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Rock fishing safety at Royal National Park

The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and the Australian National Sportfishing Association (ANSA) have been working to improve rock fishing safety in Royal National Park.

NPWS Acting Regional Manager, Michael Treanor said that Angel Ring life buoys had been installed at popular rock fishing spots in the park over Christmas and New Year.

“Rock fishing is very popular in Royal National Park and we want to make sure that anglers are as safe as possible,” he said.

“Angel Rings are now in place at Garie, Semi-Detached Point (South Era), Snapper Point (Era/Burning Palms), Figure 8 Pools rock platform, and Bulgo North and Bulgo South.

“In addition to ANSA, I’d also like to thank cabin community members Bruce Reyburn, Denis Brown and John Arney for their help in installing the rings.

“The Angel Rings are a first step and we are now looking to install multi-lingual safety signage at popular rock fishing spots throughout the park.

“In addition starting in February with the help of ANSA, we’ve organised for English, Korean and Chinese speaking educators to visit popular Royal rock fishing spots and talk to anglers about rock fishing safety.”

ANSA Angel Rings coordinator Stan Konstantaras said rock fishing was very popular but could be very dangerous.

“Unfortunately there have been many deaths associated with this sport and ANSA has been working with the NSW Government to develop and deliver safety programs, including Angel Rings,” he said.

“It’s often inexperienced anglers who put their lives at risk by fishing in dangerous conditions.

“Our experience is that a multi-faceted approach works best – education is the key and we target known black spots.

“Angel Rings are important part of the approach – being a safety back up should someone be swept off the rocks into the water.

“There are a number of precautions anglers can take when fishing off the rocks.

“Only fish where you know it’s safe and it’s vital to be aware of tides and weather, as things can change very quickly.

“Wear a life jacket at all times – particularly if you’re not a good swimmer.”

Ring installation and education is being undertaken as a jointly funded project between ANSA, Surf Life Saving Australia, the Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW, the Recreational Fishing Trust / DI&I (Fisheries), and the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water.

Further rock fishing safety tips can be found on the web at www.safefishing.com.au

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