Participant Information Statement

Title: Using citizen science to understand Lionfish (*Pterois spp.)* invasion in the Western Atlantic and Caribbean Sea

Responsible researcher: Roxanne Holmes

School/department: Department of Zoology

Email: rbh35@cam.ac.uk

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

1. *What is the study about?*

The primary focus of the Marine Behavioural Ecology Group, in the Department of Zoology, are behavioural interactions between marine organisms, particularly those relating to social interactions and predation. We are particularly interested in the behaviour of invasive lionfish (*Pterois spp*.) in the Western Atlantic. We would like to address how the abundance and behaviour of lionfish changes across the Caribbean. The study, in the form of a citizen science survey, will therefore focus upon observations made by lionfish hunters at locations across the invaded range in the Western Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean.

2. *Who is running the survey?*

The survey has been created by Roxanne Holmes, as part of her PhD research, and by Dr James Herbert-Read, the principal investigator for the Marine Behavioural Ecology Group.

3. *What will the survey involve for me?*

Participation is voluntary and entirely anonymous. No prior knowledge or expertise is required and no sensitive personal data (e.g. name, age, gender, IP address, or any other personally identifiable characteristics) will be collected about you. There are no costs associated with completing the survey, nor will you be paid.

If you wish to complete the survey, you will be presented with 23 questions (in various formats) that relate to your observations of lionfish. Only one of the questions (Q4) requires a compulsory response as it clarifies where you most often hunt lionfish. The total time to complete the survey should be no longer than 5 minutes.

If you need further clarification prior to submitting your responses, please email the responsible researcher.

4. *Do I have to be in the survey? Can I withdraw from the survey once I have started?*

Completing the survey is voluntary and you do not have to take part. Completing and submitting the survey is an indication of your consent to participate. You can withdraw at any time by closing the webpage. Once you have clicked 'submit' however, your responses cannot be withdrawn as it is anonymous and distinguishing your response from others will not be possible.

5. *What will happen to the information about me that is collected during the survey?*

Your responses for each of the 23 questions will be collated by an external website, Survey Monkey, from which they can be downloaded. By participating in the survey, you consent to the research team using this information for the purpose of research. No information will be collected that can identify you personally. It is anticipated that the results of this survey will be published or presented in a variety of forms. You will not be identifiable in any publication or presentation. General information about how the University uses personal data can be found here: https://www.information-compliance.admin.cam.ac.uk/data-protection/research-participant-data.

6. *Will I be told the results of the survey?*

While the results will not be made publicly available until the study is complete, updates relating to the project and the research group will be posted on the Marine Behavioural Ecology Group twitter page (https://twitter.com/MarineBehavEcol).

7. What if I have a complaint or any concerns about the survey?

The project has been reviewed by the University of Cambridge Psychology Research Ethics Committee (PRE.2021.072). If you are concerned about the way this study was conducted or you wish to make a complaint to someone independent from the study, please contact the university: researchethics@admin.cam.ac.uk

---

This information statement is for your personal use and records.

University of Cambridge Psychology REC Approval: PRE.2021.072