



Caribbean Oceanic Restoration and Education Foundation

The CORE Foundation
2608 Fish Bay, St. John, VI 00830

OFFICIAL DERBY RULES

1. LIONFISH (*Pterois volitans/miles*) ELIGIBLE FOR ENTRY, MAY ONLY BE TAKEN DURING THE DERBY. NO PREVIOUSLY CAUGHT OR FROZEN LIONFISH WILL BE ALLOWED. HOWEVER, PLEASE KEEP ALL LIONFISH ON ICE. All lionfish containers may be inspected before hunters leave shore. CORE presents the opportunity to each team at registration to keep their catch after weighing, measuring, and removing fins from all lionfish presented at scoring stations. Additionally, registrants may choose to donate their catch to the derby for uses that may include "lionfish tasting," research and market development. If a team registers but fails to select an option or provide a preference, the default selection will be to donate their catch to the derby.
2. CAPTAINS MEETING: The Captain's Meeting on May 17th, 2024 at 6:00 PM at Leatherback Brewery is mandatory for the team captains, and all team members are encouraged to attend. The team captain must be one of the six participants in the derby, but does not need to be the captain of the boat. Safe collecting and handling techniques and derby rules and permits will be reviewed.
3. WAIVERS: Every team member must sign the 2024 Lionfish Derby Legal Waiver Form. If a team member does not sign and submit the form either online or in person by the conclusion of the Captains Meeting, the team member will not be considered entered in the Derby, even if registration fees were paid.
4. During this single day event only lionfish may be taken by any length pole spear or spear guns less than 24" long with paralyzer tip, hand net or hook and line. No chemicals, traps or other collecting mechanisms are allowed.
5. Only legal means of capture in areas allowing use of gear types mentioned in section 4 will be allowed. All existing federal, state, and local laws must be followed. State and Federal laws will be

strictly enforced. All permits issued at the Captain's Meeting must be present while participating in this derby.

6. Only open circuit, regular air, 32% Nitrox, or 36% Nitrox SCUBA diving apparatus allowed. Closed circuit rebreathers are not permitted. All dives must be within no decompression limits and within recreational depth limits.

7. As a "local" derby lionfish may only be taken out of St. Croix territorial waters 3 mile limit.

8. Waters within Sanctuary Preservation Areas (SPAs) and Research Only Areas, East End Marine Park, Buck Island National Monument, are off limits. All other existing federal, state, and local laws must be followed. Laws and regulations will be strictly enforced.

9. Teams will be limited to 6 persons. To qualify for prizes, participants must be registered and show proper identification and PADI or equivalent Open Water certification. DAN or equivalent dive insurance is strongly recommended. See www.corevi.org, under the support tab, for information on how to obtain insurance. All participants must sign a Legal Waiver Form and a Lionfish Understanding of Risk Form to be considered registered in the Derby.

10. Non-refundable registration fees are \$50 per person, or \$300.00 per team of six, with a minimum of two persons per team, and a maximum of six persons per team. Registration will be open until the conclusion of the Captains Meeting. All early registrants will receive a Derby sun shirt. Registration and payment of registration fee will be online at www.corevi.org or contact Mike Funk via email at vicepresident@corevi.org.

11. Protective gloves should be worn when handling lionfish. Participants are encouraged to carry a thermometer and thermos bottle on the boat containing hot, but not scalding, water for first aid purposes. 45 degrees Celsius (113 F) is the recommended water temperature. Keep the sting submerged for 90 minutes.

12. Derby hours: 6:00 am until 4:00 pm Saturday May 18th, 2024. All fish must be present at Scoring Stations by 4:00 pm to qualify for prizes. Scoring stations will be attended by DPNR Division of Fish and Wildlife weigh masters whose decisions are final. Weigh station will be located at the La Reine Fish Market. Shore diving teams must not enter the water before 6am. Boats in marinas must wait until 6am to cast off their lines and leave the marina. Boats launched from trailers may be in the water, but may not leave the ramp/dock area before 6am.

13. Lionfish may be taken in St. Croix waters (except EEMP no-take zones, research areas & SPA's) as long as the collection occurs during Derby hours and the fish are present at the Scoring Stations by 4:00 pm. Prizes will be awarded in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places for most lionfish; and for the largest and smallest lionfish.

14. Each team may submit one entry into each category. One fish for Largest, one fish for Smallest, and the total catch count will be used to determine a team's entry into Most. The fish entered into Largest, and the fish entered into Smallest will count toward the Most total.
14. If fewer than 3 entries are received in any category, the remaining awards will be left as unclaimed and applied towards next year's derby prize pool.
15. All lionfish must be in whole condition (no missing heads or tails). Largest and smallest fish will be determined by total length of the fish, in millimeters, measuring from tip of snout to tip of tail.
16. Any live lionfish at Scoring Stations may be euthanized prior to being measured.
17. All entrants agree to allow Derby officials, sponsors, and CORE executives to take and use photos for media and promotional purposes.
18. The Derby takes place regardless of weather conditions. Captains make their own decision about whether to venture out. In the event of a Small Craft Advisory Warning the derby will be rescheduled at a later date.
19. In the event of a tie, the winning team will be determined by the earliest check in of its lionfish at the Scoring Station.
20. All cash prizes will be awarded to Team Captain by bank check.
21. The Lionfish Derby is an honor system tournament with the captain being responsible for team compliance with the Rules.
22. Anyone found violating Derby Rules by the Derby Officials will be disqualified from receiving any Derby prizes and may be prohibited from entry in any future derbies.
23. Decisions of the derby officials and Weigh Masters are final. Awards for the 2024 St. Croix Lionfish Derby will be determined by the number of teams entered and additional prizes and raffles will be supplemented by Sponsor's In-Kind Donations.
24. Scuba gear and other equipment(s) used must be decontaminated at the end of the day by following [NOAA decontamination guidelines](#) <- (link). [PDF](#)

If you have any questions, please reach out to Matthew at outreach@corevi.org