

and were intercepted shortly after by other officers nearby who had been called in. A search of the Pajero revealed 47 snapper, all undersize.”

“The daily bag limit for snapper is 10 per person, of which no more than 3 can be 40cm or more.”

“Officers seized the 47 snapper, two fishing rods and the Pajero on the spot.”

“Upon approaching the other two men still fishing from the rocks, officers allegedly saw them throw three fish into a rocky crevice. They were retrieved and found to be undersize snapper.”

During surveillance, officers had observed the men return to the car park so suspected there were more fish in a vehicle, however the duo did not admit to owning a car, and said they had travelled by train. “A search of their identification and a registration check revealed a Holden Astra belonged to one of the men and was in the car park.”

“The man then allegedly admitted to owning the car, which was found to contain 72 snapper, all undersize. The fish measured between 17.9cm and 27.4cm.

“Officers seized the snapper, two fishing rods, a cooler and the Astra.”

The four men will be charged on summons with various offences including taking and possessing undersize fish, taking more than the catch limit, and concealing their catch from Fisheries Officers.

To report suspicious or illegal fishing activity call 13FISH (133474) anytime. You can remain anonymous. Make the call and make the difference!

## **Ab Poachers nabbed at Cape Schanck**

Fisheries Officers seized a car, and arrested five men, on a Wednesday afternoon for allegedly taking nearly 400 blacklip abalone at Cape Schanck on the Mornington Peninsula. Victorian Fisheries Authority Director of Education and Enforcement Ian Parks said the highly organised illegal fishing syndicate from

Pakenham, Cranbourne East, and Botanic Ridge were apprehended by 12 Fisheries Officers from three stations with support from Victoria Police.

“This type of alleged illegal fishing has the potential to do serious damage to the sustainability of Victoria’s abalone population, which is highly valued by commercial and recreational fishers,” Mr Parks said. “Officers observed four of the men walk from a Cape Schanck car park down to the rocks, leaving one of the men at the car park as a lookout.”

“Of the four men on the rocks, three entered the water for several hours to dive for abalone and the fourth stayed as another lookout.”

“When the four men returned to their Commodore and allegedly put a large bag of abalone in the boot, Fisheries Officers swooped in numbers. All five of the alleged offenders ran away, some not making it far, and others hiding in dense scrub nearby until being located and arrested.”

“The bag in the car boot allegedly contained 315 abalone however officers who’d done surveillance on the men suspected more abalone had been harvested, so entered the water to search.”

“They allegedly found two more bags containing another 84 abalone, making 399 in total, 263 of which were undersize.”



“Fisheries Officers returned all the abalone to the water alive and Victoria Police transported the men to the Rosebud Police Station.” Mr Parks said the five men will attend court to face various charges under the Fisheries Act including taking and possessing a commercial quantity of a priority species, trafficking a commercial