



## 2023 Liability Waiver

The C.O.R.E Foundation  
2608 Fish Bay  
St. John, VI 00830

The mission of The Caribbean Oceanic Restoration and Education (C.O.R.E.) Foundation is to advance the mission of marine stewardship to ensure the longevity, preservation and benefits of our Caribbean Sea. The C.O.R.E. Foundation is committed to uniting non-government stewards, managers and the scientific communities to explore and address marine issues for the betterment of all who call the Caribbean their home, or who visit there.

BE ADVISED THAT THIS IS A WAIVER WHICH MEANS YOU WILL BE GIVING UP ALL LEGAL RIGHTS CONCERNING ANY COURSE OF ACTION AGAINST CORE, ITS AGENTS, VOLUNTEERS, CORPORATE REPRESENTATIVES AND ALL INDIVIDUALS AFFILIATED WITH CORE BY SIGNING THIS DOCUMENT.

IF YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND YOUR LEGAL POSITION BY SIGNING THIS DOCUMENT, YOU SHOULD CONSULT WITH AN ATTORNEY. PLEASE INITIAL NEXT TO EACH ITEM. YOUR SIGNATURE AT THE BOTTOM INDICATES AGREEMENT WITH ALL OF THE ITEMS, REGARDLESS OF IF ONE OR MORE OF THEM IS NOT INITIALED. IF YOU DO NOT AGREE WITH ALL OF THE ITEMS (PARAGRAPHS), DO NOT SIGN THE BOTTOM. PARTICIPATION IN ANY CORE SPONSORED, LIONFISH RELATED, SCUBA ACTIVITY IS CONDITIONED UPON YOUR EXECUTION OF THIS WAIVER. IF YOU DO NOT SIGN THIS WAIVER, YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO DIVE WITH, OR ON BEHALF OF, CORE.

I accept that for the purpose of this waiver...

1. C.O.R.E. shall mean the directors, members, volunteers, officers, advisors of C.O.R.E., and all owners of property utilized by Core, compensated or otherwise.
2. Diving shall mean free diving, snorkel diving, SCUBA diving, spear fishing, netting (or otherwise using any methods) to harvest Indo Pacific Lionfish while in or on the water.
3. "I" shall mean me, my heirs, survivors, assigns, representatives, estate, legal guardian, attorneys in fact, or anyone else who may be empowered to act on my behalf. Or, if I am signing as the legal guardian of a registrant, then it shall mean my ward, me, my ward's heirs, survivors, assigns, representatives, estate, attorneys in fact, legal guardian, and anyone else who may act on behalf of my ward, principal, or minor.

Initials:

I understand the inherent risks associated with diving. When harvesting fish, I understand that the risk of injury or death is even greater. I have participated in the Core training required for this dive and agree to comply with what I was taught. I waive my rights as to this activity against Core.

Initials:

I understand that weather conditions may change rapidly, and that C.O.R.E. is not responsible for my decision to participate in this event. C.O.R.E.'s decision to NOT cancel the activity does not act as an endorsement of good weather or marine conditions. I will determine these conditions myself and assume all risks inherent with weather conditions.

Initials:

I acknowledge that Indo Pacific Lionfish have venomous spines that can inflict a serious sting and/or cause serious injury or death. I will wear protective gloves when handling Lionfish, and make every effort not to touch the spines, even after the fish are dead. I accept full responsibility for my handling of Lionfish and for all risks associated with this inherently dangerous activity.

Initials:

I hereby acknowledge that C.O.R.E. is in no way directing my activities, or otherwise acting as an advisor or principal. I assume all risks, not only associated with diving and harvesting Lionfish, but also boating and traveling.

Initials:

I hereby acknowledge that not only can injuries and/or death occur from the risks of diving, but that diving is physically exerting. I agree that I am responsible for making decisions about my own physical condition in conducting these activities.

Initials \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby agree to waive my right to sue C.O.R.E. and any of its affiliates, assigns associates, or sponsors by participating in this Lionfish activity, for any injuries, death, emotional distress, pain and suffering, and all other forms of economic and noneconomic damages and all claims and causes of action. I waive any and all claims. I will hold Core harmless from any claims brought on my behalf and agree to indemnify them in case of any claim made against them. Also, I hereby provide a full release for photo and television images.

Initials \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby acknowledge that in the event of any dispute pertaining to any activity associated with Core, that the laws of the United States Virgin Islands apply. Venue of any dispute shall be in the court closest to the incident that has jurisdiction of this matter within the Territory. I further acknowledge that in any event of a dispute, the prevailing party shall be entitled to attorney's fees and costs as awarded by any Virgin Islands court.

Initials \_\_\_\_\_

I have read and understand the above, **as well as the attached *Lionfish Biology and venom***, *I Understand the personal assumption of Risk* and any questions that I had were answered to my satisfaction. I understand these risks and am willing to take part in this project.

Lionfish Biology and Venom  
Understanding of Risk  
Overview

Lionfish

(*Pterois volitans/miles*) are members of the scorpionfish family native to the Indo-Pacific. They are now also found in the waters throughout the Western Atlantic from Rhode Island through the Bahamas Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico. Lionfish are predators reaching a size of more than 470 mm and reproducing year-round in the southern portion of their Atlantic range. They also possess venomous spines and potentially represent both ecological and human health risks. Significant study, public education/outreach and control efforts are now being planned and implemented throughout the region.

Need for specimens.

In order to predict the spread and impact of this invasive species, data is needed to determine populations and distribution, age and growth, reproduction, predation, larval disbursement, recruitment, mortality, genetics and changes to native fish communities. Obtaining this information requires the collection of many samples and appropriate preservation of these samples. There is little funding and few field operations available to collect the number of samples required for statistically robust analysis.

CORE is working with U.S. state, Territorial, federal, and university researchers in addition to Caribbean nations to obtain the necessary samples as well as educate the public and key government officials about the lionfish issue. As part of this effort, we are also collaborating with the dive community to gather samples and data from their regularly dived sites.

Venom use as a defense mechanism by Lionfish.

Lionfish spines, like those of many other scorpionfishes, contain venom. Spines located within the dorsal, ventral, and anal fins contain venomous tissue along the length of the spine. A sheath or skin covers the spine and glandular tissue which, when exposed in the act of puncture, releases venom into the wound. Severities and reactions to stings can vary, I \_\_\_\_\_ am aware the possibility exists that I may be allergic to the Lionfish's venom and of the possibility of death occurring from anaphylactic shock. Lionfish stings are generally not known to be lethal. Most reactions to Lionfish venom typically include localized, moderate to severe pain and swelling, which normally subsides within hours treatment. Complications or increased severity of reactions could result from allergic reactions or severe punctures. Heat and time reduce the effect of this venom. As with any wound, cleaning and sterilization of the affected area is important to prevent infection.

Participation

There exists the possibility of being stung. No participants wishing to avoid collection, dissection or any other physical contact with lionfish will be asked to handle or in any other way physically engage themselves with any lionfish. All contact with lionfish, direct or otherwise, is voluntary in nature as is participation in this project, with full knowledge concerning the venomous nature of the lionfish.

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Diver Signature / Diver Printed Name / Date

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone # / Email Address