



**NJ Fish and Wildlife
Monthly Highlights
Bureau of Law Enforcement
April 21, 2022- May 20, 2022**

Frank Panico, Chief
Jason Snellbaker, Deputy Chief
Douglas Applegate, Deputy Chief
L. Anne Quirk, Captain – Administration
Tom O'Rourke, Lieutenant – Training
Robert Driscoll, Conservation Police Officer - Training
Joseph Soell, Lieutenant – Administration
Tyler Hausamann, Conservation Police Officer - Administration

Northern Region (908) 735-8240

Joseph Kuechler, Captain
Steven Sutton, Lieutenant (District 1)
Jordan Holmes, Lieutenant (District 2)
Vacant, Lieutenant Investigator
Vacant, Administrative Assistant 1

Central Region (609) 259-2120

Shannon Martiak, Captain
Bryan Mascio, Lieutenant (District 3)
Sean McManus, Lieutenant (District 4)
Vacant, Lieutenant Investigator
Shari Irick, Technical Assistant 2

Southern Region (856) 629-0555

Lisa Lacroix, Captain
Zane Batten, Lieutenant (District 5)
Craig James, Lieutenant (District 6)
Vacant, Lieutenant Investigator
Sue Canale, Agency Services Representative

Marine Region (609) 748-2050

Brian Scott, Captain
Paul Toppin, Lieutenant (District 7)
Ryan Harp, Lieutenant (District 8)
Chris Petruccelli, Lieutenant (District 9)
Vacant, Lieutenant Investigator
Noreen White, Agency Services Representative

Conservation Police Officers report a total of 6966.2 hours of duty (8210.7- 2021). These hours are charged to the following categories of duty:

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
Total Law Enforcement	4532.4	6413.9
Fishing	696.3	1130.3
Marine Resources	1239.2	1766.1
Hunting	772.3	1414.2
Deer Hunting	13.9	15
Trapping	12.5	4.1
Wildlife Mgt. Areas	230.9	676.6
NG & Endangered Species	40.9	175
Court	41.1	56.8
Regional Meetings	41.3	141.5
Pollution Investigation	46.3	82.7
Training	385.8	181.7
Other Law Enforcement	1011.9	769.9
Administration	2329.9	1688.7

Fish Management	8	0
Wildlife Management	60.8	69.1
Information & Education	35.1	59
Bear Control	22.1	16.5
Bear Patrol and Investigation	21.6	0.5

During patrols, officers performed 3089 field inspections (4578-2021) 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>Adm.</u>	<u>Total 2021</u>
Summonses Issued	45	59	78	59	0	426
Criminal Charges	0	0	2	0	0	0
Warnings Issued	2	1	1	3	0	15
Bear Feeding Warnings	1	0	0	0	0	5

Field Inspections by Region

Administration	0
Northern Region	385
Central Region	400
Southern Region	722
Marine Region	1582

Total 3,089

Field Inspections by Activity:

Hunters	251
Freshwater Anglers	817
Trappers	3
Commercial Fishermen	46
Marine Rec. Anglers	1685
WMA non-hunting/fishing	162
Other	125

Listed below are the types of summonses issued:

	<u>North</u>	<u>Central</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>Marine</u>	<u>Adm.</u>
Fishing	17	43	31	0	0
Hunting	8	6	12	0	0
Waterfowl Hunting	0	0	1	0	0
Deer Hunting	0	0	4	0	0
Trapping	1	0	0	0	0
WMA	2	2	26	0	0
Striped Bass	17	1	0	0	0
Shellfish	0	6	0	3	0
Title 2C	0	0	2	0	0
Marine-Commercial	0	0	0	0	0
Marine-Recreational	0	0	0	45	0
Nongame & Exotic	0	0	0	0	0
Title 58	0	0	0	0	0
Title 39	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	1	4	0	0
Bear Hunting	0	0	0	0	0
Bear Feeding	0	0	0	0	0
Marine Striped Bass	0	0	0	11	0
Totals	45	59	80	59	0

Penalties collected during this report period by Conservation Police Officers: \$40,466.00

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

North	* numbers not reported due to office closure
Central	195
South	238
Marine	190

Total calls received: 623

Bureau of Law Enforcement personnel status as of 5/20/22:

Administration - 8

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

Northern Region – 7

1 CPO III
2 CPO II
4 CPO Is

Central Region - 9

1 CPO III
2 CPO IIs
5 CPO Is
1 Technical Assistant 2

Southern Region - 11

1 CPO III
2 CPO IIs
7 CPO Is
1 Agency Services Rep

Marine Region - 16

1 CPO III
3 CPO IIs
11 CPO Is
1 Agency Services Rep

Total Employees: 51

Northern Region Highlights

CPO Merritt assisted Sparta Township Police with an illegal dumping investigation at Sparta Mountain WMA. Sparta Police received a complaint about concrete and brick being actively dumped in a WMA parking area. The suspect was not on scene when they arrived, but they did observe freshly dumped concrete and brick in several parking areas within the WMA. A description of the suspect's vehicle was provided and broadcast to other area police departments. A short time later, a neighboring police department stopped a vehicle matching the description and observed evidence consistent with the dumped materials. The individual was uncooperative and denied any knowledge of the dumped concrete and brick on the WMA. Due to the overwhelming evidence, CPO Merritt issued summonses for "dumping refuse on a WMA" and "dumping solid waste in excess of .148 cubic yards." Sparta Police issued additional summonses.

Northern Region CPOs have been busy completing pre-employment background investigations for potential new hires, along with maintaining regional patrol and investigation functions.

Central Region Highlights

The Conservation Police would like to acknowledge Captain Lisa Lacroix. Lisa began her career 29 years ago and was assigned to Monmouth County. After patrolling the woods and waters of Monmouth County, Lisa was promoted to lieutenant and then captain of the Central Region and more recently the Southern Region. Lisa's photographic memory and extensive record keeping, always kept the wildlife poachers guessing! Lisa's accomplished career and her dedication to the North American Wildlife Enforcement Officers Association is much appreciated and we will miss her.



District 3 officers attended some beneficial training this last month. CPO Riviello attended the Gloucester County Police Academy's Basic Investigative Digital Photography course. CPO Garofalo attended the weeklong New Jersey State Police's Basic Marine Law Enforcement Officer Boat School. In addition, CPO Riviello did some outreach and attended the New Jersey Woman in the Outdoors 2nd Annual Banquet held by the National Wild Turkey Federation.

While working turkey hunters, CPO Riviello received a complaint of a turkey hunter trespassing in Burlington County. When he arrived on scene, CPO Riviello observed two harvested turkeys in the bed of a pick-up truck. After speaking with the hunter, he admitted that he had shot both turkeys while hunting on a property he did not have permission to hunt on. CPO Riviello issued the following summonses: did trespass for the purpose of hunting, over the daily bag limit of turkey, and two summonses for not tagging immediately upon harvest.

Officers received a complaint of people freshwater clamming in Doctor's Creek in Allentown. CPOs Carman and Garofalo responded with Lt. McManus. They apprehended 5 individuals from NY that were actively collecting clams and had over 19,500 freshwater clams. The individuals were charged with clamming without a license, clamming in condemned waters, and possession of exotic species without a permit.

Officer Bickerton received a complaint that an individual had harvested two turkeys on the same day. Officer Bickerton was able to interview the individual who admitted to harvesting both

turkeys the same day and found that the individual had harvested four turkeys so far this season without tagging any of them. He was issued a summons for failure to properly tag turkeys and taking turkey over the daily limit.

Lt. Mascio, CPOs Riviello, Garofalo and Bickerton have been working in the Delaware River during the striped bass, shad and river herring migration. During the report period, the officers utilized boats and land patrols to maximize the number of inspections. A total of 47 summonses were issued. Violations included; interference with the duties of a Conservation Police Officer, fishing in an illegal manner – more than 3 hooks, fishing without a fishing license, possession/take of undersized striped bass, possession/take of striped bass during the closed season, possession/take of alewife/blueback herring during the emergency closure. A total of 49 alewife/blueback herring were seized.

Southern Region Highlights

Lt. James located multiple trees that had been cut in an area of the Peaslee WMA in Vineland, Cumberland County. Multiple large oak trees had been cut into small lengths and were staged to presumably be removed at a later time. Lt. James and CPO Fox set up a trail camera on the woods road leading to the area. Two weeks later images were captured of a pickup truck entering the WMA with an empty bed and leaving with the wood in multiple trips. CPO Fox interviewed the son of the truck's registered owner who admitted to cutting and removing it for firewood. The man was issued a summons for cutting/removing vegetation from a WMA.

It has been a busy spring with a large number of dumping complaints being investigated in District 6. While investigating one complaint from the Millville WMA, In Commercial Twp., Cumberland County, CPO Fox was able to locate the responsible party with a combination of identifiers and an eyewitness description of the vehicle used. The man was charged for dumping solid waste in excess of 0.148 cu yards and dumping on a WMA. CPO Fox charged another individual for dumping solid waste in excess of 0.148 cu yards and dumping on a WMA in a section of the Peaslee WMA, Vineland, Cumberland County.

Southern Region officers received information forwarded by the Pennsylvania Game Commission that hunters had been observed walking from a wooded area in PA carrying a wild turkey that was recently shot and still flopping. The PA wardens suspected the hunters of "road hunting". CPO Vazquez led the investigation assisted by CPO Kille and Lieutenant Batten. An early morning interview of the Mullica Hill resident, Gloucester County, ensued, and it was revealed that the turkey shot adjacent to the road was actually the third illegal bird shot that week. The identity of the passenger was uncovered, and the information was passed over to PA Game Commission for prosecution. CPOs pressed the interview and determined that both the NJ and PA residents had hunted in NJ the previous week. Both hunters harvested turkeys that were in violation of NJ's tagging requirements. Issuance of summons is pending in the Pennsylvania investigation.

Lt. Batten received a trespassing complaint in Logan Township, Gloucester County. The complainant stated a hunter was parked adjacent to his residence and he had heard a shot. Lt. Batten contacted the hunter and conducted a field inspection where he determined the gun had recently been fired. The hunter stated that he had shot at a "rat" but had missed. Further inspection uncovered a recently killed wild turkey in the bed of the truck. The hunter's transportation tag was unused and not filled in representing the harvested bird. A field investigation was conducted, and two spent shot shells

and turkey feathers suggested that an additional turkey was attempted to be harvested by the hunter. Lt. Batten issued the hunter summons for failing to fill out a turkey transportation tag, attempting to take two birds in one day and taking animals in a manner not prescribed by the game code. The illegal turkey was seized as evidence and the hunter was released.

CPO Kille received a complaint regarding a Mantua Township, Gloucester County resident who allegedly shot several geese out of season. The officer interviewed the accused who willingly admitted to having shot three geese with a .22 caliber rifle as they were on his property. The resident was charged with one count of taking waterfowl in a closed season.

A complaint was called into Trenton Dispatch regarding a hunter who was witnessed shooting a turkey close to an occupied dwelling. CPO Kille led the investigation and was assisted by CPO Fox. The hunter was identified and subsequently interviewed by the officers. The interview substantiated the violation of hunting within 450' of a dwelling and hunting without the required Turkey permit. Both violations were issued to the hunter.

Lieutenant Batten was conducting a foot patrol in Greenwich Township, Cumberland County when he heard a shot from a nearby woodlot. He observed a hunter at his truck placing a turkey in the passenger side floorboard. The officer contacted the hunter moments later and conducted a field inspection of the turkey. Evidence suggested the turkey was harvested from the vehicle, but the hunter denied the allegation. No transportation tag was filled in or placed on the turkey as required by statute. A summons for failure to fill out the transportation tag was issued.

CPO Kille conducted spring, freshwater fishing patrols throughout Gloucester County. The patrols were targeted towards early morning and evening fishing patterns having been observed in his area. CPO Kille issued summons totaling: 26 fishing without a license, 1 fishing while revoked, 8 trespass for the purpose of fishing and 2 defiant trespassing while fishing.

Marine Region Highlights

In early May, CPO Bahrle was patrolling the Old Bridge, Middlesex County area where he observed individuals catching striped bass and running the fish from the pier up to their vehicle. Upon inspection, CPO Bahrle found two undersized striped bass hidden on the pier behind where they were fishing. After interviewing the fishermen for a few minutes, CPO Bahrle was able to uncover four more undersized striped bass that had been taken the fishermen's vehicle. Summons for undersize and overlimit striped bass were issued.

During a patrol on the Bureau's P/V Integrity, CPOs identified a NJ-based party boat fishing for black sea bass in Federal waters without a Federal Party/Charter Black Sea Bass Permit. While at sea, CPOs made observations of patrons on board catching and retaining black sea bass. CPOs also observed vessel employees assist patrons in removing black sea bass from their hooks and place them into coolers. Over the VHF radio, the party boat operator admitted to targeting black sea bass and claimed the vessel was properly permitted. A subsequent dockside inspection of the party boat revealed hundreds of black sea bass were landed and the operator was unable to produce a valid permit. The operator fully cooperated in processing the violation. The case was referred to National Marine Fisheries Service for possible enforcement action.