

Biosphere Page

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NICA education officer Catherine Cheung with Megumi Yamaguchi, Mana Miyashita, Yoh Takashima and Mika Hiroshima. Sunshine Coast Regional Council funds this project.

PHOTO: OWEN JACQUES/N24148E

Visitors 'do their bit' to help out

By OWEN JACQUES

Japanese students studying English in Noosa have been enjoying the beaches, the weather and the natural beauty of the region and now they want to give something back.

About eight students from the Global Village English Centre at Noosa have taken the time to meet with the Noosa Integrated Catchment Association (NICA) to find out how they can help keep the region clean, while improving their English skills.

Activity co-ordinator Don Newman-Tyler said the decision grew organically from the

students, not as something pushed by the centre.

"Yoh Takashima just decided it would be a good idea to do community work and work with locals," he said.

"It's mostly only Japanese students at this stage, about eight or so at the moment.

"I'm not sure if they have any new recruits."

Mr Newman-Tyler said he was "very impressed" and that their decision had left people "scratching their heads".

"They're just doing their bit for Noosa," he said.

"And people will come up and approach the group, so it gives them a chance to speak with

locals."

NICA education officer Catherine Cheung met with four of the students on Monday and they were yet to discuss what work they would do.

"They're interested in doing some clean-up work and they found our website," she said.

NICA has often had volunteers dressed up in safari gear, trolling the shores of Noosa for cigarette butts.

"They might be interested in dressing up in the butt-hunters outfit," she said.

"But this is the first time we've ever met.

"There is a range of things they can do."