



Sting stab strike!

Stonefish

What do they look like? As the name suggests, the stonefish looks like a rock. It is a greenish-brown colour and has bumpy skin which helps it camouflage itself among rocks on reefs. It has 13 grooved spines on its back and is 30 centimetres long.

Where do they live? Its main habitat is on coral reefs, around dull coloured plants near rocks, or they can be found sleeping in the mud or sand. They are found all around the Australian coastline.

Why are they dangerous? Its back is lined with spines that release a venomous toxin which makes it the most dangerous fish in the world. Its venom causes very severe pain and swelling and can kill your tissues, stop your arms and legs working properly and put your body into shock. Always seek medical attention quickly as the sting is very serious and in rare cases, has been fatal.

How to avoid them. Wear thick-soled shoes and shuffle your feet when walking in the shallows. Don't pick up rocks on reefs — they might not really be a rock!

What to do if you get hurt. Call 000. Place the affected area in hot water (as hot as the rescuer can stand with their elbow) to relieve the pain and seek urgent medical attention.

