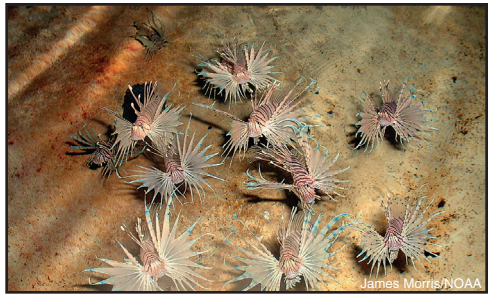

Karen Doody


James Morris/NOAA

EAT LIONFISH

In the U.S. and the Caribbean, lionfish are an invasive species — a top predator with the potential to create massive and irreversible harm to our reef ecosystems. Fortunately for our reefs, the flashy lionfish has caught the attention of the hungriest predators of all: People! The “Eat Lionfish” campaign is a way to make the public aware of this growing threat and invite them to be part of the strategy to combat it and enjoy a tasty fish at the same time.

THE FACTS

- We can’t possibly eat too many of them.
- Lionfish are an invasive species threatening the delicate balance of our US and Caribbean coral reefs, which support our fisheries. It would be a great success to eat them out of existence in these areas.
- Lionfish threaten the recovery of overfished native stocks, like snapper and grouper, because they compete for the same food. Scientists fear that lionfish will also kill off helpful species such as algae-eating parrotfish, which would allow algae to overtake our reefs.
- Eating lionfish can help reef recovery.
- In the near future, struggling fishing communities may benefit from the income they can realize by harvesting lionfish.
- The sooner we act the better.
- Between 2004 and 2008, local densities of lionfish off of North Carolina increased approximately 700% in some locations. We expect lionfish densities to continue to increase in the Atlantic for the foreseeable future. We have some opportunity to limit the damage if we move quickly.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Diners who choose lionfish are not only getting a delicious fish; they are making a direct contribution to preserving our coral reefs and our communities.

Eat sustainable, eat lionfish!

sea to table

REEF

PARTNERS

NOAA is on the forefront of lionfish research, which is centered at its laboratory in Beaufort, NC. NOAA recommends eating lionfish as a way to help reduce the impact of this invader on US and Caribbean reefs.

Barton Seaver is a Nationally recognized chef and fellow with both the Blue Ocean Institute and National Geographic.

Sean Dimin is the proprietor of Sea to Table, a company that seeks out sustainablymanaged fisheries needing better access to markets, connecting fishermen with top chefs.

REEF (The Reef Environmental Education Foundation), a prominent grassroots organization of ecologically minded divers, fishermen, and others who work on research efforts to track lionfish.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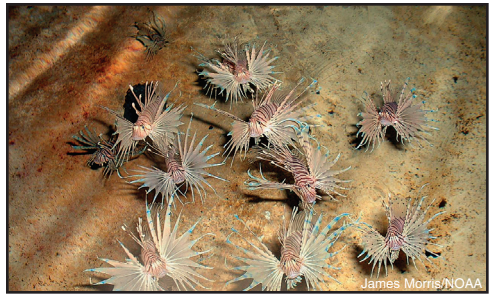
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