

Bid to save turtles from bags, bright lights

By JOHN ANDERSEN

TOWNSVILLE turtle lovers have formed a group to help save sea turtles from plastic bags, careless boaties, and the bright lights of the city.

The Indo-Pacific Sea Turtle Conservation Group's project officer, Karen Bolles, said turtles were at risk from a number of things including boat strike injuries, habitat change that meant beach nesting sites became part of the urban sprawl, and from plastic bags they ate, mistaking them for their number one prey, jellyfish.

Ms Bolles said street lights disoriented both adult and baby turtles.

She said they could be drawn towards the lights instead of the ocean and ran the risk of being run over by cars as they made their way across roadways.

The project officer said the group planned to com-



FAN . . . Karen Bolles, project officer for the turtle conservation group Photo: SCOTT RADFORD-CHISHOLM SR172035

pile the first report on the number of sea turtles that nest in the Townsville region.

She said the Townsville

region was not a major nesting area, but that flatback and green turtles did lay eggs on local beaches including The

Strand. Ms Bolles said the group would hold a public meeting in conference room one at the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park

Authority at 6.30pm today and at 2pm on Sunday.

For more information about becoming involved, phone 47815 019.