

MTIASIC Lionfish Project

Mitigating the Threats of Invasive Alien Species in the Insular Caribbean (MTIASIC) is a regional project, which is nationally executed by The Department of Marine Resources (DMR) in partnership with local and regional organizations to prevent, eradicate, and manage invasive alien species.

The MTIASIC Project has 4 main objectives:

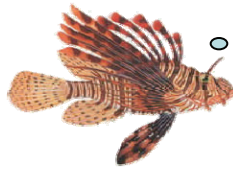
- 1) Engage in outreach and educational initiatives;
- 2) Provide research opportunities;
- 3) Develop and execute lionfish pilot project; and
- 4) Review and reform policy.

YOU can HELP by:

- ◇ Educating yourself and others
- ◇ Reporting lionfish sightings to Department of Marine Resources
- ◇ Volunteering with DMR & the MTIASIC Project
- ◇ Participating in removal efforts
- ◇ **START EATING LIONFISH!!!**



Image by Stuart Cove Dive Bahamas



GROUPE
ain't got nut-
tin on Me!

Local & Regional Partners



BEST Commission



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MTIASIC Bahamas Lionfish Project

Lionfish Safe Capture, Handling & Cleaning Brochure



Image by Stuart Cove Dive Bahamas www.stuartcove.com



The Commonwealth of The Bahamas

Capturing Lionfish

Lionfish are invasive alien species in the Bahamas! They are outcompeting and preying on commercially and ecologically important marine species.

The best way to manage the invasive lionfish is to **EAT IT!**

Two (2) methods are commonly used to capture lionfish; netting and spearing.

Pairs of handheld nets with aluminum frames and vinyl netting are used to collect lionfish. To capture a lionfish, position the nets to block potential escape routes. Maneuver the nets **slowly** to surround the fish.

Lionfish are also captured with a Hawaiian sling or a pole spear. Pole spears with paralyzer-tips are safer to use because they prevent the fish from sliding along the spear.

Netting is preferred when collecting lionfish for research.



Images by Stuart Cove Dive Bahamas www.stuartcove.com



Paralyzer-tip for pole spears.

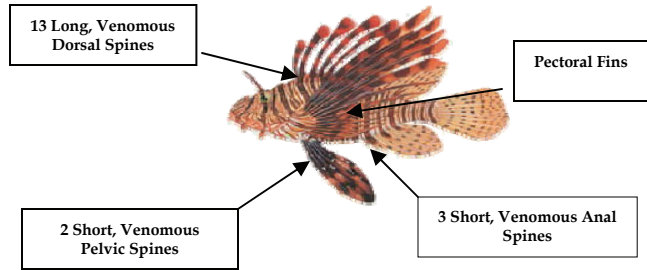


Image by Stuart Cove Dive Bahamas www.stuartcove.com

Netting minimizes damage to the specimen and allows the fish to be captured humanely.

Lionfish can also be caught on hook and line.

Handling Lionfish

The only way to handle lionfish is **SAFELY!!!** Heavy-duty gloves should be worn at all times when handling lionfish. Hold the fish by the head to avoid the spines. Puncture proof gloves will protect your hands from lionfish stings and the sharp protruding tentacles located on the head.

Cleaning Lionfish

To avoid being stuck by the venomous spines when preparing the lionfish, begin removing the dorsal spines by making a V-cut along the top on both sides of the fish. After loosening the spines pry them out completely (see photos



Image by DMR

below).

Remove the anal and pelvic spines as described above (see photo overleaf). The cartilaginous ventral fins are not venomous and can be removed in the same way.



Image by DMR

Use a kitchen shears or clippers to remove the venomous spines on smaller fish.



Image by DMR

Lionfish scales are small and easy to remove. Once scaled, prepare the fish for cooking e.g. fillet, pan fry, bake, ceviche, alfredo, etc.

First Aid Procedures

If you are stuck by a venomous spine, stop what you are doing and seek medical attention **IMMEDIATELY!!!**

Check for and remove all pieces of spine left in the wound. Pre-treatment includes applying heat to the wound to prevent the venom from spreading. Use hot water, as hot as can be tolerated (not more than 100—110°F), or an instant heat pack should be applied directly to the wound for 15 to 20 minute intervals.

Repeat if pain persists. Over-the-counter painkillers should also be taken for additional pain relief.

If at sea use hot water from the jet stream of an outboard engine.

