

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department  
Law Enforcement Division  
LETC/LEC State Report – March 2020  
Asst. Commander Jarret Barker

The Law Enforcement Division is currently half way through the 2019 JEA contract year. Texas has agreed to undertake five enforcement priorities; IUU, IFQ, TED, reef fish, flower garden banks and HMS species. Patrols in federal waters have discovered 35 violations that have been referred to NOAA for prosecution. Violations include 1 HMS species, 1 Ted violation and 33 reef fish violations. Texas has prosecuted one vessel for an IFQ violation.

Texas is in the fourth year of a 10 year NRDA project that prioritizes additional inspections of TED gear above and beyond the JEA contract effort. The patrols began January 1<sup>st</sup> and will conclude May 1<sup>st</sup>. There have ben no significant federal violations discovered. One shrimping vessel was found to be in possession of 71 flounder.



Texas does not have many marine mammals other than dolphins. However there is a small resident population of manatees that migrate in and out of Mexico. One of the manatees recently died. Tissue samples were collected by biologists to help better understand this population.



Texas was one of the few gulf states to have an open oyster season. Pictured below is an image of the Seadrift harbor that was overtaken with lugers from as far away as Mississippi. Recent hurricanes along the gulf coast have forced the licensed vessels to congregate in the few bay systems with sustainable reefs. This can overwhelm patrol resources and has caused the department to create saturation patrols to check for compliance.



The Mexico launcha fleet continues to fish US waters off of the Texas lower coast. Pictured below is an US Coast Guard apprehension on 2/324/20. The vessel was in possession of 1800 lbs of red snapper, sharks, and red drum.

