

MEDIA RELEASE – 6 MARCH 2023

ANZ CHOOSES TO TREAD LIGHTLY WHILE IN NOOSA

The Specialist Property Team at ANZ stepped away from behind the desk to connect with Noosa's rich diverse environment and volunteered to clean up Main Beach while in Noosa with Plastic Free Noosa under the Tread Lightly Noosa program.

The group met at the Visitor Information Centre on Hastings Street this week and after a brief presentation, volunteers collected their upcycled malt bags (generously donated by Heads of Noosa) and gloves before heading out to Main Beach eager to collect microplastics and other plastic pollution from First Point to The Groyne and in towards Noosa Woods.

After an hour and a half of trawling the foreshore, rock walls, vegetation and areas adjacent to the boardwalk – including the garden beds (often a hiding spot for empty bottles and cans), a total of 33.4kg of waste was collected and close to 3,000 individual pieces of litter removed from the environment.

Volunteers were surprised by the volume of waste found with many beginning the clean-up with the view '...the beach is clean and there was no rubbish to be found' shares Peita Otterbach, Plastic Free Noosa Program Manager.

Volunteers emptied their bags onto a mat set up in Noosa Woods and whilst some observed, a number chose to get hands-on and join in on the sorting and recording of waste collected. From separating plastic and compostable straws and single-use takeaway food packaging, to counting hair ties, band aides and cigarette butts, delegates gained insight into the usual litter culprits and the method of data collection used by the Plastic Free Noosa program under the Australian Marine Debris Initiative.

Jason Cannock from ANZ commented on the program "The Tread Lightly Noosa Program was a wonderful opportunity for ANZ to give back to the local community in such a positive way. The program coordinators did an amazing job in the lead up to our afternoon of volunteering. Our staff were provided with a professional briefing to explain the task ahead along with information about the local environment and the impacts of plastic pollutions. We were amazed at the amount of waste collected, 33kg removed from a 1.2km stretch of Noosa Main Beach. With waste collected, sorted and recorded our staff were able to see the impacts of our efforts and we appreciated the opportunity to make a difference to this beautiful environment."

'It is one thing to collect rubbish but when volunteers choose to go one step further and get involved in waste sorting and recording, powerful and productive conversations are usually had, and the ANZ team of volunteers was no exception' Otterbach explains.

Curious to understand the local contributing factors driving the volume of waste and relating this to their own hometowns, the conversation organically evolved amongst the ANZ volunteers to the journey of waste - from production through to disposal and its impacts on the environment.

'It was encouraging to see the energy and enthusiasm amongst the team lift as they explored the power of consumers and what they may do as collective to eliminate plastic pollution from the outset while in Noosa and when they return home to their daily lives.'

'The enormity of plastic pollution can be overwhelming for some but it's the brainstorming and collaborating on solutions that often brings a team together, especially amongst corporate groups' shared Otterbach.

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The Plastic Free Noosa Beach Clean-ups are one of the six environment-based experiences available to visitors under the Tread Lightly Noosa program, launched by Tourism Noosa in December in 2022. Plastic Free Noosa looks forward to hosting Fun Over 50s on the 21st March for a beach clean-up under the Tread Lightly Noosa program.

For further information on the Tread Lightly Noosa program visit:
<https://www.treadlightlynoosa.au>

Click [here](#) to view the Web Gallery or copy and paste this link:
<https://tourismnoosa.mediavalet.com/galleries/9f2baa7a-4d37-4b2c-96e8-ce938c>

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