



Caribbean Spiny Lobster

Panulirus argus

Range: Commonly inhabits the subtropical and tropical waters of the Western Atlantic Ocean from North Carolina to Brazil. It is often found in shallow waters where it is mostly active at night (nocturnal), hiding during the day in protective reef crevices, ledges, and overhangs.

Similar Species: Spotted Spiny Lobsters (*Panulirus guttatus*.) are sometimes confused with the Spiny Lobster but are covered, including the legs, in numerous white spots.

Identification: Hard spines cover most of its shell. The coloration is mainly brown-gray with stripes and yellow spots on the tail segments. Spiny Lobsters have very long, thick, spiny antennae and lack claws on the first four pairs of walking legs. Despite name and appearance, Spiny Lobsters are not closely related to true lobsters. True lobsters have much smaller antennae and claws on the first three pairs of legs (the first being enlarged).

Note: In response to the onset of late summer and fall storms, Spiny Lobsters migrate towards deeper, warmer water in single file lines known as "marches," sometimes thousands of lobsters in length. Spiny Lobsters prefer warmer water that helps the development of their eggs.