

# **DNREC Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police Blotter: Sept. 16-22**

*Reminder for the week: Hunters are required to wear hunter orange and properly transport firearms for safety*

**DOVER** – To achieve public compliance with laws and regulations through education and enforcement actions that help conserve Delaware's fish and wildlife resources and ensure safe boating and public safety, DNREC's Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers between Sept. 16-22 made 2,384 contacts with hunters, anglers, boaters, and the general public, issuing 40 citations. Officers responded to 57 complaints regarding possible violations of laws and regulations or requests to assist the public. An increased Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police presence continued at the C&D Canal Conservation Area and Michael N. Castle Trail.

## **Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police in the Community**

- On Sept. 17, Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers presented information to a Hunter Education Class held at Little Creek Hunter Education Training Center, including information on the role of Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers, safe hunting practices, hunting laws, and what to expect when checked by an officer in the field.
- On Sept. 20, Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers discussed the role of Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers, answered hunting, fishing, and boating questions, and displayed the Marine Patrol vessel Oscar during a safety day at Lulu M. Ross Elementary School in Milford.

# Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police Actions

- On Sept. 20, Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers arrested Christopher Ribolla, 37, of Clayton, for one count each of unlicensed hunting, failure to display conservation access pass, unattended vehicle in a wildlife area, and driving with a suspended or revoked license at the Woodland Beach Wildlife Area near Smyrna. Ribolla was arraigned at Kent County Justice of the Peace Court 7 and released on his own recognizance pending a future court date.
- On Sept. 21, Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers responded to a report of a vessel accident in which a 20' vessel struck equipment related to a dredging operation of the Bulkhead Shoal Channel in the Delaware River near Delaware City. The vessel sustained damage but no passengers were injured. The accident remains under investigation at this time.

Citations issued by category, with the number of charges in parentheses, included:

**Wildlife Conservation:** No federal duck stamp (1), hunting wildlife out of season (1), unlicensed hunting (1), and failure to display conservation access pass (1).

**Fisheries Conservation:** *Recreational:* Possession of undersized blue crab (1), possession of undersized tautog (1), unlawful possession of tautog (1), unlicensed fishing (3), and no Fisherman Information Network (FIN) number (2).

**Boating & Boating Safety:** Operating a vessel with insufficient number of life jackets (4), operating a personal watercraft without required life jackets (1), no fire extinguisher on board (1), no boating safety certificate (1), failure to have boating safety certificate in possession (1), no boat ramp certificate (1), operating an unregistered vessel (2), failure

to observe slow no wake (1), and negligent operation of a motor vessel (1).

**Public Safety:** Driving a motor vehicle under the influence (1), failure to remain in lane of traffic (1), improper use of taillights (1), and possession of marijuana – civil (1).

**Other:** Trespassing after hours on a state wildlife area (8)\*, unattended vehicle in a wildlife area (1), driving with a suspended or revoked license (1), and operating a motor vehicle without proof of insurance (1).

*\*Includes citation(s) issued at the C&D Canal Conservation Area*

DNREC's Division of Fish & Wildlife recognizes and thanks the majority of anglers, hunters, and boaters who comply with and support Delaware's fishing, hunting, and boating laws and regulations. The Public are encouraged to report fish, wildlife, and boating violations to the Delaware Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police by calling 302-739-4580 or through the DENRP Tip app on a smartphone, which can be downloaded free of charge by searching "DENRP Tip" via the Google Play Store or the iTunes App Store. Wildlife violations may also be reported anonymously to Operation Game Theft by calling 800-292-3030, going online to <http://de.gov/ogt>, or using the DENRP Tip app. Verizon customers can connect to Operation Game Theft directly by dialing #OGT.

### ***Are you AWARE?***

Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police remind hunters that they are required to wear hunter orange for safety during all firearm deer seasons, except when hunting migratory birds. Firearm deer hunters, as well as bow hunters and small game hunters, are required to wear no less than a total of 400 square inches of hunter orange on their heads, chests, and backs combined during firearm deer seasons. Deer hunters concealed inside ground-level blinds during firearm deer

seasons must also place 400 square inches of hunter orange within 10 feet outside of the blind and at least 3 feet off the ground.

Current and upcoming hunting seasons include:

- Archery and crossbow deer season: through Feb. 2, 2020
- Gray Squirrel season: through Feb. 1, 2020 (closed during November shotgun deer season)
- Snow goose season: Oct. 1-Jan. 31, 2020, and Feb. 8, 2020
- Antlerless deer: Oct. 4-6, 21, and 25-28, including Sundays
- Muzzleloader deer season: Oct. 11-20 and Jan. 27 – Feb. 2, 2020

Hunters also are reminded that transporting a loaded firearm in any motorized vehicle, including ATVs, is prohibited. A muzzleloader can be transported with a charge in the barrel only if the cap, primer or striking mechanism is removed and the gun is enclosed in a case.

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*Follow Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police on Twitter, [https://twitter.com/DE\\_FW\\_NRPolice](https://twitter.com/DE_FW_NRPolice).*

**Contact:** Sgt. Brooke Mitchell, Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police, 302-739-9913, or 302-382-7167.