



AAC Publications

Ledge Fall – Inadequate Protection

West Virginia, New River Gorge, Fern Buttress

On the afternoon of June 3, a male climber (age unknown) was attempting to lead the route Ritz Cracker, a 5.9 trad climb at the Fern Buttress area. According to a National Park Service report, the climber fell above his last piece of gear and impacted with the prominent ledge about halfway up the route, injuring an ankle. NPS rangers responded to the accident and assisted the injured climber to Fayette Station Road, where he refused transport and left the area. (Source: National Park Service IMARS incident report.)

ANALYSIS

Ritz Cracker is a popular crack climb, with the crux above a wide ledge. At the crux, the hand crack narrows to finger size and small protection must be placed. While additional details regarding the fall were not available, adequate protection and an attentive belay are essential above ledges and other terrain where a fall could result in injury. (Source: The Editors.)

Images

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