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New fish species flock to artificial reef

Twelve months on from the deployment of two artificial reefs in the South West, Recfishwest says the initiative has been hugely beneficial for the State.

Each artificial reef is made up of 30 ten-tonne reinforced concrete modules placed in six clusters across four hectares. These state-of-the-art modules were part of the State Government’s \$1.86 million commitment to artificial reefs through Royalty for Region funding with a further \$520,000 of recreational fishing licence money being allocated to the project.

“This is a great example of recreational fishers benefiting directly from the introduction of recreational fishing licence fees,” Recfishwest Principal Policy Officer Leyland Campbell said.

“The reefs were deployed to create additional fishing opportunities in Geographe Bay, in the state’s south west. The locations were chosen after consultation with a stakeholder group established by Recfishwest. Both locations are close to boat ramps and provide safe access for small vessels.

“The reefs have attracted twice as many fish species as was previously identified at these locations including Samson fish, Silver Trevally, Dhufish, Mackerel, Pink Snapper as well as unprecedented numbers of Yellowtail Kingfish.

“As the peak recreational fishing body in WA, Recfishwest worked closely with the government and project partners to bring the artificial reefs project to fruition and feedback from recreational fishers indicates these artificial reefs have been a huge success.

“Prior to this project Recfishwest identified the development of habitat enhancement structures as one of the priorities for WA’s recreational fishing sector and we are pleased the State Government listened to the voice of recreational fishers and took the lead in such a wonderful project.

“Artificial reefs can be used as a legitimate tool in Fisheries management and Recfishwest look forward to the development of more reefs and other habitat enhancement structures around the State in the near future.”

Recfishwest advocates for sustainable fishing resources and policies that ensure long term benefits to all recreational fishers.

For more information about Recfishwest visit www.recfishwest.org.au or phone 9246 3366. For more information on new recreational fishing rules visit www.fish.wa.gov.au.

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