



Invasive Lionfish: The Next Grouper?

By [STEVE NEWBORN \(/PEOPLE/STEVE-NEWBORN\)](/PEOPLE/STEVE-NEWBORN) • AUG 23, 2017



[Tweet \(http://twitter.com/intent/tweet?\)](http://twitter.com/intent/tweet?)

[url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.tinyurl.com%2Fya9gufdz&text=Invasive%20Lionfish%3A%20The%20Next%20Grouper%3F\)](http://twitter.com/intent/tweet?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.tinyurl.com%2Fya9gufdz&text=Invasive%20Lionfish%3A%20The%20Next%20Grouper%3F)



[Share \(http://facebook.com/sharer.php?\)](http://facebook.com/sharer.php?)

[u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.tinyurl.com%2Fya9gufdz&t=Invasive%20Lionfish%3A%20The%20Next%20Grouper%3F\)](http://facebook.com/sharer.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.tinyurl.com%2Fya9gufdz&t=Invasive%20Lionfish%3A%20The%20Next%20Grouper%3F)

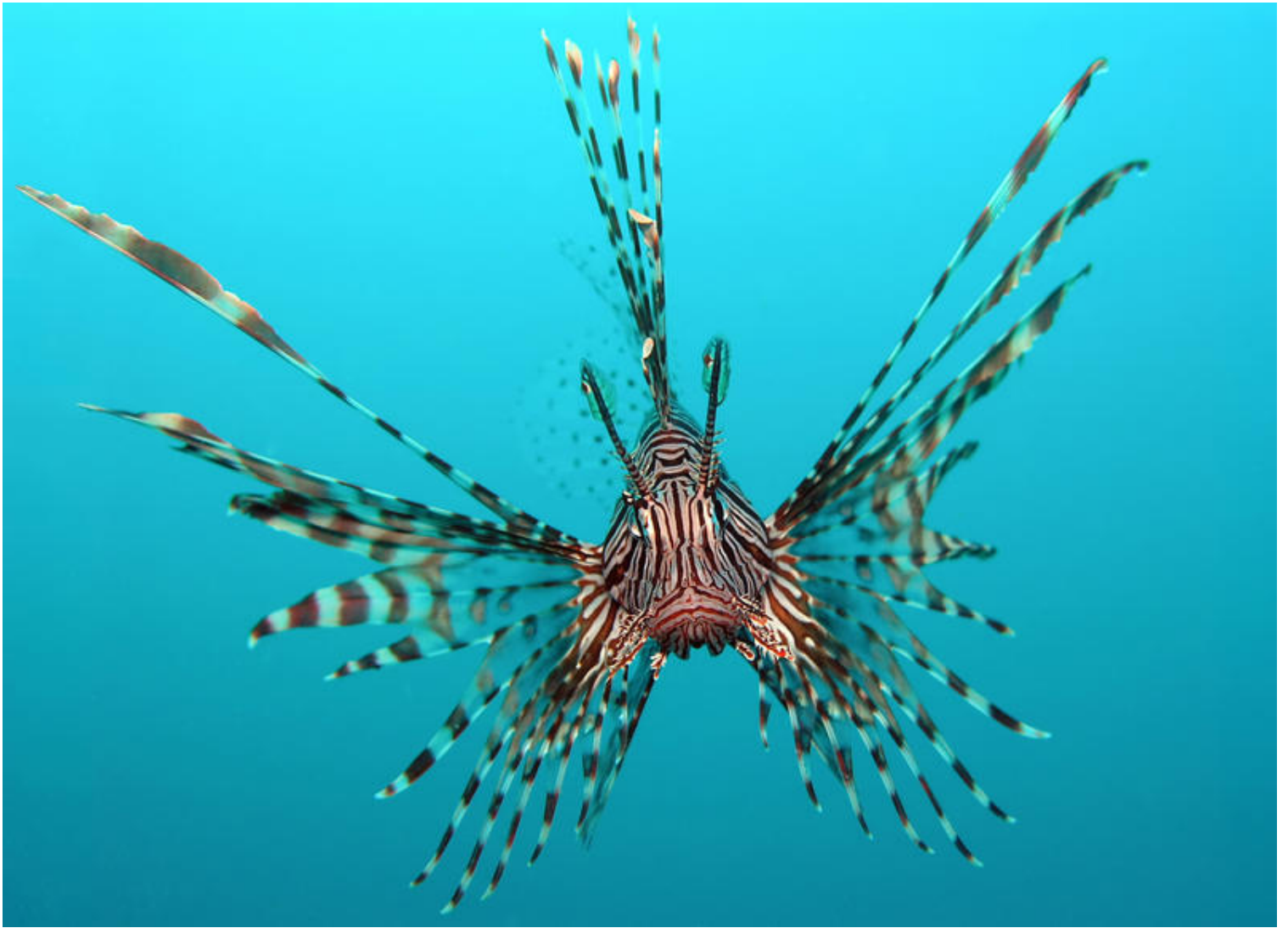


[Google+ \(https://plus.google.com/share?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.tinyurl.com%2Fya9gufdz\)](https://plus.google.com/share?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.tinyurl.com%2Fya9gufdz)



[Email \(mailto:?\)](mailto:)

[subject=Invasive%20Lionfish%3A%20The%20Next%20Grouper%3F&body=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.tinyurl.com%2Fya9gufdz\)](mailto:subject=Invasive%20Lionfish%3A%20The%20Next%20Grouper%3F&body=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.tinyurl.com%2Fya9gufdz)




(http://mediad.publicbroadcasting.net/p/wusf/files/styles/x_large/public/201708/lionfish2_1.jpg)

WIKIPEDIA.COM



Listen

1:06



They're beautiful - and they're deadly. And they're here. Lionfish (<https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/lionfish-facts.html>) are infesting waters around Florida, and there might be one tasty way to stem the tide of this invasive species.

Lionfish were named for the beautiful mane of deadly stingers that surround their body. They were introduced in South Florida in the mid-1980's, and have since spread throughout the Caribbean, the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Coast to New England. They're voracious eaters, outcompeting everything in their path.

But lionfish have one weakness: they're delicious. So marketers are looking to make it the next hot seafood item. Whole Foods has sold more than 35,000 pounds of the delicacy in the past year. David Ventura is the supermarket chain's regional seafood coordinator.

"They've been very, very passionate about it, they've been very curious. Some of them are very well informed - especially residents that live in Florida, they're aware of the invasive species in Florida," Ventura said of the reaction to carrying lionfish. "I personally eat it in the form of a sushi, ceviche, fish taco, pan sautéed. So it's very, very versatile. It's mild, it tastes very similar to grouper. Most comments are very positive, quite frankly."

Ventura took part in a panel on lionfish at the American Fisheries Society's (<https://afsannualmeeting.fisheries.org/>) conference in Tampa.

Here's the National Ocean Service's (<https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/lionfish-facts.html>) take on the species:

The lionfish, a longstanding showstopper in home aquariums, is a flourishing invasive species in U.S. Southeast and Caribbean coastal waters. This invasive species has the potential to harm reef ecosystems because it is a top predator that competes for food and space with overfished native stocks such as snapper and grouper. Scientists fear that lionfish will also kill off helpful species such as algae-eating parrotfish, allowing seaweed to overtake the reefs. In the U.S., the lionfish population is continuing to grow and increase its range. This is largely because lionfish have no known predators and reproduce all year long; a mature female releases roughly two million eggs a year.



(http://mediad.publicbroadcasting.net/p/wusf/files/styles/x_large/public/201708/lionfish-factsheet_0.jpg)

CREDIT COURTESY NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE


TAGS: [LIONFISH \(/TERM/LIONFISH\)](#)


 [Tweet \(http://twitter.com/intent/tweet?](http://twitter.com/intent/tweet?)

[url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.tinyurl.com%2Fya9gufdz&text=Invasive%20Lionfish%3A%20The%20Next%20Grouper%3F](http://twitter.com/intent/tweet?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.tinyurl.com%2Fya9gufdz&text=Invasive%20Lionfish%3A%20The%20Next%20Grouper%3F))

 [Share \(http://facebook.com/sharer.php?](http://facebook.com/sharer.php?)

[u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.tinyurl.com%2Fya9gufdz&t=Invasive%20Lionfish%3A%20The%20Next%20Grouper%3F](http://facebook.com/sharer.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.tinyurl.com%2Fya9gufdz&t=Invasive%20Lionfish%3A%20The%20Next%20Grouper%3F))

 [Google+ \(https://plus.google.com/share?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.tinyurl.com%2Fya9gufdz\)](https://plus.google.com/share?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.tinyurl.com%2Fya9gufdz)

 [Email \(mailto:?\)](mailto:?)

[subject=Invasive%20Lionfish%3A%20The%20Next%20Grouper%3F&body=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.tinyurl.com%2Fya9gufdz](mailto:?subject=Invasive%20Lionfish%3A%20The%20Next%20Grouper%3F&body=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.tinyurl.com%2Fya9gufdz))

 Recommend Share

Sort by Best ▾




Join the discussion...

**Robert Wilkos** • 19 hours ago

Lionfish are tasty...so do it...soon! Put a price tag on its head so we can eat our way from a growing problem and before they eat their way into a bigger one.

^ ▾ • Reply • Share ▸

 File failed to load: <https://cdnjs.cloudflare.com/ajax/libs/mathjax/2.7.1/extensions/MathZoom.js>

RELATED CONTENT



[remove-invasive-species-without-disturbing-other-wildlife\)](#)
[FWC Urges Lionfish Divers to Remove Invasive Species Without Disturbing Other Wildlife \(/post/fwc-urges-lionfish-divers-remove-invasive-species-without-disturbing-other-wildlife\)](#)
 JUL 14, 2017

[\(/post/fwc-urges-lionfish-divers-remove-invasive-species-without-disturbing-other-wildlife\)](#)



[floridas-coasts\)](#)
[Lionfish Pervade Waters Off Florida's Coasts \(/post/lionfish-pervade-waters-floridas-coasts\)](#)
 MAY 22, 2017

[\(/post/lionfish-pervade-waters-floridas-coasts\)](#)

[\(/post/saturday-marks-fwc-lionfish-challenge-kickoff-lionfish-removal-and-awareness-day\)](#)
[Saturday Marks FWC Lionfish Removal And Awareness Day \(/post/saturday-marks-fwc-lionfish-challenge-kickoff-lionfish-removal-and-awareness-day\)](#)
 MAY 19, 2017



[shs-feeding-frenzy-causing-economic-damage\)](#)
[Stuffed to the Gills: Invasive Lionfish's Feeding Frenzy Causing Economic Damage \(/post/stuffed-gills-invasive-lionfishs-feeding-frenzy-causing-economic-damage\)](#)

MAR 8, 2015

[\(/post/stuffed-gills-invasive-lionfishs-feeding-frenzy-causing-economic-damage\)](#)

WUSF Partners

(<http://www.pbs.org/>)

(<http://www.npr.org/>)



(<http://wusf-cardonations.org/>)



(http://www.wusf.usf.edu/_iContact/Sign-Up_iContact_form.html)

 (<http://www.cpb.org/>)

(<http://protectmypublicmedia.org/>)

© 2017 WUSF News