

The Invasive Lionfish Web Portal

El Pez León Invasor Portal Web

Le Envahissantes Lionfish Web Portal

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Introduction

Invasive lionfish (*Pterois volitans/miles*) were first sighted off the Florida coast in 1985 and have since become one of the most abundant top-level predators on some reefs in the Western Atlantic. Over the last fifteen years, researchers and managers from a wide range of institutions have allocated a great deal of resources to better understand the invasion. As a result of these efforts, a diverse wealth of invasive lionfish knowledge has been translated into a variety of products including fact sheets, training videos, management plans, and peer-reviewed literature. Having a way to manage and centralize this information has not been realized until now.

The Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration have partnered to create the Invasive Lionfish Web Portal (available at <http://lionfish.gcfi.org/>) (Figure 1). The Invasive Lionfish Web Portal serves as a clearing house and repository for all things pertaining to the invasion. The Web Portal is broken down into a Home Page and four topic-focused interior sections including Education & Outreach, Research & Monitoring, Control, and Management. The Home Page and the interior sections are built out into several content containing sub-sections with various features within.

Home Page

From the Home Page, users can navigate to the four interior sections, search for content, and share the Web Portal through various social media outlets. Users can access archived GCFI proceedings and the GCFI ListServ, view and post Tweets to and from Twitter using #lionfish, view a timeline map of the invasion, view Flickr photos and YouTube videos, engage in conversation in the open forum, participate in an image and video contest, and view recent lionfish news feeds.

Education and Outreach

The Education & Outreach section contains broader information on the invasion. Users can access fact sheets, the Invasive Lionfish Story Map, links to reputable educational website, podcasts, Ted Talks, and can view a compilation of common lionfish myths and view the truths behind the myths. Users can also view an interactive calendar to find and post dates of upcoming workshops and conferences. Teachers who are looking for lionfish classroom materials can access pre-made lectures, PowerPoints, work sheets, and arts and crafts ideas.

Research and Monitoring

The key feature in the Research & Monitoring section is the Lionfish Literature Database. This database contains over 200 lionfish citations and has a built in feature which allows users to search for literature based on keywords, authors, journal, and year. Users can upload a citation that isn't already in the database and make edits. Users can also access training information on lionfish monitoring designs and dissection techniques, and report lionfish sightings. This section also contains the Lionfish Research Corner which contains a variety of content including remaining research questions, a research focused forum, and a place to upload abstracts and presentations.

Control

The control section focuses on the principles of harvesting lionfish for control and the different methods available for Recreational Harvesting and Commercial Harvesting. Within these sub-sections, users can access training videos on lionfish removal, a calendar of derbies and tournaments from around the Caribbean, and links to lionfish distributors and facilitators. This section also addresses the three primary end-uses for lionfish including consumption, the curio trade (ornamental), and the aquarium trade. Here, users can view restaurants who serve lionfish as well as cooking videos, cook books, and links to lionfish jewelry makers. To promote collaborations, this section contains a list of organizations and programs involved in lionfish control and management, which users can update.

Management

The management section of the Web Portal contains management and strategy plans from around the Caribbean.

Conclusions

In contrast to similar sites on the web, all of the information on the Invasive Lionfish Web Portal has been vetted by experts in the field and the site is updated and maintained monthly. As the invasion continues, the Web Portal will serve as a platform from which the public, researchers, and managers alike can retrieve and exchange the most up-to-date invasive lionfish information to better control and manage this invasive species. Content and questions can be sent to Alex Bogdanoff.

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KEY WORDS: Invasive lionfish, web portal, management, invasive species control

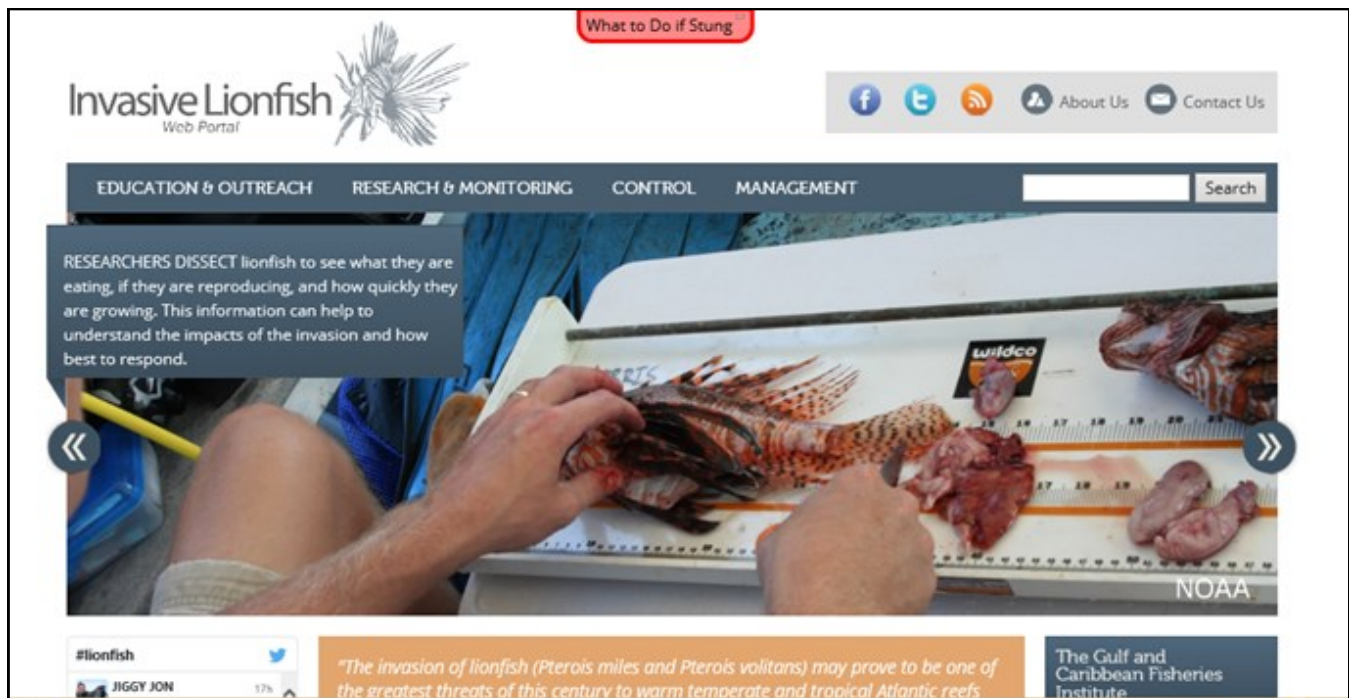


Figure 1. The Invasive Lionfish Web Portal home page: <http://lionfish.gcfi.org/>.