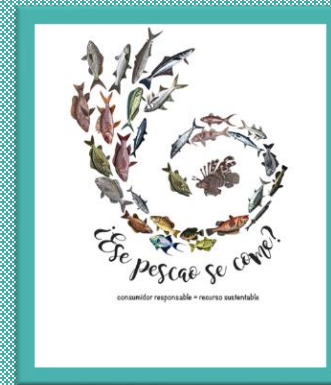


Is That Fish Edible? Eat Lionfish and Diamondback Squid! Festival

Jannette Ramos García
OEAP Member



On March 10, 2024, at the Plaza del Pescador, Guayanilla, PR the Caribbean Fishery Management Council and Puerto Rico Sea Grant Program with the collaboration of the Municipality of Guayanilla, EcoEléctrica and HJR Reefscaping, was celebrated the "Is That Fish Edible?" Eat Lionfish and Diamondback Squid! Festival.

The festival had five components:

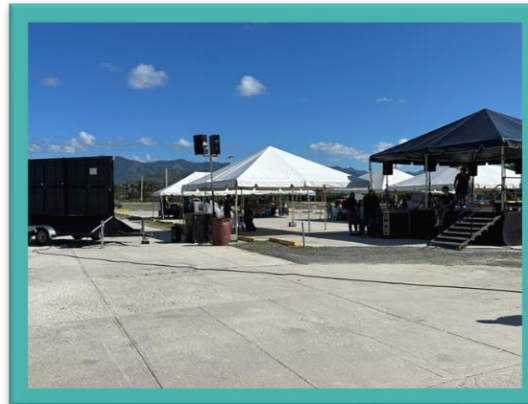
Educational

Scientific

Gastronomical

Cultural

Homage



Why do we celebrate the festival?

As part of the OEAP panel, we recognize persistent misinformation about lionfish despite efforts to educate consumers, fishers, and restaurant owners.

The festival aimed to spread accurate information about lionfish and introduce the diamond squid as a new culinary option.

It also celebrated our culture with music and promoted the consumption of both species, particularly emphasizing diamondback squid and lionfish as alternatives when conch is in closed season.

Additionally, the event brought together a diverse group of sea-dependent individuals, including scientists, fishers, chefs, and marine science students.

Science

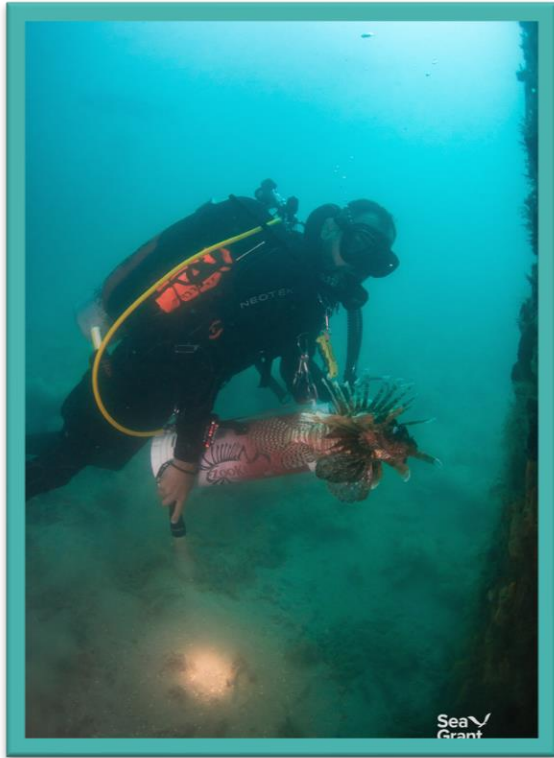


Photos: Pichón Duarte for PRSG

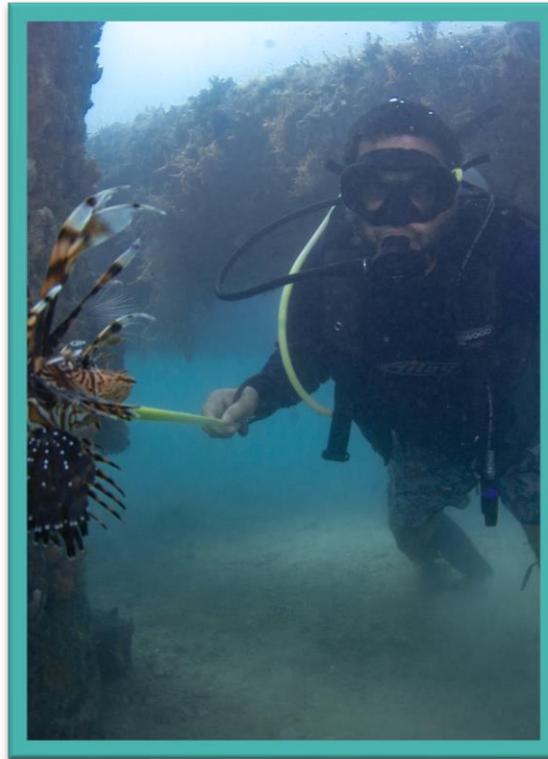


In the scientific and collaborative realm, a group of students from UPR Humacao along with HJR Reefscaping staff and four commercial fishers went out to fish for lionfish under the EcoEléctrica pier.





Fishing lionfish



Here we can see some of the people who went fishing for lionfish.



Photos: Pichón Duarte (PRSG)

Education

The education section was divided into informative booths with the collaboration of various entities and groups. Additionally, there was a demonstration of the venomous spines of the lionfish and its stomach contents.



Photos: Cristina D. Olán Martínez

Education



Gastronomy

The renowned chef **Giovanna Huyke** delighted the audience with a demonstration on how to cook diamondback squid and lionfish.

Likewise, chef **Hiram Monteverde** spoke to the audience about his experience preparing squid and lionfish ceviche and served it to the audience.

We had the presence of **Chef Wanda Pantojas**, long-time collaborator in Council activities including the Fish Fry, an event of NOAA.



Gastronomy



Photos: Cristina D. Olán Martínez and Jannette Ramos García

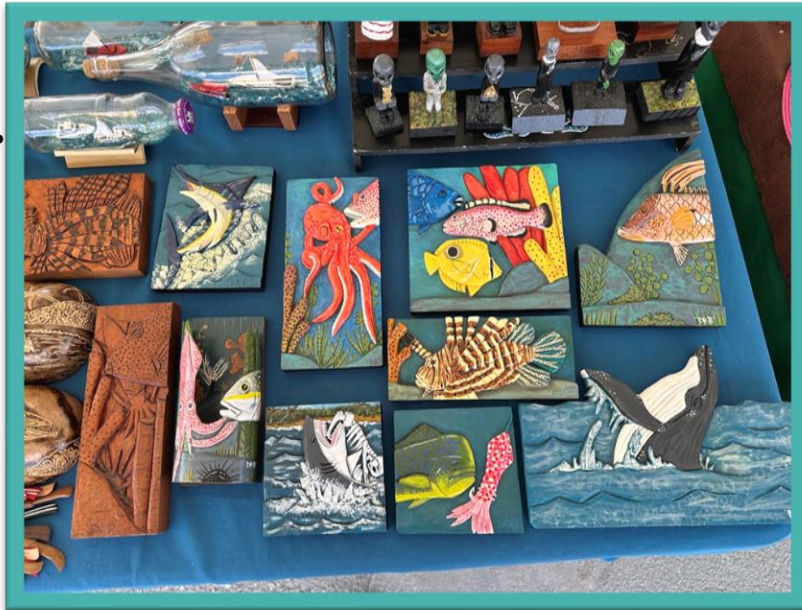
Gastronomy

We also had Proyecto Vereda with its agroecological products, and to a large extent, its presence served as a reminder that what is done in the mountains reaches the sea and affects its ecosystems.



+ Cultural

A group of artisans exhibited and sold their creations inspired in the marine ecosystems.



Cultural

And then, we also had, the music that distinguish our people, bomba, plena and jíbaro music.

The one that you are hearing is a plena dedicated to the lionfish and the diamondback squid consumption.



We had live lionfish for the public to enjoy.



Homage

On the Outreach and Education Panel, Dr. Álida Ortiz Sotomayor has been the driving force behind all the strategies. She is wise, eloquent, always given to teaching and sharing her knowledge.

Our beloved Álida deserves all the possible recognition and this year we dedicate the festival to her.

Álida you are the best and everybody here loves you!



Sponsors





Special thanks to:

Miguel Rolón, CFMC Executive Director, who has always trusted our work and to all the CFMC staff for their support.

Thanks to Mrs. Lesbia Montero (Former Puerto Rico Sea Grant Educator & Biologist) for providing me with the photos of Álda that were used in her tribute.

Infinite thanks to Dr. Héctor Ruiz who, since the celebration of the first festival held in La Parguera, has given all kinds of support.

Finally, I want to thank my dear "square" Cristina D. Olán Martínez, who always without fail has great ideas, she took wonderful photos and videos at the festival, collaborated with the lionfish and squid tasting activity, and keeps me organized and focused.



Thank you!

