



# INVASION OF THE CARIBBEAN BODY SNACKERS

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# Life in the times of COVID

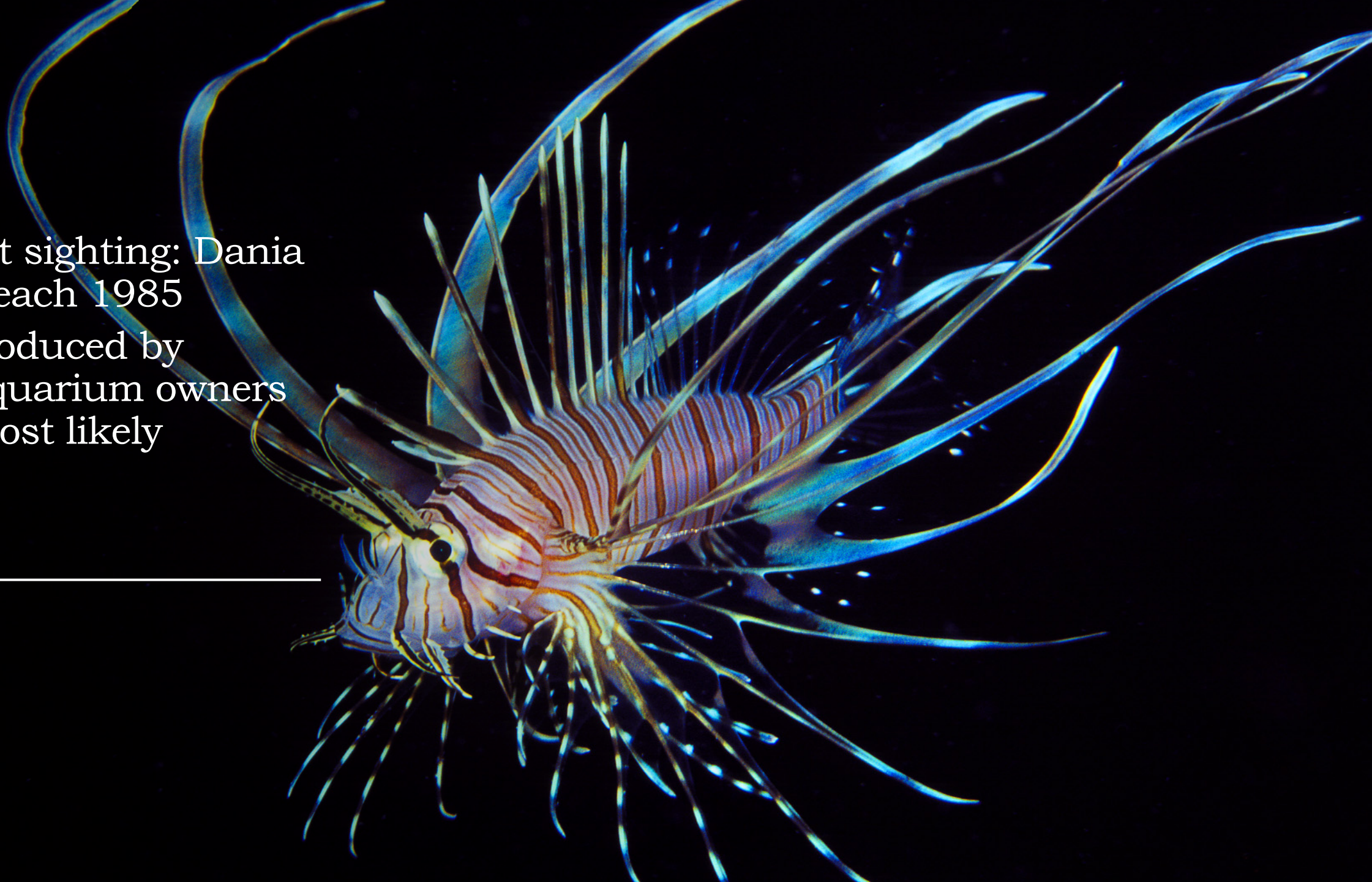
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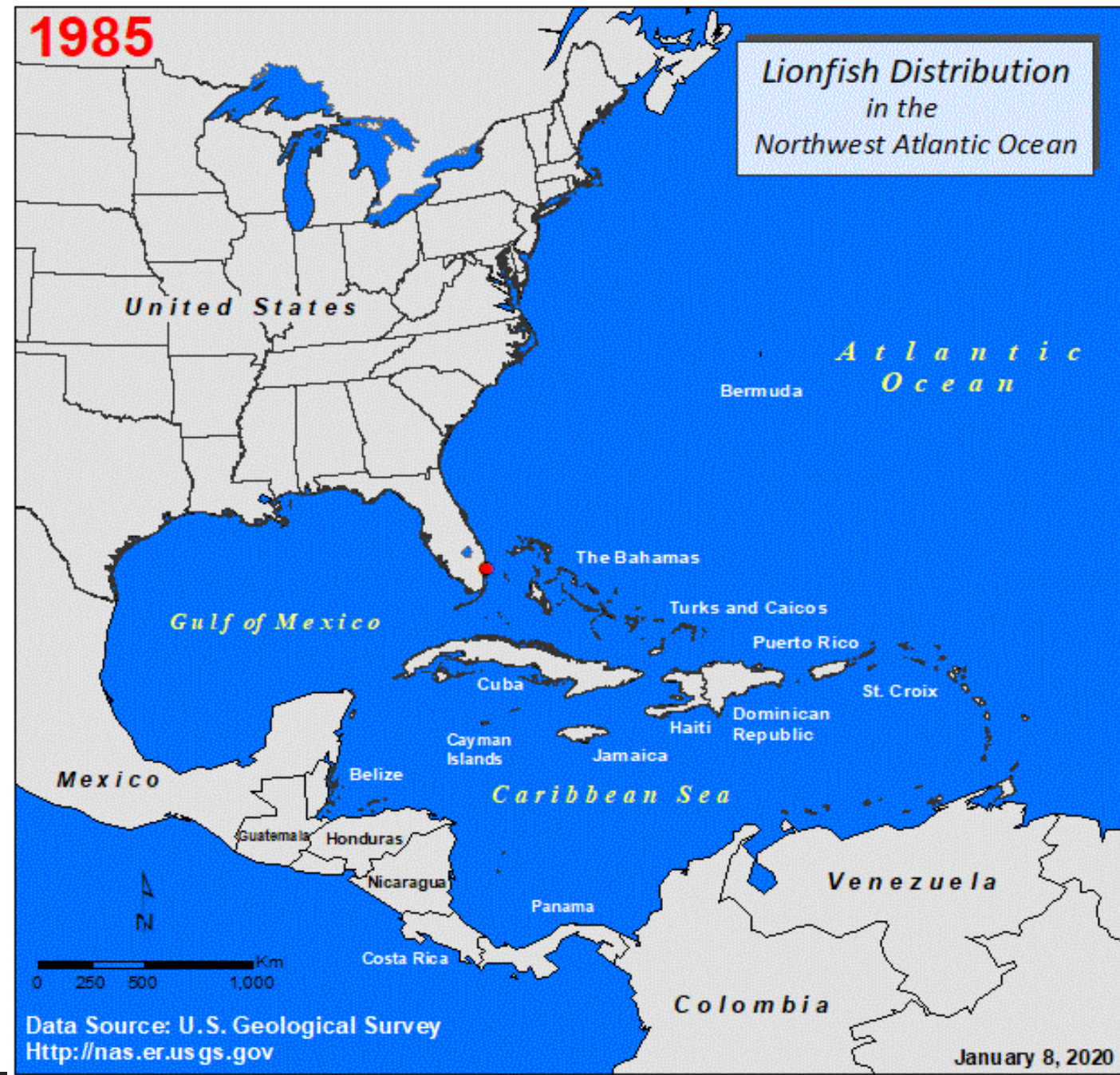
First sighting: Dania  
Beach 1985  
Introduced by  
aquarium owners  
most likely

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- By 2000 populations started to explode
- 2008-2010 lionfish made it to the Western Caribbean





**“It doesn’t seem to be covered in our  
invasive species management plan.”**

# Progression of change in behavior of native reef fish and lionfish over time in the Cayman Islands

- No predators would eat lionfish dead or alive at first
- No internal parasites, or very low at first: Dr Tuttle and her research and differences between the origins of the invasion in the Mediterranean and the Caribbean and how that might affect parasites in lionfish.





# Progression of change in behavior of native reef fish and lionfish over time in the Cayman Islands

- Grouper and Mutton Snapper started eating lionfish that were speared and would point them out like a bird dog but not eat them



- Predators made no leap to eat lionfish unaided

# Progression of change in behavior of native reef fish and lionfish over time in the Cayman Islands

- Then we started hearing anecdotal evidence of predators sighted eating lionfish and in stomach contents of predators
- Starting in 2010 speared lionfish were being fed to predators or being left on the ocean floor before people realized they tasted good and they could make money selling them.

**DO NOT FEED LIONFISH TO PREDATORS!**

Leads to predator aggression





## Shark aggression



## Green Moray attack and bites



# INVASIVE SPECIES FROM JAPAN WASH UP ON NORTH COAST BEACHES







# History of Culling Equipment in the Cayman Islands



- Nets at first



# History of Culling Equipment in the Cayman Islands

- Spearing started around 2010: it was quite a fight to get regulations changed
- Various container devices over time from homemade to the Zookeeper





# Cayman regulation spear

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# History of Culling in the Cayman Islands

- Individual volunteers culling
- Organized weekly culls
- Derbies

