issued included operating an unregistered vehicle on a WMA, operating an ATV on a WMA, operating a vehicle off an established roadway on a WMA, and possession of alcohol on a WMA.

Southern Region Highlights

CPO Chillari received a complaint from a hunter regarding severe damage of vegetation on the Millville WMA. After months of surveillance and obtaining additional evidence, CPO Chillari and CPO Malinski spoke to the accused individual. The individual admitted to damaging vegetation and soil on the Millville WMA with the intent of using the woods trail to ride ATVs. The individual was issued the respective summonses and instructed to discontinue any activity related to the trail on the WMA.

An ongoing complaint, from the local community, of late-night parties with loud music in the Union Lake Wildlife Management Area, located in Cumberland County has been reported throughout the summer months. Officers from the Southern Region including, Lts. James & Batten, CPOs Malinsky, Stites and Vasquez conducted a patrol of the area when they observed multiple vehicles entering the WMA and begin to set up for a party after legal entry hours. Before the party could begin, the officers initiated an inspection from multiple locations and contacted twenty-one individuals. The officers issued twenty-one summonses for entering a WMA after legal hours.

CPO Vazquez inspected two bow hunters, hunting in the White Oak WMA, Franklin Township, Gloucester County, on opening day of archery season. While inspecting the two bow hunters, actively hunting in a closed zone, the officer encountered five ATVs in the WMA. The operators of the ATVs were stopped and issued summons for operating off road vehicles in the WMA. The hunters, a first- and third-year hunter, were issued written warnings for their actions.

Marine Region Highlights

CPO Bahrle and Lt. Moscatiello were following up on a complaint they received about a commercial fisherman utilizing an otter trawl within two miles of the coastline in Ocean County. Regulations allow commercial fishermen to use their otter trawls between two and three miles in state waters. This provides an area inside of two miles for recreational fishermen with undisturbed bottom. While on patrol CPO Bahrle located a vessel off Seaside that was dragging inside the two-mile line. CPO Bahrle issued the captain a summons for utilizing his otter trawl within two miles of the coastline. Court is set for October and the fisherman faces a penalty of up to \$3,000.

In early September, CPO Szelc was conducting surveillance of shoreside anglers targeting tautog in Atlantic City. He observed one of the anglers catch an undersized tautog, which he immediately wrapped in a plastic bag, then quickly ran from the jetty and onto an adjacent street. Moments later the angler returned to the jetty without the bag and CPO Szelc, with the assistance of Lt. Petrucci, was able to apprehend the fishermen on the jetty with multiple undersized tautog. CPO Szelc was then able to identify the vehicle belonging to the group and found additional undersized tautog within it, including the bag he had previously observed. The group of anglers was found in possession of 18 undersized tautog.

Lt. Harp and CPO Klitz responded to a complaint in Egg Harbor Township involving a group of individuals utilizing a large seine net at Malibu Beach WMA. Lt. Harp and CPO Klitz conducted an inspection of the netters when they returned to shore. The group had two large totes, each with approximately 100 pounds of assorted marine life. After several hours of sorting through the catch, Lt. Harp and CPO Klitz found a total of 180 undersized blue claw crabs - three of which had eggs attached, seven undersized black sea bass, four undersized tautog, 53 bluefish over the daily limit, and one undersized winter flounder. The net being utilized had a mesh size less than the minimum 3/8-inch requirement and it exceeded 50 feet in length, which would require a license to use. Numerous summonses were issued to the group for the violations.