

# SHARK STABBING LEADS TO CHARTER CAPTAIN'S ARREST

Zane Garrett, 26, faces animal cruelty charges



Zane P. Garrett stands accused of animal cruelty after a video surfaced showing him reportedly stabbing a hooked shark at the side of a boat. MCSOI/Contributed

**A** Monroe County charter captain allegedly seen stabbing a shark multiple times in a viral video was arrested by Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) officers on June 5. Zane P. Garrett, 26, of Stock Island was charged with one felony count of animal cruelty.

On May 23, officers received tips through FWC's Wildlife Alert Program of a man repeatedly stabbing a shark on a fishing line before cutting the line and releasing the animal. In the widely-circulated video, uploaded to social media, blood clouds the water behind the caption "bud u broke my rod."

Through investigation and using video evidence provided by witnesses, FWC officers were able to locate the vessel in Key West and identify Garrett as the charter captain on the day of the incident. FWC investigators spoke with Garrett, who reportedly admitted to the act. He was arrested and taken to jail before being released on a \$10,000 bond.

"The careless cruelty displayed in this video is unacceptable," said FWC Major Alberto Maza, South Bravo Regional Commander, in a press release. "I'm proud of the public for reporting this senseless act and our officers' work in identifying the subject and holding him accountable."

The FWC takes wildlife violations very seriously and encourages the public to report them by downloading the FWC Wildlife Alert app, calling the FWC's Wildlife Alert Hotline at 888-404-FWCC (888-404-3922) or submitting a tip at myfwc.com/wildlifealert.

— Keys Weekly staff report

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

# PROTECTING PUBLIC BEACH ACCESS IN KEY LARGO

To the Editor,

A long-standing public shoreline access point in Key Largo is at risk of being lost. The public right-of-way at the end of North Bay Harbor Drive, which has been peacefully used for decades by residents to access Florida Bay, is now the subject of a legal dispute.

This matter is scheduled to be heard in Monroe County Circuit Court in Key West on Tuesday, June 17. The outcome of this case could determine whether this public access point remains available to the community — or is effectively privatized.

This parcel of public land is one of the few remaining access points to Florida Bay in the area. It offers locals and visitors a place to enjoy the natural beauty of the Keys, watch sunsets and connect with the water. These spaces are more than scenic — they are vital to our identity, our economy, and our rights as citizens. Under Florida law, public access to coastal areas is part of our shared heritage. Attempts to eliminate it reflect a troubling trend of shrinking shoreline access throughout the state.

This case isn't just about one

street — it's about the growing pattern of efforts to restrict public access to our coasts. The Florida Keys are unique, not just for their ecology, but for a culture deeply tied to the water. If we allow this access point to be taken away, we risk losing part of what makes our island home so special.

The Florida Keys Chapter of the Surfrider Foundation believes it is important for residents to be aware that the future of this location — and the precedent it may set for other shoreline access points across the island chain — is now in the hands of the court. We are committed to monitoring the case closely and continuing to advocate for public access throughout the Keys.

We would also like to thank the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners for their continued support in defending this important public beach access point.

Public access to the water is a right rooted in our history and identity. Let's ensure it remains part of our future.

Katie Cleek  
Chair, Surfrider Foundation  
Florida Keys Chapter

# TRAFFIC STOP IN KEY LARGO LEADS TO GUN AND DRUG CHARGES



File Photo

**F**our men were arrested following a June 7 traffic stop on U.S. 1 in which two handguns — one of them reported stolen — and drugs were found.

According to the Monroe County Sheriff's Office, deputies stopped a Nissan sedan at about 7:15 p.m. near MM 103 in Key Largo. Deputies said there was a strong odor of marijuana coming from the vehicle. A search by deputies led to the discovery of two loaded 9mm handguns — one of them reportedly stolen from a vehicle parked at a Florida Panthers hockey game, according to the Sunrise Police Department — two loaded extended

magazines and about 22.5 grams of marijuana.

Deputies say Demerion Altwon Fields, 21, of Greenacres, was driving. He was charged with driving without a valid driver's license, grand theft of a firearm, possession of a firearm or ammunition being the subject of a risk protection order, possession of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia.

One of the occupants, Isaiah Dimitris McCrary, 20, of West Palm Beach, has a previous conviction of robbery with a deadly weapon in Palm Beach County. Deputies said Fields was not allowed to possess firearms due to a

previous protection order against him in which he was deemed an extreme risk. He was charged with grand theft of a firearm, possession of a firearm by a Florida delinquent, possession of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Jimmy Cliff Leger, 21, of Palm Springs was charged with possession of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia. Todd Bradley Presendieu, 20, of Lake Worth was charged with possession of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia.

All four were taken to jail.

— Keys Weekly staff report