

Science is all around you: The lionfish ^[1]

Submitted by [Greetchen Díaz-Muñoz](#) ^[2] on 10 May 2013 - 4:37pm



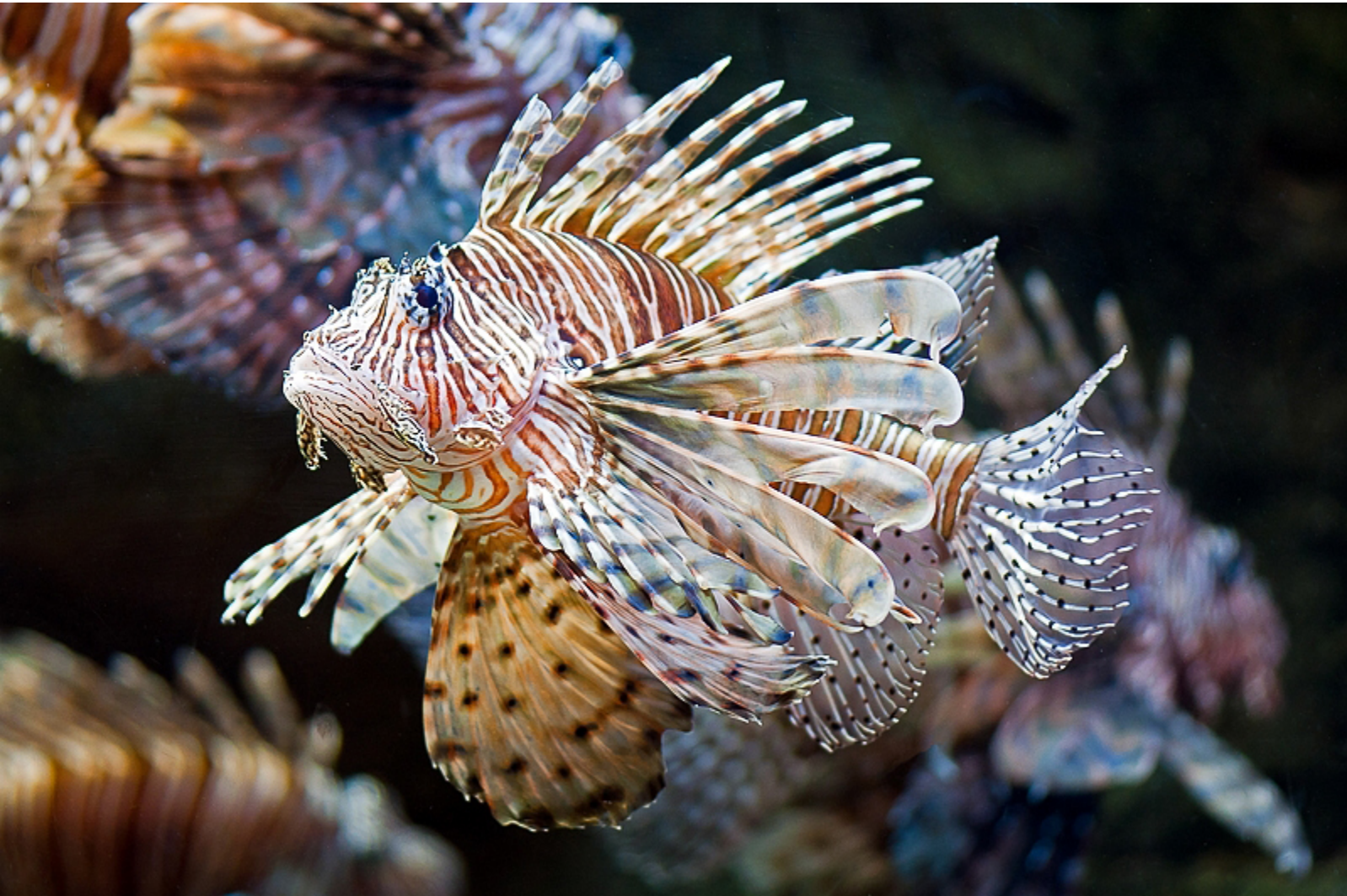
^[2]



Photo: José Almodóvar

José: "The lionfish ^[3] (*Pterois*), always caught my attention because of its color pattern, rays and spines. This photo was taken at the Atlanta aquarium, but you do not have to go far to see it. "

Greetchen: "That's right. By the way, I found in the "Mi Puerto Rico verde" [4] website that a Festival to learn and taste lionfish will be held in La Parguera. This is worth to see or tasting it ... This month, Dr. Eddie Laboy Nieves [5], Professor at the Universidad del Turabo [6] is sharing a video of the lionfish in Puerto Rico. "



The lionfish. Presented by: Greetchen Díaz [7] y José Almodóvar [8]. Photo: José Almodóvar

José: "Eddie, how was the experience? How did it feel to have the fish so close? "

Eddie: "I was diving in the "Escambrón" beach when I suddenly stumbled upon the lionfish. I took the opportunity and I recorded it, as it is a shy and peaceful fish to human presence. By having it around, I was curious at the majesty of its fins ".

José: "What can you say about the danger of the fish and its ecological damage?"

Eddie: "Their fins have a very irritant toxin. When in contact with our skin it produces such intense pain that causes dizziness and nausea among other symptoms. If the person is allergic it could endanger his/her life. This fish is native to Indonesia and has virtually no natural enemies. It has expanded across the Caribbean basin where it has a successful rate of reproduction, which will threaten native fisheries. "

Gretchen: "This video is part of the "[Videoteca de la Fauna de Puerto Rico](#)", ^[9] an initiative of Dr. Laboy Nieves."

José: How was the "videoteca" originated?

Eddie: "I was frustrated when I offered a diagnostic test for environmental science teachers who were able to correctly identify 10 animals of Africa, but almost none of the endemic to Puerto Rico . Then I wondered: how students are going to defend and conserve a native fauna that is unknown for them? I formalized a proposal with the [Toyota Foundation](#) ^[10] and the Universidad del Turabo, and with a team of students I started to record and edit videoclips, and providing an overview of the fauna of Puerto Rico ".

Gretchen: "Tell us about the future plans for this initiative"

Eddie: "I will request more funds to subsidize field trips. I aim that the Videoteca link be included in the website of many environmental organizations. In the long term, I wish to develop a documentary on the wildlife of P.R. for distribution to schools and colleges. "

If you enjoyed these images "like it" and share it with everyone. Tell us if you've had any experience with the lionfish.Want to know more? Here we include other related resources (in Spanish):

[The true danger of the lionfish](#) ^[11]

[Draft: management plan for lionfish control](#) ^[12]

[How to cook lionfish?](#) ^[13]

If you have a nice image that shows the science around you, it might appear here! Contact us: gdm610@cienciapr.org ^[14]

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