

## Safety Alert

HSESA-TO-12-011

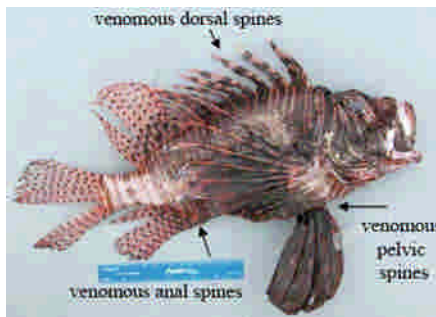
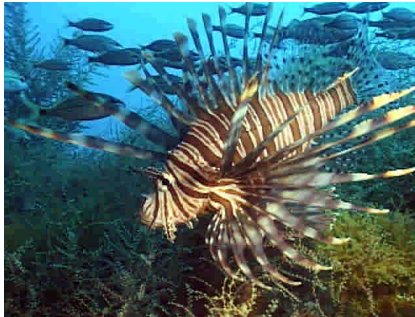
# Hazardous Marine Life - Lionfish

An EPIC Diving Superintendent working off a Heavy Lift barge in the West Cameron and High Island blocks recently reported his divers having encountered several lionfish. The first confirmed sighting of a lionfish in the Gulf of Mexico was two years ago; since then the population of this invasive – and highly venomous – fish has exploded.



These maps show the high-rate of population expansion into the GOM over the last 10 years

These fish pose a very real hazard to working divers in the GOM. The fish can grow to be as large as 15” – and is one of the most venomous fish on the ocean floor ranking second only to stingrays in the total number of stings worldwide, with an estimated 40,000-50,000 cases annually. The fish are generally not aggressive, however when threatened they will flare their fins as a defense mechanism.



A lionfish sting releases a powerful neurotoxin that is VERY painful and can have serious medical consequences. If a diver is stung:

1. Gently remove any broken spines
2. Promptly soak the affected area in hot water (113 degree water is 97% effective in reducing pain completely)
3. Notify Safety Department
4. Any secondary symptomatic complications should be treated if they arise.

Please report any sightings, including location, approximate size and number of fish to the Safety Department.

As with ALL MARINE LIFE – contact and provocation should be absolutely avoided.

Take Care of Each Other. Work smart. Work safely. “NO ONE GETS HURT”