

Dangerous Marine Species in the Arabian Gulf

The fire coral lives on coral rock, shells skeletons of horny corals and other submerged structures, it is highly toxic and those rubbing against them suffer a severe burning sensation, blistery rash and allergic reaction. The affected part of the victim should be rinsed with seawater, Apply vinegar, immobilize the victim and treat for allergic reaction and pain.



Fire Coral

This species lives in surface water and has a thick bunch of tentacles which causes painful sting and can be fatal, they are often seen on the beaches during strong winds. The sting can be treated by vinegar or banking soda on the affected part to dislodge the tentacles and pain may reduce on immersion in hot water, Antihistamines treatment may help.



Portuguese Man-of-War

Large numbers of this species occur in the inshore water in certain seasons, their stings develop coughing fits and breathing difficulties and cause distressing pain and allergic reaction. Application of vinegar may be useful as a first-aid to inactivate the detached tentacles, the severely affected patient must be hospitalized.



Little Mauve jellyfish

This jellyfish is found in surface water, and is a close relative of the highly lethal Australian box jellyfish, but less deadly. Applications of cold packs, hot packs, vinegar, papain and baking soda on the stung area may reduce the pain, an antivenin injection prevents fatality.



Cone-shaped Jellyfish

This bell or cube shaped jellyfish is transparent and invisible, and drift to shores in calm weather on a rising tide, Its venom is often fatal and many people succumb each year, victim experiences muscular cramps, vomiting, frothing, breathing difficulties and paralysis. Pouring vinegar liberally helps to inactivate the stinging cells, Artificial respiration, cardiac massage and administering box-jellyfish antivenom may help the victim.



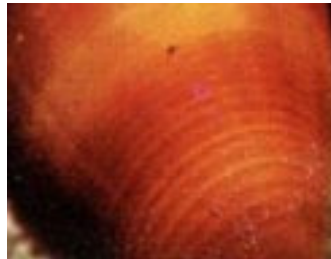
Bell-shaped jellyfish

This worm is referred to as "Ghool" in Arabic, which means "Snake" it lives in burrows at the edge of the coastal water, and delivers a painful bite to anything which blocks the opening of it's hole, in most reported cases the human foot. The bite is not fatal, however, it should be medically treated.



Bristle worm

This molluscan species occurs in shallow coastal waters, and possesses a venom apparatus, Its sting causes pain at the site if injury, respiratory distress with chest pain, difficulties in swallowing, dizziness, blurring vision and respiratory paralysis that may lead to fatality. The treatment should be immediate immersion in hot water for 30 minutes, in severe cases ventilator support is needed, no antivenin is available.



Cone shells

Octopus lives in surface to deep waters and prefers to hide in rocks and crevices, they possess two powerful jaws by which they can inflict puncture wound, a few species of Octopus produce venom and their bite is fatal to humans. The bite wounds of the Octopus should be treated medically.



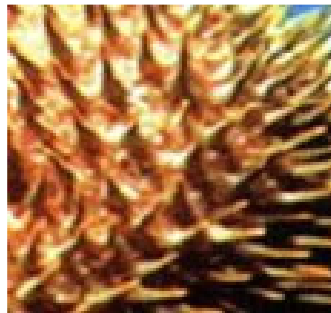
Octopus

The sea urchins are found on rocky foreshores and reefs, they have venomous spines capable of delivering very painful injuries which may lead to vomiting, cramps, red swellings, numbness, loss of coordination, fainting and breathing difficulties. The venomous stings are likely to be helped by hot water immersion for up to 90 minutes or more. Puncture wound causes infection which demands tetanus immunization.



Black sea urchin

The crown of Thorns Starfish (COTS) lives and feeds on coral reefs, a significant mortality of corals occurs due its presence, brush against it causes many painful punctures and its venom may lead to vomiting and paralysis. Punctures and venomous pricks are treated by hot water immersion for up to 90 minutes or more, any puncture wound demands tetanus immunization.



Crown of thorns starfish

The scalloped hammerhead shark spend most of the day closer inshore, moving offshore in search of prey at night, this species if considered as potentially dangerous to human especially to drive who approach closely. The wounded victim should be given first-aid to stop the bleeding and hospitalized.



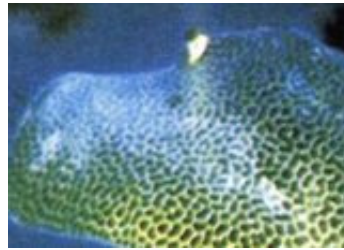
Hammerhead shark

The tiger shark lives in open oceans, shallow coastal waters and islands including lagoons, it is aggressive with great care while swimming. The wounded victim should be given first-aid to stop the bleeding and hospitalized.



Tiger shark

Stingrays tend to partially bury on sandy or silt bottoms in shallow inshore water, the venomous spine on the tail can stab swimmers who step on, or unknowingly disturb them, the injuries can be fatal. The stingray's wound must be allowed initially to bleed freely, wash it with clean water, and immerse in hot water, a prompt medical attention prevents secondary infection.



Spotted stingray

The electric ray is commonly found in sandy bottoms in the inshore waters, it has specialized electric organs for producing and discharging electricity and are capable of delivering powerful electric shock, it can survive for hours after being stranded on the beach, electric shocks are a defensive response and strong enough to be dangerous. The victim should be given artificial respiration if necessary and treated for electric shock.



Marbled Electric ray

This species is mostly confined to coral reefs, and frequently moves to shallow water to feed on algal food, this fish attacks with its side spines when excited and inflict painful wounds. Deep wounds may cause secondary infections which need medical treatment.



Lined surgeonfish

This species occurs at the surface water and is found commonly in lagoons and reefs, it possess very long, strong and pointed jaws and is a significant threat to humans, Fisherman or divers on night expeditions are often severely wounded or even killed by jumping needlefish. Immediately wash the wound, stop the bleeding and hospitalize the victim.



Crocodile needlefish

The moray eel is commonly seen hiding in dark holes and deep caves of coral and rocky reefs, its jaws are large and bear powerful and fang-like teeth, it is aggressive and attacks when provoked. The wound must be washed with clean water and first aid should be given to stop the bleeding, tetanus toxoid injection should be administered.



Honeycomb Moray Eel

The catfish appears in dense should in reed areas and also occurs in estuaries and tidal pools, it possesses highly venomous pectoral and dorsal spines which can inflict painful fatal wounds. Immersion of wounded part in hot water followed by prompt medical attention helps the victim, administering tetanus toxoid injection prevents infection.



Eel Catfish

The lionfish is found in shallow reeds and lagoons, it possesses a highly developed venom apparatus connected with the spines, punctures from the spines cause burning pains and swelling, in severe cases heart irregularities, breathing troubles, convulsions and paralysis may develop. The toxin can be inactivated by immediately immersing the wounded portion in hot water for 30 minutes, a tetanus toxoid injection must be administered.



Spotfin Lionfish

The devil Scorpion fish lives in coastal areas, and is commonly found partly buried in coral, rocky and weedy environments, it can inflict injuries with its venomous dorsal spines, the injury causes shooting pain, stiffness and at times paralysis, jaw paralysis and paralysis of eyelid are quite common. Immediate immersion of the affected part in hot water for 30 min helps patient, a tetanus toxoid injection is helpful.



Devil scorpion fish

The great barracuda lived in and around the edge of coral reefs, it has pointed head with a large mouth and long knife-like teeth, attacks divers most often, when provoked, and is capable, of inflicting severe wounds. The wounds of the victims must be washed with clean water and treated medically.



Great Barracuda

The blackededge puffer fish prefers quieter waters of lagoons and coral reefs, it is highly poisonous and the poison is mainly found in the internal organs and skin, consumption of the fish may cause rapid and violent death. Immediate stomach wash and hospitalization may help the patient to recover.



Blackedged Puffer

This species is found around shallow coral and rocky reefs, it has nerve poison which is found in skin, liver and gonads, eating the fish sometimes causes headache, numbness and tingling followed by difficult in speaking, vomiting, abdominal, pain and paralysis leading to respiratory failure and fatality. Immediate medical attention may help to save the victim.



Whitespotted Puffer

The sea snake prefers shallow inshore waters, it swims on the surface but usually drift by ocean currents, it is venomous and its venom is neurotoxin. The bitten wound should be bled and tied a knot immediately, Administering of an antivenin injection helps the victim.



Sea Snake

For further information contact: Minister of Environment & Water
Website: www.moew.gov.ae