

Operation Lionfish: A Fin-tastic Success for Conservation & Helping our Veterans

FT LAUDERDALE, FL, USA, July 12, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The 2024 [Operation Lionfish](#) inaugural is in the record books. True to its “Clear the Path” byline, scuba snipers racked up 483 lionfish kills off Southeast Florida on June 29th. Organized by [Guy Harvey Outpost Resorts](#), two-man dive teams took home cash awards and trophies presented by Florida’s FWC, ZooKeeper, manufacturer of their acclaimed lionfish containment unit, and Stoked on Salt, dealer of custom marine art and lionfish inspired jewelry. The Reef Environmental Education Foundation, REEF, provided scoring and record keeping. [Warfighter Scuba](#), a not-for-profit dedicated to providing combat-wounded Purple Heart veteran service members with scuba therapy and certification, was the event beneficiary.



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*Guy Harvey Outpost Resort's
EVP, Kevin DeNell.*

“An incredible group of divers and sportsmen joined in a common cause to help protect our valuable reefs from the devastation of these invasive lionfish,” noted Outpost Resort’s EVP, Kevin DeNell. “We salute these eco warriors who contribute their time, energy and money, all while giving back to our soldier-warriors who have sacrificed to allow us the freedoms to enjoy our wonderful South Florida water sports lifestyle.”

Jim “Chiefy” Mathie, local spearfishing and lobster diving authority noted, “with the success of this inaugural derby, Operation Lionfish is now poised to become a signature annual South-Florida scuba diving event dedicated to vets

and first responders on the eve of other patriotic July 4th festivities.” The inaugural venue was the Sands Resort & Marina in Pompano Beach. He added, “Gina Barron and her hotel event staff

made this an event to remember”.

Lionfish derbies are popular scuba competitions in coastal destinations to collect and euthanize as many lionfish as possible. Derbies focus public awareness on the threat to healthy reefs posed by these predator fish who have no natural enemy. Explains Tim Robinson, owner of ZooKeeper , “The sheer quantity of lionfish along all of Florida’s coastline makes our state ground zero for lionfish derbies. We have great diving conditions in South Florida and with Operation Lionfish here in our hometown, we’re looking forward to help grow the event in upcoming years.”

The biggest prizewinner of the two-day festival was Warfighter Scuba suggested Nick Powers, president of the organization. “No one is left behind; no one is left alone”, he recites. “We are grateful to the Guy Harvey folks and everyone who supported Operation Lionfish, raising \$20,000 to help more of our vets overcome their trauma with the serenity of scuba diving on colorful and healthy reefs”.

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