

**Media Release:**

**17.4.08**

## **Ellery Creek Safety Concerns**

The Department of Natural Resources, Environment and The Arts has issued a reminder that visitors to national parks must exercise care and caution, so as to not put either their health and safety, or that of others, at risk.

Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Service senior ranger John Papple said the reminder comes after reports of dangerous behaviour at Ellery Creek Big Hole in the West MacDonnell National Park during the Easter long weekend.

“We received reports about a group of kids forming a bike ramp between the hill on the eastern side and the waterhole,” Mr Papple said.

“The kids were reportedly riding BMX style bikes down this ramp and then jumping them into the waterhole.

“This type of behaviour is not only dangerous to their own personal safety, but also to the safety of others.

“The Ellery Creek Big Hole is a naturally formed waterhole and submerged logs and rocks are common, jumping and diving into the water is prohibited as per the safety signs around the area.

“In 1999 a Swiss tourist died after striking his head on a submerged rock in the waterhole so we cannot stress enough the importance of adhering to these safety warnings.”

Mr Papple said visitor safety at parks and reserves administered by the Department of Natural Resources, Environment and The Arts is the number one priority.

“With so many people visiting West MacDonnell National Park, we also know visitor behaviour has an impact on others, so we strongly encourage responsible and considerate visitor behaviour,” Mr Papple said.

“The Parks and Wildlife Service want visitors to have safe and enjoyable experiences in our national parks but this will only happen if all visitors do the right thing and behave responsibly.

“If anyone knows of, or witnesses, irresponsible or dangerous behaviour, they are encouraged to pass on any details to Parks and Wildlife Service so that rangers and police can take action.”

The Department of Natural Resources, Environment and The Arts continues to welcome visitors to parks and reserves and reiterates the need for visitors to exercise care and caution.

Ends

**Media Note – for more information contact John Papple on 8956 7799**

**Image – Senior ranger John Papple at Ellery Creek Big Hole**

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