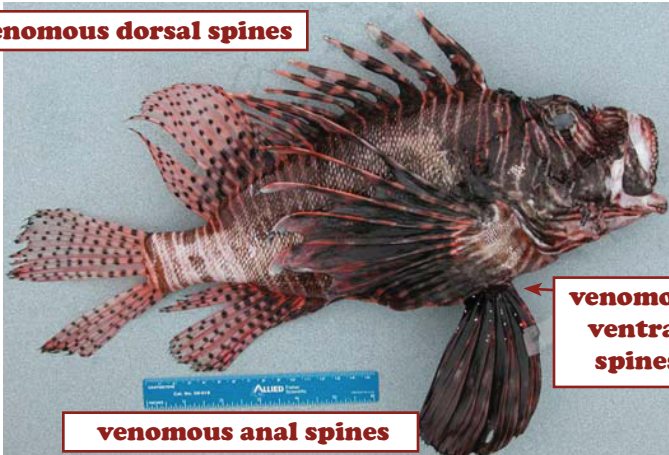


# Divers, Have You Seen Me?

venomous dorsal spines



venomous ventral spines

venomous anal spines

The venomous Indo-Pacific ‘Lionfish’ is regularly observed in habitats within the southeast region (Florida to North Carolina) and the Bahamas. These fish are not native to Atlantic waters and may have a negative impact on native fish populations. **All of their spines are venomous and can cause extreme pain!** If stung, immerse wound in hot water and seek medical attention as soon as possible.

## Identification:

- Lionfish have distinctive red, maroon, and white vertical stripes;
- Fleshy tentacles above eyes and below mouth;
- Fan-like pectoral fins;
- 13 long separated dorsal spines;
- 10-11 dorsal soft rays;
- 3 anal spines;
- and 6-7 anal soft rays;
- An adult lionfish can grow as large as 18”

## Geographic Location and Habitat:

Lionfish are native to Indo-Pacific waters and are now being reported primarily by Scuba divers from the Bahamas to Cape Hatteras NC in water depths from 5 to 300 ft on hard bottom, coral reef and artificial substrates. Lionfish can also be caught by hook and line. NOAA requests information about all Lionfish collected by hook and line. Location information such as lat/long, depth and type of bait and tackle are encouraged.



Lionfish underwater

**Recommendation:** If you catch a lionfish be extremely careful, do not come in contact with the dorsal, anal or ventral spines. If fish must be handled, thick PVC gloves or a gaff is recommended. Please do not throw lionfish back in the water! NOAA is interested in all lionfish specimens and reports. Put lionfish on ice and report any lionfish catches to NOAA at (252) 728-8714 or email [reportlionfish@noaa.gov](mailto:reportlionfish@noaa.gov)

Report online at <http://www8.nos.noaa.gov/nccos/ccfhr/lionfishreport.aspx>

For more information and to print out additional flyers go to:

<http://coastalscience.noaa.gov/education/lionfish.html>

<http://lionfish.eisf.org>

or google “lionfish outreach”

