HMAS Arunta Sailors Visit Alice Springs Desert Park

Parks and Wildlife Minister Alison Anderson will today meet nine sailors from HMAS Arunta at the Alice Springs Desert Park.

Ms Anderson, who speaks Arrernte, said she was looking forward to meeting the sailors and seeing them enjoy what the popular tourist attraction has to offer.

“HMAS Arunta is named after the language of Central Australia’s Arrernte people,” Ms Anderson said.

“The close and special bond between the Arrernte people and HMAS Arunta stretches back over many years.

“This bond has previously been demonstrated by the Arrernte Council presenting HMAS Arunta with a flag displaying a Perrente lizard, which is an animal from the dreamtime for the Arrernte people.

“The ship, which is the second of the Royal Australian Navy’s eight Anzac class frigates, often sends contingents to Alice Springs to maintain the bond with the Arrernte people.

“The Alice Springs Desert Park provides a unique visitor experience that I am sure the visiting sailors will enjoy, further strengthening their bond with Alice Springs.

“There are many different flora and fauna species the sailors might not have seen before and they will spend time with Desert Park guide and Arrernte man Doug Taylor, who will teach them about traditional Arrernte tools and weapons.

“The Desert Park is a great place for tourists – and locals – to go to as they learn a lot about the culture and language of the region.”

The HMAS Arunta sailors are expected to meet Ms Anderson and Mr Taylor at 2pm today.

The Alice Springs Desert Park is open daily from 7.30am to 6pm but closed Christmas Day.

People can go to www.alicespringsdesertpark.com.au or contact the Desert Park on 8951 8788 for more details about the Park and admission prices.