



NJDEP Fish and Wildlife
Monthly Highlights
Bureau of Law Enforcement
October 21, 2024 to November 20, 2024

Frank Panico, Chief
Brian Scott, 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)
Mike 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
Vacant, 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 6,795.4 hours of duty (7,413.7 - 2023).
These hours are charged to the following categories of duty:

	2024	2023
Law Enforcement	4,832.5	5,583.0
Fishing	1,066.8	1,334.6
Marine Resources	1,164.3	1,525.7
Hunting	590.9	566.4
Deer Hunting	1,147.1	1,022.9
Trapping	17.7	6.5
Wildlife Mgt. Areas	273.1	235.1
NG & Endangered Species	23.0	7.5
Court	39.1	33.3
Regional Meetings	44.9	46.1
Pollution Investigation	10.8	19.5
Training	424.1	1,248.5
Other Law Enforcement	962.0	762.9
Administration	1,822.9	1,506.4
Fish Management	0.0	0.0



Wildlife Management	42.2	30.1
Information & Education	33.8	21.0
Bear Control	0.5	0.3
Bear Patrol & Invest	13.1	13.3

During patrols, officers performed 3427 field inspections (3 6 8 1 - 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>Total</u>	<u>2023</u>
Summonses Issued	69	38	24	129	260	368
Criminal Arrests	1	0	0	0	1	0
Warnings Issued	3	0	0	7	10	26
Bear Feeding Warns Issued	0	0	0	0	0	0

Field Inspections By Region

Northern Region	903
Central Region	550
Southern Region	466
Marine Region	1508
Total	3427

Field Inspections By Activity

Hunters	1321
Freshwater Anglers	117
Trappers	1
Commercial Fishermen	18
Marine Rec. Anglers	1169
WMA non hunt/fish	218
Other	36

Listed below are the types of summonses issued:

	<u>North</u>	<u>Central</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>Marine</u>
Fishing	2	0	0	0
Hunting	16	5	1	0
Waterfowl Hunting	0	1	2	0
Deer Hunting	36	10	17	0
Trapping	0	0	0	0
WMA	3	21	2	0
Striped Bass	1	0	0	1
Shellfish	0	0	2	2
Marine-Commercial	0	0	0	0
Marine-Recreational	7	0	0	126
Nongame & Exotic	0	0	0	0
Title 58	0	0	0	0
Title 39	1	1	0	0
Other	3	0	0	0
Bear Hunting	0	0	0	0
Bear Feeding	0	0	0	0
Marine Striped Bass	0	0	0	0
Title 2C	3	0	0	0
Totals	69	38	24	129



Penalties collected during this report period by Conservation Police Officers: \$11075.00

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

North	200
Central	268
South	224
Marine	203
Total Calls Received	895

Bureau of Law Enforcement personnel status as of Nov 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 - 10

1 CPO III
2 CPO II
6 CPO I
1 TA 2

Southern Region - 12

1 CPO III
2 CPO II
8 CPO I
1 ASR

Marine Region - 13

0 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: 58

Northern Region Highlights

Northern Region Conservation Police Officers have been busy with small game enforcement and have apprehended individuals hunting without valid hunting licenses, taking pheasant on stocked WMAs without valid pheasant stamps, hunting pheasant during closed season, hunting prior to legal hours, hunting without proper orange, hunting with illegal shot size, hunting with a shotgun capable of holding more than three shells, taking over the daily limit of pheasant, and interfering with the duties of a Conservation Police Officer.

District Two Officers have been busy with deer hunting patrols and have apprehended four individuals for antler point restriction (APR) violations, two individuals for falsely registering deer, one individual for hunting without a valid hunting license, and eleven individuals for hunting without a valid permit bow zone permit.

On October 25, 2024, CPO Parham observed two fishermen targeting Tautog in Bayonne, Hudson County. CPO Parham inspected the individuals, with the first having a single sixteen-inch Tautog. The



second individual claimed to not have any fish, but CPO Parham found the individual to be hiding a green mesh bag containing nine undersized Tautog. The second individual claimed ownership of the fish and received summonses for possessing eight Tautog over the daily limit and possessing nine undersized Tautog.

On November 10, 2024, Lt. Paey and CPO Parham were patrolling a piece of township property in Montgomery Township, Somerset County, after receiving complaints of illegal hunting in the area. An individual was found hunting deer in a tree stand on an adjacent property and admitted to not having a hunting license. CPO Parham also located two prohibited urine-based deer lures in the area. When Lt. Paey and CPO Parham met the individual at his vehicle, another hunter who had been seen hunting on township property with no permission was seen in the area. This individual was also inspected and was found to not have a valid 2024 Zone 12 bow permit. A total of four summonses were issued for possessing natural deer lures derived from deer urine, hunting without a valid 2024 hunting license, and two counts of hunting white-tailed deer without first procuring a valid zone 12 permit. The individual found to be hunting without a valid hunting license or zone permit is facing a 2-year suspension of licenses due to having received prior violations of title 23.

On November 13, 2024, CPO Parham received a complaint of a restaurant owner in Plainfield, Union County, who was selling striped bass. On November 15, 2024, CPO Parham went to the restaurant to speak with the owner. The owner claimed that they bought the fish in Philadelphia and that "everyone does it." The owner was issued one court mandatory summons for offering striped bass for sale.

Central Region Highlights

On opening day of the south zone for waterfowl, CPO Garofalo and Lt. Riviello were doing an evening patrol at Lebanon Lakes in Woodland Township, Burlington County. After legal shooting time had passed, multiple waterfowl hunters were observed shooting well past legal time. Upon inspection of these hunters, multiple violations were discovered including an uncased and loaded firearm in a vehicle, no federal stamps in possession, and hunting waterfowl after legal hours. Appropriate summons and warnings were issued.

On the opening day of the pheasant and quail season, Central Region CPOs were busy patrolling all our stocked wildlife management areas. Multiple summonses were issued for not wearing an orange cap while hunting on a wildlife management area and no possession of a pheasant and quail stamp. Captain Quirk apprehended a bow hunter who was driving around a field on Medford WMA. The hunter was issued summonses for hunting without a license and having a cocked crossbow in a motor vehicle. In addition, CPO Carmen and Lt. Riviello apprehended a large group of illegal off road vehicle operators at Greenwood Forest WMA. Ten summonses were issued for operating an off-road vehicle on a WMA and having an unregistered vehicle on a WMA.

While on patrol for the coastal waterfowl season, CPO Garofalo inspected a hunter on Great Bay Boulevard WMA who had shot two double crested cormorants. A summons was issued for killing cormorants.

Central Region CPOs have been busy patrolling Greenwood Forest WMA and Colliers Mills WMA for illegal off-road activity. On these patrols, multiple summonses have been issued for operating an off-road vehicle on a WMA, unregistered vehicles on WMA, and possession of alcohol on a WMA.

CPO Bickerton received a complaint regarding a boat that was dumped on Greenwood Forest WMA property. It had no engine or trailer. Upon inspecting the boat, Bickerton was able to locate a VIN

number and a "For Sale" sign in the destroyed flooring. In doing a lookup on the VIN number, Bickerton was able to identify the original owner of the boat, who said that they had lost the boat years ago after a repair service failed to complete thousands of dollars of work on it. They were given a replacement boat by the repair service instead. Bickerton used the phone number on the sign to identify a more recent person of interest. After stopping at numerous marinas in the area to build information, he contacted that individual. The individual who tried to sell it stated that he gave the boat away to someone who had worked on boats for him and was struggling financially. After weeks of trying to track down the individual who was given the boat, Bickerton received information that he was incarcerated at the Ocean County Correctional Facility. CPO Bickerton and Lt. Riviello went to the correctional Facility and conducted an interview. This led to the individual admitting to dumping the boat in the area. The suspect was charged with dumping solid waste on a WMA and engaging in the disposal of over 0.148 cubic yards at an unauthorized location.

On October 24th, Bryan X. Reinoso Mantilla, 29, of East Windsor, entered a plea agreement in the Upper Freehold Municipal court on charges of dumping solid waste on three separate occasions in Assunpink WMA during the summer of 2023. Reinoso Mantilla was fined \$1500, must pay NJ Fish and Wildlife \$3654 in restitution for the cleanup costs, and is banned from returning to the WMA. CPO Garofalo was the lead investigator on this case, with assistance from Captain Martiak, Lt. McManus, and Lt. Riviello.

Southern Region Highlights

CPO Kille received a trespass complaint from a hunter in Upper Pittsgrove Township, Salem County. The complainant reported that while deer hunting, he observed two men trespassing as they were blood trailing a deer. The complainant approached the hunters, advised them that they did not have permission to be on the property and that he had reported the incident to NJFW, at which point one of the hunters fled. CPO Kille arrived and interviewed the remaining suspect. The man was not willing to disclose the identity of the person he was with but did state that person had not hunted that morning. He claimed that he was the only one hunting and that he had shot a 6-point buck. He also mentioned that permission to be on the property was obtained from the unidentified person. Eventually the suspect disclosed the identity of the second hunter to substantiate the permission. After a call was placed to the second hunter, he emerged from the woods he had been hiding in carrying a bow. CPO Kille asked the original suspect as to why there were two bows; one located within his vehicle and one the second individual was possessing. One bow was left-handed while the other was right-handed. He claimed they were both his, stating that he was ambidextrous. After additional interviews were conducted both men admitted to hunting that morning. Both men were charged with not having an archery license, not having DMZ archery permits and not having an archery buck permit.

On November 15th, 2024, CPO Malinski received a complaint in Hamilton Township of an individual hunting without appropriate licenses. Upon inspection of the hunter, it was determined the hunter failed to possess an archery license as well as the appropriate zone permit. The hunter was issued several summonses.

Marine Region Highlights

Large bluefin tuna settled into South Jersey nearshore waters last month and as such came numerous landings by recreational anglers. A mandatory Federal reporting requirement exists within 24 hours of landing a bluefin tuna to ensure long term sustainability and to demonstrate the recreational stake in the



fishery. Lt. Petruccelli and CPO Tomlin followed up on numerous landings and found significant non-compliance with the reporting. These cases will be referred to NMFS for Federal enforcement action. The first offence for failing to report a bluefin tuna is a \$1,000 fine.

Lt. Petruccelli inspected a vessel that returned from a day of recreational angling for bluefin tuna, but did not have any catch onboard. He found the individuals had a commercial highly migratory species (HMS) permit, which limits them to bluefin tuna 73" or greater when the commercial fishery is open. After a brief investigation, it was determined that the same individuals on the same vessel had landed a 49" bluefin tuna the day before. The case was referred to NMFS for possible enforcement action.