



NJDEP Fish and Wildlife
Monthly Highlights
Bureau of Law Enforcement
December 21, 2024 to January 20, 2025

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 6,108.1 hours of duty (5,655.6 - 2024) These hours are charged to the following categories of duty:

| | 2025 | 2024 |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Law Enforcement | 4,613.0 | 4,006.3 |
| Fishing | 759.1 | 495.9 |
| Marine Resources | 922.3 | 671.3 |
| Hunting | 561.8 | 465.1 |
| Deer Hunting | 736.9 | 729.5 |
| Trapping | 192.0 | 64.7 |
| Wildlife Mgt. Areas | 243.0 | 164.1 |
| NG & Endangered Species | 13.5 | 19.2 |
| Court | 36.4 | 41.2 |
| Regional Meetings | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Pollution Investigation | 0.0 | 10.9 |
| Training | 1,014.3 | 1,135.9 |
| Other Law Enforcement | 720.5 | 642.6 |
| Administration | 1,453.3 | 1,551.9 |
| Fish Management | 0.0 | 3.0 |



| | | |
|-------------------------|------|-----|
| Wildlife Management | 19.0 | 8.0 |
| Information & Education | 0.0 | 8.0 |
| Bear Control | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Bear Patrol & Invest | 0.0 | 0.0 |

During patrols, officers performed 1037 field inspections (1027 - 2024) 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>2024</u> |
|---------------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|
| Summonses Issued | 101 | 58 | 17 | 4 | 180 | 101 |
| Criminal Arrests | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Warnings Issued | 4 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 10 | 10 |
| Bear Feeding Warns Issued | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Field Inspections By Region

| | |
|-----------------|-------------|
| Northern Region | 393 |
| Central Region | 244 |
| Southern Region | 237 |
| Marine Region | 163 |
| Total | 1037 |

Field Inspections By Activity

| | |
|----------------------|-----|
| Hunters | 647 |
| Freshwater Anglers | 178 |
| Trappers | 9 |
| Commercial Fishermen | 28 |
| Marine Rec. Anglers | 64 |
| WMA non hunt/fish | 70 |
| Other | 9 |

Listed below are the types of summonses issued:

| | <u>North</u> | <u>Central</u> | <u>South</u> | <u>Marine</u> |
|---------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| Fishing | 14 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Hunting | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 |
| Waterfowl Hunting | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Deer Hunting | 67 | 39 | 11 | 0 |
| Trapping | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| WMA | 1 | 5 | 5 | 0 |
| Striped Bass | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Shellfish | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Marine-Commercial | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Marine-Recreational | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Nongame & Exotic | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Title 58 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Title 39 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 18 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Bear Hunting | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Bear Feeding | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Marine Striped Bass | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Title 2C | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Totals | 101 | 58 | 17 | 4 |



Penalties collected during this report period by Conservation Police Officers: \$25,802.00

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

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| North | 150 |
| Central | 128 |
| South | 111 |
| Marine | 142 |
| Total Calls Received | 531 |

Bureau of Law Enforcement personnel status as of Jan 20, 2025

Administration - 8

- 1 Chief
- 2 Deputy Chiefs
- 1 CPO II Training
- 2 CPO I Training
- 1 CPO III 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 TA 2

Southern Region - 12

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

Marine Region - 14

- 0 CPO III
- 3 CPO II
- 10 CPO I
- 1 ASR

Special Investigations Unit - 3

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

Total Employees: 60

Northern Region Highlights

On December 26, 2024, CPO Della Vella was notified of an illegal hunting complaint for Knowlton Township, Warren County. The complainant stated an individual shot a firearm too close to his residence. CPO Della Vella conducted a patrol of the area and footprints were observed in the snow within the 450-foot safety zone of several residences. One (1) .22 WMR shell casing was located near the footprints. CPO Della Vella interviewed the suspect, who admitted to hunting deer with a .22 WMR rifle within the safety zone of several residences. Multiple summonses were issued for the safety zone violations, along with utilizing a rifle and illegal missiles for deer hunting.

While on foot patrol on Saturday, January 4, 2025, at Dators Pond in Mahwah Township, Bergen County, CPOs Coiro and C. Sikora noticed a 330 conibear set in the water near a beaver lodge. After finding the 330 conibear, the CPOs thoroughly searched the area and found multiple cable restraints set on trails near the shoreline. Based on the cable restraints' loop diameter, height, and proximity to the water, the CPOs suspected they were set for beaver and otter. CPO Coiro and C. Sikora searched the trapper's active licenses and learned the trapper had a zone twenty-three (23) beaver and otter tag. Dators Pond, where the traps were located, is designated as beaver and otter management zone three (3). CPO



Coiro and CPO C. Sikora interviewed the trapper, who admitted to trapping for beaver and otter out of zone. The individual received summonses for trapping beaver out of zone, trapping otter out of zone, and failure to attach trap tag information above the water.

On January 11, 2025, at 2012 hours, Lt. Paey was contacted by Hillsborough Twp. Police Officers, (Somerset County) who had located a suspicious truck with four untagged deer in the bed behind a hotel. The Police Officers made contact with the individual who owned the truck and provided the information to Lt. Paey who determined the individual was not in possession of a valid 2025 firearm hunting license. Lt. Paey and CPO Hughes met with the individual at the Northern Region Office. It was determined that the individual had killed two of the four deer, and a second individual had killed the other two. CPOs found the second individual did not have a valid 2025 hunting license or any permit shotgun zone permits. As a result of the investigation, two individuals were issued a total of nine (9) summonses for the following violations: Did hunt without a valid 2025 firearm license, did hunt without a valid permit shotgun zone permit, did fail to register deer as required by code, did possess untagged/unregistered deer parts, and did fail to affix a transportation tag. The second individual was given a mandatory court date and is facing enhanced penalties due to a prior deer hunting violation and revocation for a second violation within 5 years.

Early in the morning on Sunday, January 12, 2025, CPO A. Sutton was contacted by an individual who had a photograph of individuals on his property, in a truck, attempting to shoot deer before daylight. The photograph showed one individual in the bed of the truck with a weapon and the passenger utilizing a spotlight. CPO A. Sutton contacted CPO C. Sikora for assistance and both officers then met with New Jersey State Police, who had apprehended the three (3) individuals hunting from a vehicle. The three (3) individuals were arrested for weapons charges and transported to the Sussex State Police Barracks for processing. A total of 30 Fish and Wildlife summonses were issued, along with criminal charges by New Jersey State Police. After clearing the Sussex State Police Barracks, CPO A. Sutton and C. Sikora apprehended an individual utilizing another trapper's beaver tags. Through the course of the investigation, it was determined that the individual who had drawn the beaver tags in the lottery never completed trapper education and illegally transferred the beaver tags to another. A total of 15 summonses were issued to the two (2) individuals and the trapping equipment was seized as evidence, along with four (4) illegally harvested beavers.

Central Region Highlights

During the 6 Day Firearm season, a hunting club was investigated by Central Region officers after an illegal hunting incident took place in Toms River. From the investigation, CPO Bickerton issued multiple summonses for possessing a loaded firearm within 450 feet of a building and careless discharge of a firearm while hunting. In addition, CPO Garofalo issued 14 summonses for purchasing a firearm license without completing a Hunter Education Course.

Lt. Riviello received a complaint that someone had possibly hunted too close to a house in Medford during the permit shotgun season. Riviello was able to determine that the distance was a legal distance but noticed that a deer had been harvested. After conducting an interview, the hunter admitted not registering the deer. The hunter was issued a summons for failing to register his deer.



Southern Region Highlights

Over the past month, CPO Malinski has focused enforcement efforts on interviewing hunters for potential deer hunting violations. CPO Malinski interviewed several hunters in reference to their recent deer harvests. During these inspections, the following violations were discovered: hunting without the appropriate zone permits, failing to tag deer properly, failing to register deer properly, hunting without a firearms license, and firearm hunting on a Sunday. As a result of the interviews, several hunters were found to be in violation and the appropriate summonses were issued.

CPOs Chillari and Malinski interviewed a Salem County hunter in relation to a deer harvested during the permit bow season in Atlantic County. During the interview, the hunter admitted the buck was harvest in Salem County, and not Atlantic County where the deer was registered. The hunter was issued summonses for registering a deer improperly and hunting without the appropriate zone permit. The illegal 8-point buck skull was seized from the hunter as evidence.