

Scorpionfish (Scorpaenidae)



red lionfish, *pterois volitans*

Scorpionfish are a group of venomous fish that are found in the shallow waters of the tropical and subtropical regions of the world. They are part of the family Scorpaenidae, which includes several hundred species of fish that are known for their venomous spines and their ability to blend in with their surroundings.

Scorpionfish have a variety of body shapes and sizes depending on the species, but they are generally characterized by their large, spiny fins, venomous spines, and the ability to change color to match their surroundings. They have a venomous gland located near the base of each spine, and they can deliver a painful and potentially dangerous sting if they are handled or stepped on.

Scorpionfish are generally slow-moving and ambush predators, and they use their venomous spines and camouflage abilities to

defend themselves and capture prey. They are not considered a threat to humans unless they are accidentally stepped on or handled, and they are generally not targeted by fishermen.

Some species of scorpionfish, such as the Lionfish, have become invasive in certain areas, either as a result of intentional or unintentional introductions by humans.



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Lionfish is a type of scorpionfish that is native to the tropical waters of the Indian and Pacific Oceans. They feature a colorful appearance and ornate, fan-like fins. However, several species of lionfish have become invasive in certain areas of the Western Atlantic Ocean, the Caribbean Sea, and the Gulf of Mexico.

Lionfish were likely introduced to these areas through the release of pets or escaped specimens from the aquarium trade. They have since become established in many parts of the Western Atlantic, and they have been documented as far north as New York and as far south as Brazil.

Lionfish are considered invasive because they have the potential to cause harm to the local environment, economy, or human health. They are voracious predators that feed on a wide variety of small fish and invertebrates, and they can outcompete native species for food and habitat. They are also venomous and can deliver a painful and potentially dangerous sting if they are handled or stepped on.

Efforts are underway in many parts of the Western Atlantic to control and manage the lionfish population in order to minimize their negative impacts on local ecosystems and communities. This can involve efforts such as removing lionfish from affected areas, controlling their population sizes, and taking steps to prevent their spread to new areas.