



# TURNING INVASIVE SPECIES INTO COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITY

*The Lionfish Bites & Beats Model*



**Aquanauts Grenada**  
*- The Art of Diving -*





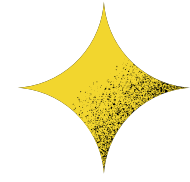
# Who We Are ● ● ● ● ●

What began as a family dream in California became a mission to create lasting, positive impact for future generations. For nearly a decade, we envisioned running a dive shop rooted in Education, Engagement, and Technology — not just to explore the ocean, but to protect it.

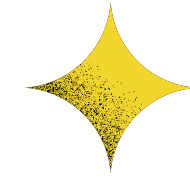
Today, that vision is becoming a reality in Grenada, where our passion meets purpose beneath the waves.







# What We Do



## Snorkeling

Through snorkeling, we connect guests with art, history, and reef life at the world's first Underwater Sculpture Park.

## Scuba Diving

From adaptive divers to technical divers, we welcome people of all abilities to explore the underwater world with us.

## Conservation

From single-day events to multi-day, nationwide collaborative festivals, we spearhead various land and in-water eco-initiatives.







# THE PROBLEM:

## Invasive Lionfish

In 2021, at the height of COVID-19, we took over Aquanauts Grenada. Travel had stopped, business was uncertain, and lionfish were thriving — but we had time, vision, and purpose.

Our response? Lionfish Bites & Beats: live music, lionfish tacos, a filleting demo, and an eco-good time at the local brewery.

Conservation became community. And it worked.

*“Life’s a marathon, not a sprint.” ~ Phillip C. McGraw*



# THE SOLUTION:

## Lionfish Bites & Beats



### Conservation



Invasive lionfish are removed from local reefs and transformed into flavorful dishes and handcrafted jewelry — turning a reef threat into a source of sustainability and funding for marine conservation programs.

### Education



Live filleting demos teach guests how to safely handle lionfish while sharing why they're harmful to our reefs — sparking awareness through storytelling and science.

### Entertainment



Local live music (by our dive crew!) and fun raffle giveaways create a laid-back, vibrant atmosphere that keeps guests engaged and coming back for more.





# THE SOLUTION-Part 2:

## Jam & Jewelry Nights

### Community Engagement

A regularly occurring event that invites guests to connect, create, and converse — turning lionfish into a meaningful part of their island experience.

### Conservation & Education

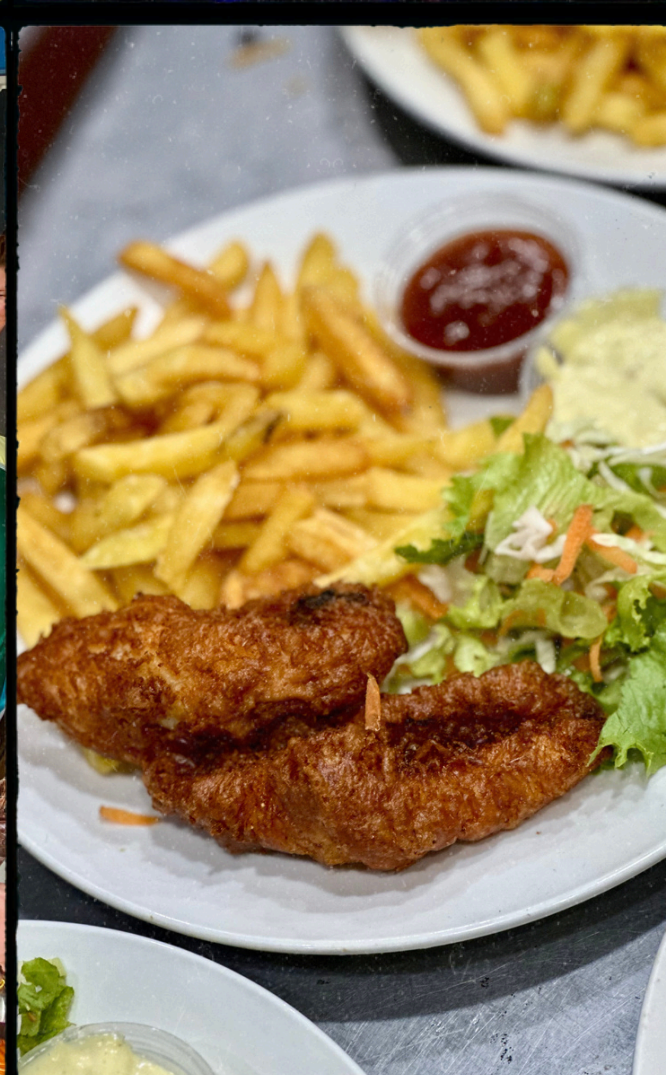
Guests learn about lionfish impact through hands-on jewelry-making and casual conservation chats, deepening awareness one spine at a time.

### Entertainment

Live music by our team sets the vibe while guests craft unique souvenirs — transforming invasive species into memories that matter.









# THE IMPACT:

## Aqua Rangers Youth Development Scholarship Program

Training the next generation of Blue Economy leaders.

- \$36,000 EC / \$13,400 USD raised since 2021 through lionfish meals & jewelry — fully reinvested into youth conservation training.
- Over 82 SCUBA certifications sponsored since 2023 for students, swim instructors, and early-career researchers.
- Scholarship recipients include SGU Marine Biology students, Ocean Spirits researchers, and Get Grenada Swimming instructors.
- 8 Aqua Rangers already employed in the Blue Economy — proof of purpose-driven success.



**Problem we're solving: Access to real-world experience and dive certifications needed to get hired or launch their own ventures in marine conservation.**



# Hands-on experience. Professional dive training. Career-focused results.

## Academic Integration & Fieldwork

Created for CARICOM youth passionate about marine conservation and/or studying Marine, Wildlife & Conservation Biology at SGU. It combines classroom learning with in-water citizen science and marine conservation projects.

## Dive Certifications & Research Training

Participants receive SCUBA certifications up to the professional level, fully funded through the program. They're trained in citizen science methods through REEF.org, gaining hands-on experience in reef surveys, species identification, and underwater data collection.

## Career Pathways in the Blue Economy

Students engage with marine scientists, conservationists, and eco-tourism professionals, gaining real-world insight into the Blue Economy. This network-driven approach supports job placement, encourages entrepreneurial thinking, and empowers ongoing contributions to local conservation initiatives.







# What's Next ● ● ● ● ●

The Aqua Rangers Youth Development Program is just getting started — but its impact is already clear. Designed to build technical skills, confidence, and real-world readiness, the program aims to become a trusted pipeline for Blue Economy talent. Our long-term vision is to create such a high standard of training and experience that employers actively seek out Aqua Rangers graduates, knowing they are well-prepared, capable, and conservation-minded.

Looking ahead, we plan to expand the program's reach and rigor. This includes aligning with AAUS standards for scientific diving, launching our own coral restoration initiative, and deepening partnerships across the marine science and eco-tourism sectors. With every new Ranger trained, we're not just preparing students for jobs — we're building a workforce that will protect and shape the future of our oceans.



# Recipe for Replication



## Step 1. Start with a Clear Mission

Define your goals for invasive species management and community engagement. Whether you're focusing on Lionfish or another invasive species, make sure your mission is clear and communicated to your community.

## Step 2. Collaborate with Local Partners

Team up with local businesses, like breweries or restaurants, to create a collaborative event. They can help with providing food, drink, and additional entertainment, and you'll bring more awareness to their passion for conservation in the process.

## Step 3. Make It Fun and Educational

Guests learn best when they're having fun. Incorporate music, food, and hands-on activities to keep the atmosphere relaxed and engaging. Consider hosting dive trips, jewelry making, or educational talks alongside your events to give a well-rounded experience.

## Step 4. Turn Conservation into Action

While raising awareness is important, make sure your events encourage action. Invite people to get involved with your SSI Invasive Species Management course and/or contribute to your local environmental initiatives.

## Step 5. Celebrate Progress

Invasive species management is a long-term effort, and every step forward is a success. Celebrate the small victories and continue engaging your community to keep the momentum going.








# THANK YOU!




**Aquanauts Grenada**  
*- The Art of Diving -*

✉ [Management@AquanautsGrenada.com](mailto:Management@AquanautsGrenada.com)

  @AquanautsGrenada

 [www.AquanautsGrenada.com](http://www.AquanautsGrenada.com)

 +1-473-444-1126