

Game Warden Field Notes

The following items are compiled from recent Texas Parks and Wildlife Department law enforcement reports.

- **Buried Treasure**

Buried deep in a Polk County thicket lay an elaborate marijuana grow site with an irrigation system and food and shelter for the people tending the plants. After the site was spotted from the air, the Polk County narcotics team moved in on foot to secure the scene. Polk and Trinity County game wardens assisted the Polk County Sheriff's Office in collecting nearly 9,000 marijuana plants from the site. No one has been charged at this time.

- **Game Warden's in Town**

When a large group of dove hunters spread out along the bank of a large pond in Montgomery County saw a game warden approaching, one hunter yelled at the others to get another hunter inside a nearby house. As the game warden checked the hunters for the appropriate licenses and hunting techniques, he saw milo grain spread along the bank of the pond and found that one hunter's shotgun was not plugged. The warden issued citations for hunting mourning dove over bait with an unplugged shotgun and without completing a hunter education course. The cases are pending.

- **High Stakes on the High Seas**

When a commercial shrimp boat drew too close to his own boat near the Port O'Connor jetties, a fishing guide opened fire with his .45 caliber weapon after the shrimp boat failed to heed his flare pistol warnings. When Matagorda and Wharton County game wardens contacted the shrimp boat crew, the wardens observed what appeared to be seven to nine bullet strikes on the steel-hulled vessel. The wardens turned the investigation over to the Matagorda County Sheriff's Office. The fishing guide faces three counts of felony deadly conduct.

- **In the Dark of the Night, the Warden Will Find You**

Late one night as he watched for spotlights, a Starr County game warden observed a single cab pickup truck traveling slowly on a county road. The warden waited for spotlights from the truck, but none appeared as it continued down the road. The warden, not wanting to give away his position, waited a few minutes before leaving the scene, but the truck turned around and stopped in front of the warden's location for about five minutes before someone got out to look for something. Once the individual got back in the truck and continued down the road, the warden stopped the vehicle when it turned off into private property. When the warden asked the two occupants what they were doing, they said they were hunting rattlesnakes. Both said they had no hunting licenses. The warden issued citations for hunting without licenses from a public road.

- **Run Aground**

For two long hours, a pair of lonely fishermen were stranded on the Rio Grande after their boat ran aground on a gravel bar about 20 miles north of Eagle Pass. Maverick County game wardens responded to the distress call, and with the aid of the U.S. Border Patrol marine unit's airboat, helped free the stuck boat. Both fishermen were okay and were taken safely back to the boat ramp by the wardens.

- **Hog Wild**

In Ramirez, a group of men were hunting feral hogs with dogs on a public roadway. When approached by a Duval County game warden, the hunters said they were hunting the area with permission from the surrounding landowners, though further investigation revealed they did not, in fact, have such permission. Nor did they possess hunting licenses.

- **No Smoking on Private Property**

While patrolling the back side of Lake Casa Blanca, two Webb County game wardens saw a black car jump the curb and turn off its lights as it drove onto private property. As the wardens watched the car for a few minutes, they saw an occasional orange glow from inside. The wardens walked over to the car and asked its occupants, a male and female, to step out. As soon as they did, the wardens noticed a strong odor of marijuana. The occupants admitted to having a small clear glass pipe with marijuana residue inside the car. The wardens confiscated the pipe, told both subjects they were trespassing on private property and issued a citation to the male for possession of drug paraphernalia.

- **Arrested Motion**

Shortly after sunset as Starr and Zapata County game wardens patrolled Falcon Lake for water safety compliance, the wardens noticed a boater in distress motioning for help. Clinging to the side of the boat, which was taking on water and drifting dangerously close to the U.S./Mexico border, were two additional fatigued individuals. The wardens rescued all three individuals, though they discovered that one had an active arrest warrant in Starr County. The subject, who learned not to boat in high winds and try to avoid arrest, was transported to the Starr County Jail.

- **Munchies Lead to Citation**

After a long morning of checking dove hunters, two Brown County game wardens took a break at an ice cream place. While waiting to receive their orders, they noticed a strong smell of marijuana. When the wardens pinpointed a person who came into the establishment smelling like marijuana, they waited until he had placed his order and sat down before asking him to step outside. They asked how much marijuana he had on him and the suspect produced a partially smoked rolled marijuana cigarette from his pocket.

- **Close Call in Cameron County**

As he cruised down South Padre Island's central boulevard, a Cameron County game warden noticed two males fighting in a convenience store parking lot. Though the warden broke up the fight, one of the subjects made multiple attempts to get into the driver door of his vehicle, so the warden forcibly detained him. After searching the vehicle, the warden found a .40 caliber handgun in plain view of the driver's door and multiple baggies of marijuana in the trunk.