

Mass mortality of *Canthigaster rostrata* at the northeast coast of the Yucatan Peninsula

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Fig. 1 Dead and dying fishes that were washed ashore (*top*) with no evident signs of disease (*bottom*)

On December 2008 a mass-mortality event affecting the sharpnose puffer, *Canthigaster rostrata*, was observed at several locations along the northeast coast of the Yucatan Peninsula. Dead and dying fishes were washed ashore periodically between December 6 and 18 (Fig. 1). Dead fishes desiccated during the day allowing the differentiation of recurring episodes of demise. The first observations were made on December 6 around Akumal and 2 days later at Puerto Morelos, 70 km down-current. Later reports originated from several locations along a 100-km section of the northeast coast. Recently dead fishes were washed ashore with the highest frequency of 39.5 ± 23.6 (mean \pm SD) dead fishes per m^2 (in four $3 m^2$ belt transects) at Puerto Morelos. Fishes were dissected for signs of disease on the skin and organs, but none was found. Fishes had a maximum length of 3.8 ± 0.26 cm (mean \pm SD, $n = 47$), being about half the size of the smaller reproductive adults reported by Sikkel (1990) and, given their small range in size, they were probably juveniles from a single cohort.

Reference

Sikkel PC (1990) Social organization and spawning in the Atlantic sharpnose puffer, *Canthigaster rostrata* (Tetraodontidae). *Environ Biol Fish* 27:243–254

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