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GCFI Announces Special Publication from Seminal Lionfish Symposium

[Marathon, Florida][October 27, 2016] The Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute and partner organizations are pleased to announce the publication on the invasion of Indo-Pacific lionfish into the Western Atlantic in a special, open access Theme Section in the *Marine Ecology Progress Series* (MEPS), a scientific journal dedicated to publishing the best peer-reviewed articles on marine science. A total of nine peer-reviewed scientific papers were published on a variety of topics including factors that enhance the success of the lionfish in the invaded region, the effects of lionfish on native species, their genetic diversity, and the interactions between lionfish and native predators in the region. The papers represent seminal research from many parts of the lionfish's invaded range including Bermuda, the Gulf of Mexico, Belize, The Bahamas, and Puerto Rico. "We are very excited about the publication of this comprehensive examination of one of the most consequential invasions of non-native species in any environment", stated Dr. Mark Hixon of the University of Hawaii, co-organizer of the session. Co-organizer Dr. Stephanie Green from Stanford University added, "This special edition on the lionfish invasion finally brings together the best research into one standalone issue which will serve as the go to reference on this subject for many years to come." Added Bob Glazer, Executive Director of the GCFI, "We are very excited to have hosted this symposium and be a partner in this publication. GCFI places a very high value in making information available to everyone and we are particularly gratified that the sponsors shared our vision and provided the funding to publish this important issue free of charge to anyone interested in this emerging and consequential issue."

The articles originated from the over 60 submissions that were presented at the 68th annual Gulf and Fisheries Institute (GCFI) conference in Panama City, Panama, in November 2015. This symposium was the 8th annual activity that focused on the lionfish invasion. The symposium drew scientists and resource managers from across the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico to share their research and management approaches on the invasive fish. Symposium support and journal open access was made possible through funding from the Florida Sea Grant college program, the Reef Environmental Education Foundation, NOAA, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and GCFI. The special lionfish issue can be viewed and download free of charge here: <http://www.int-res.com/abstracts/meps/v558/#theme>

For more information on the symposium or publication, please contact: stephanie.green@stanford.edu

***About the GCFI:** The Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) was founded in 1947 to promote the exchange of current information on the use and management of marine resources in the Gulf and Caribbean region. From its beginning, GCFI has endeavored to involve scientific, governmental, non-governmental, academic, and commercial sectors to provide a broad perspective on relevant issues, and to encourage dialogue among groups that often operate in relative isolation from one another.*

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