



# REEF SANCTIONED LIONFISH DERBY



## REEF Sanctioned Lionfish Derby Program

### **Introduction:**

Invasive lionfish (*Pterois volitans* and *P. miles*) have invaded the western Atlantic, Caribbean and Gulf and are impacting native marine life. Local control via diver and snorkeler removals has been shown to be effective at reducing lionfish populations and sizes and minimizing impacts of lionfish. Lionfish derbies have been found to be effective tools in lionfish removals. Well organized and conducted derbies can serve to:

- educate the public,
- train removers in safe and effective collecting and handling,
- provide samples and data to researchers,
- develop the market demand through public tastings,
- engage the media to help spread the word about invasive species, and
- remove significant numbers of lionfish helping to protect native marine life and ecosystems.

The Reef Environmental Education Foundation (REEF) has been organizing and conducting derbies since the first derby in the Bahamas in 2009. REEF aims to help others organize and conduct safe and effective derbies through a “REEF Sanctioned Lionfish Derby” program providing tools, templates, presentations and promotion for derby organizers. Derbies that meet criteria found in successful derbies around the region will be recognized and promoted through this program.

### **Criteria to be met:**

- Must conduct a Captain’s Meeting prior to the Derby where the following occur:
  - Late registration and waivers completed
  - Puncture resistant gloves provided or available
  - Presentation (either verbal or powerpoint) covering the following topics
    1. Background, biology/ecology/impacts of the lionfish invasion
    2. Lionfish collecting and handling
    3. Safety and first aid
    4. Rules and regulations
- Liability waivers must be filled out by EVERY participant.
- Derby Participants must abide by ALL local fishing regulations. Necessary permits should be acquired by the derby organizers well in advance.
- The derby should be widely promoted with “REEF Sanctioned” language and the REEF logo
- Only lionfish may be brought to the scoring station at the derby. If any other marine life is brought to the scoring, that team will be disqualified. This is a lionfish only tournament!
- All fish must be measured during the scoring (measured in millimeters). These data must then be entered into an Excel spreadsheet and copies provided to REEF



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- Fishing locations and methods should be recorded by each team and copies sent to REEF
- Lionfish samples/specimens must be made available to researchers
- Lionfish tastings should be offered to the public
- Derby organizers should make best use of collected fish (sold to fish market or restaurant, given to research organization, etc.) or secure disposal of unused fish should occur (burial, return of carcasses into deepwater, etc.).
- Recognition should be given to all participants (certificates, media releases, etc)
- Proceeds of the derby should go to benefit marine conservation
- Post derby summary must be completed and provided to REEF

## **Derbies meeting the above criteria will be listed and promoted as REEF Sanctioned Lionfish Derbies and organizers will be provided:**

- Lionfish Derby Rules and regulations template
- Lionfish Handouts – Lionfish quickfacts sheet
- Powerpoint presentation for the Captain's meeting
  - **NOTE:** We ask that you not distribute this presentation to anybody else. This presentation is meant to be used in a REEF Sanctioned Derby Captains Meeting only. Other informational presentations are available from REEF. Thank you!
- Derby Poster template for promotion flyers
- Liability waivers templates
- Derby Registration template
- Data collection templates for fishing methods/location
- Individual team scoring template
- Master scoring template—to be used to input each team's **complete** catch data (every single lionfish scored should be entered here)
- Scoring summary template—to **summarize** each team's catch. This makes determining the winners easier.
- Discounts on gloves, lionfish flags, collecting gear
- Certificate templates (for winners/participants and sponsors)
- Listing on REEF website and posting on social media

## **To be considered a REEF Sanctioned derby, the following documents must be provided to REEF.**

### **Pre-Derby:**

- Sanctioned Derby application form including:
  - Name of sponsoring organization
  - Date and location
  - Name of Derby
  - List of awards that will be given to winners



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- Associated researchers that will be using the data/samples
- Beneficiary of proceeds
- Points of contact
- Sponsor list
- Proof of any necessary permits/permissions or verification of none required
- Web/social media links
- Copies of promotional material (electronic or links to)

## **Post Derby:**

- Post derby report:
  - Scoring summary spreadsheet
  - Master scoring data sheet
  - Maps/locations sheets (scanned or hardcopy)
  - List of any media coverage of the derby
  - Research partners and contact info
  - Derby proceeds beneficiary
  - Derby images