

**UC Santa Cruz**  
**Graduate Research Symposium 2018**

**Title**

The Secret Life of Larval Fish: A Geocaching Adventure

**Permalink**

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/5sm587bs>

**Author**

Dale, Katherine

**Publication Date**

2018-05-14



# The Secret Life of Larval Fish

## A Geocaching Adventure

Katherine E. Dale

Ecology & Evolutionary Biology Dept., University of California, Santa Cruz ~ kdale@ucsc.edu

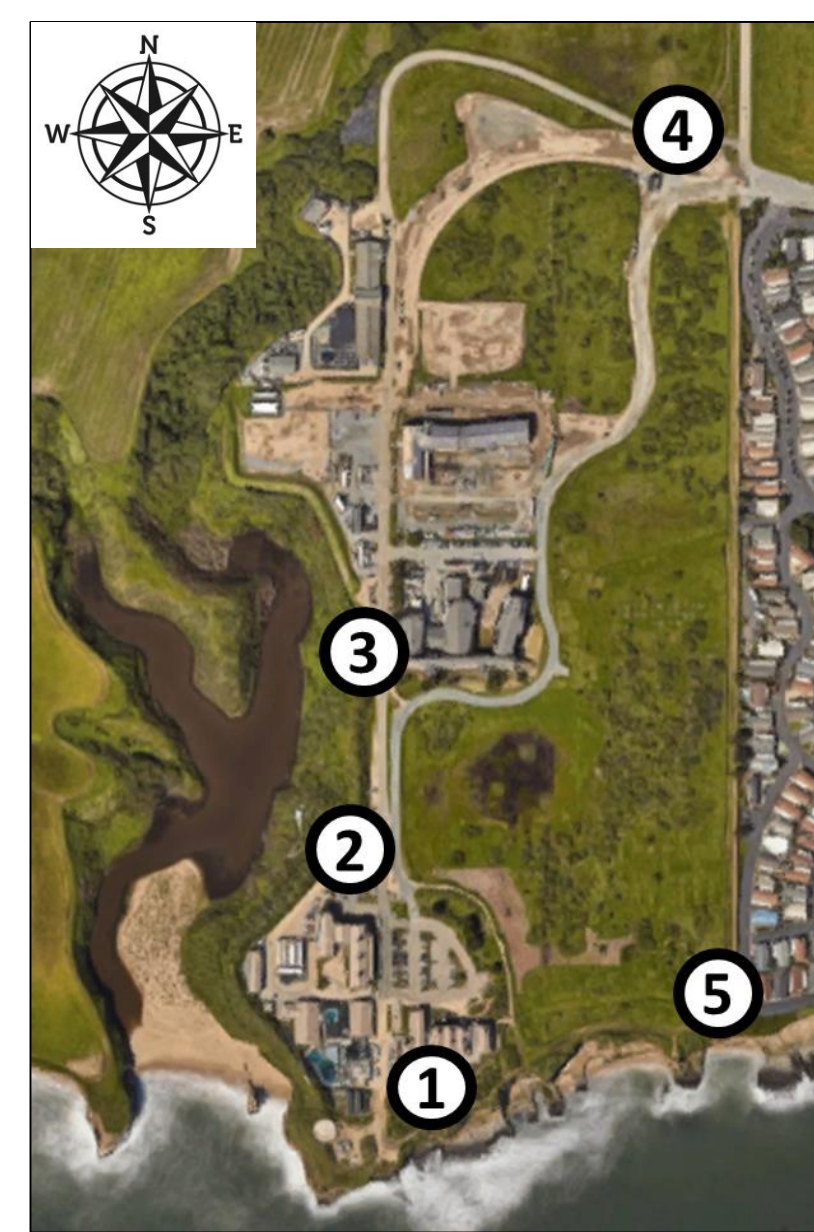


### What is geocaching?

Geocaching is a GPS-based scavenger hunt in which participants find hidden containers (“caches”).

### Where/what are the caches?

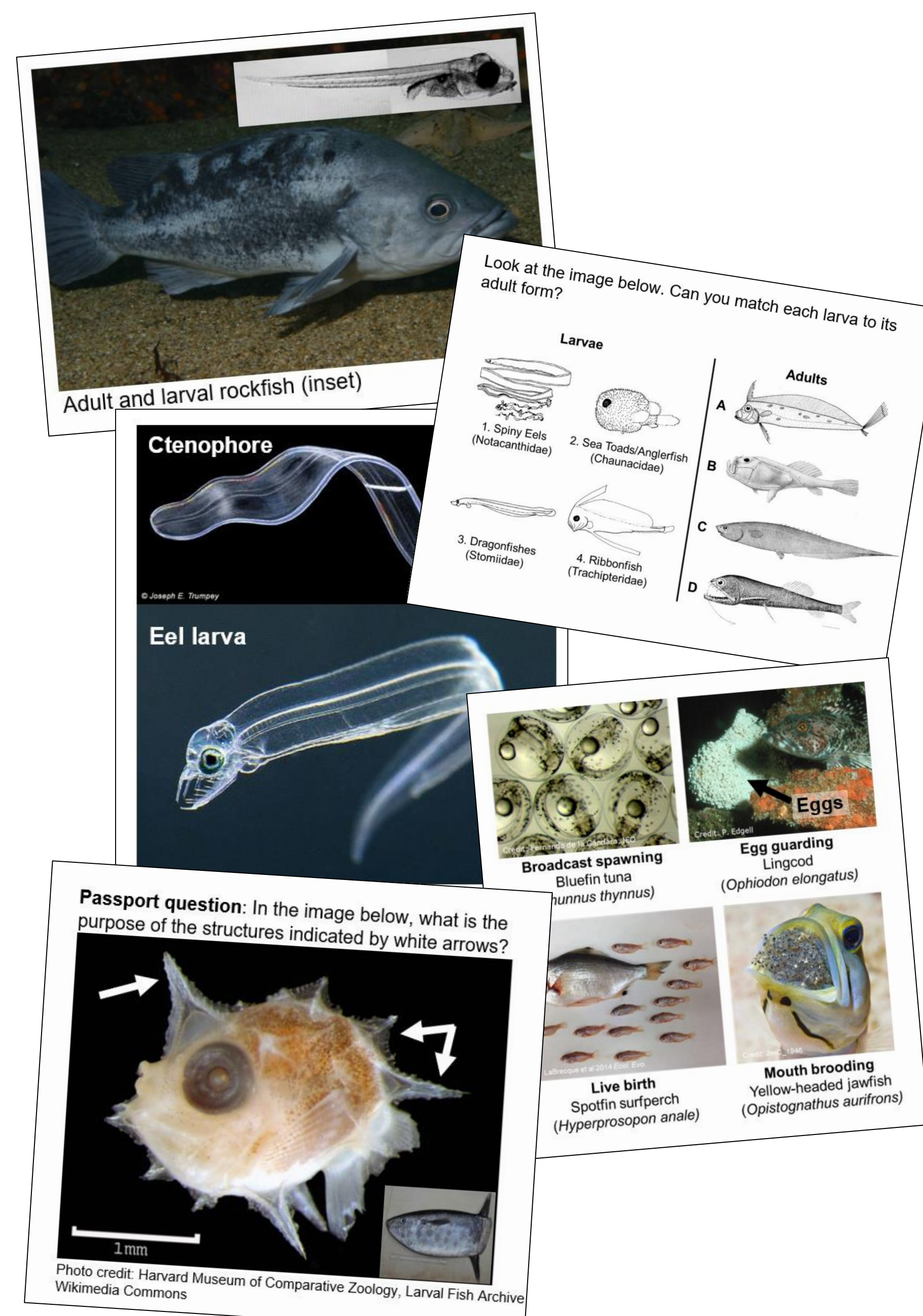
There are five geocaches hidden on the Coastal Science Campus. Each focuses on a different aspect of larval fish biology.



### Learning Outcomes

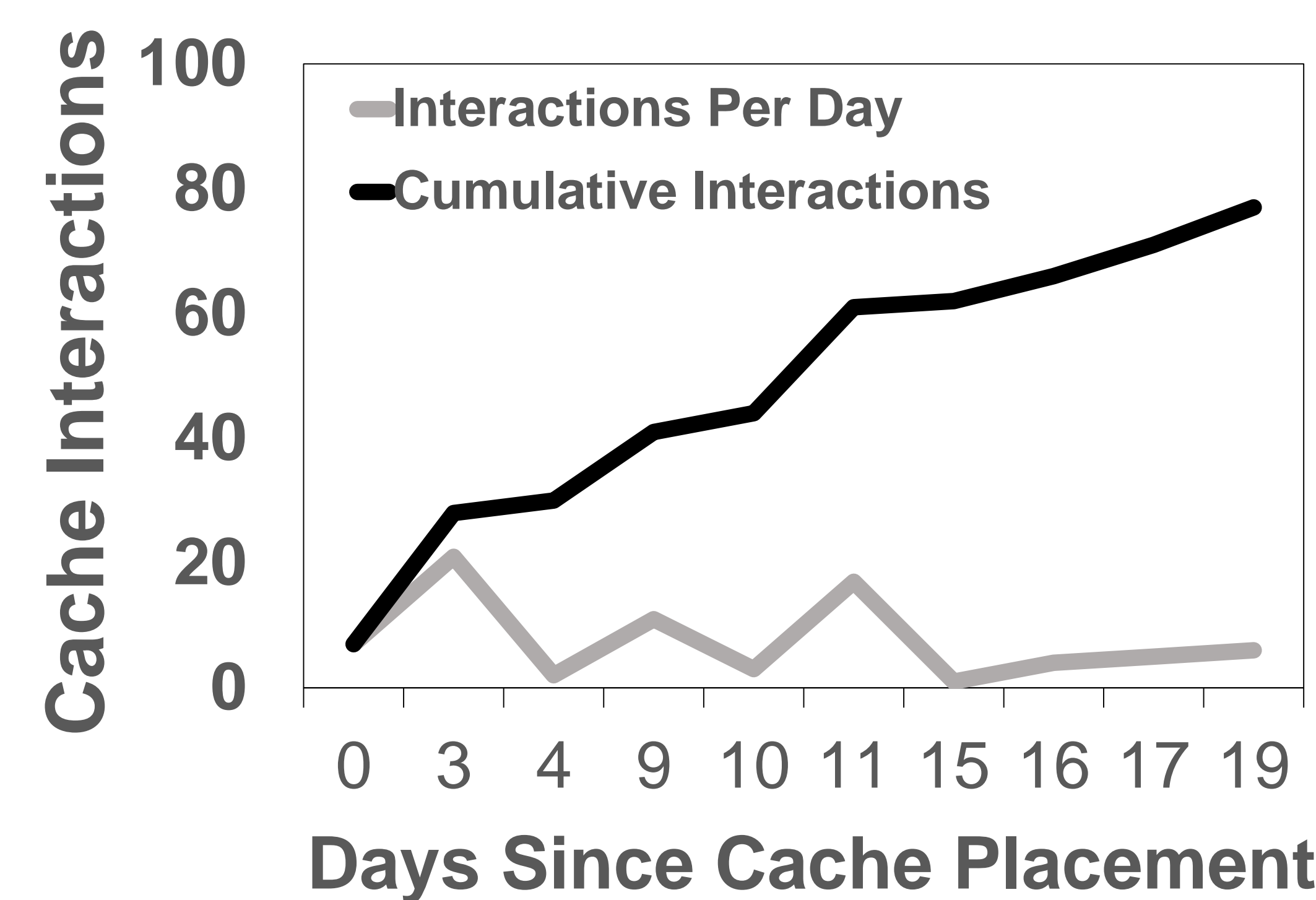
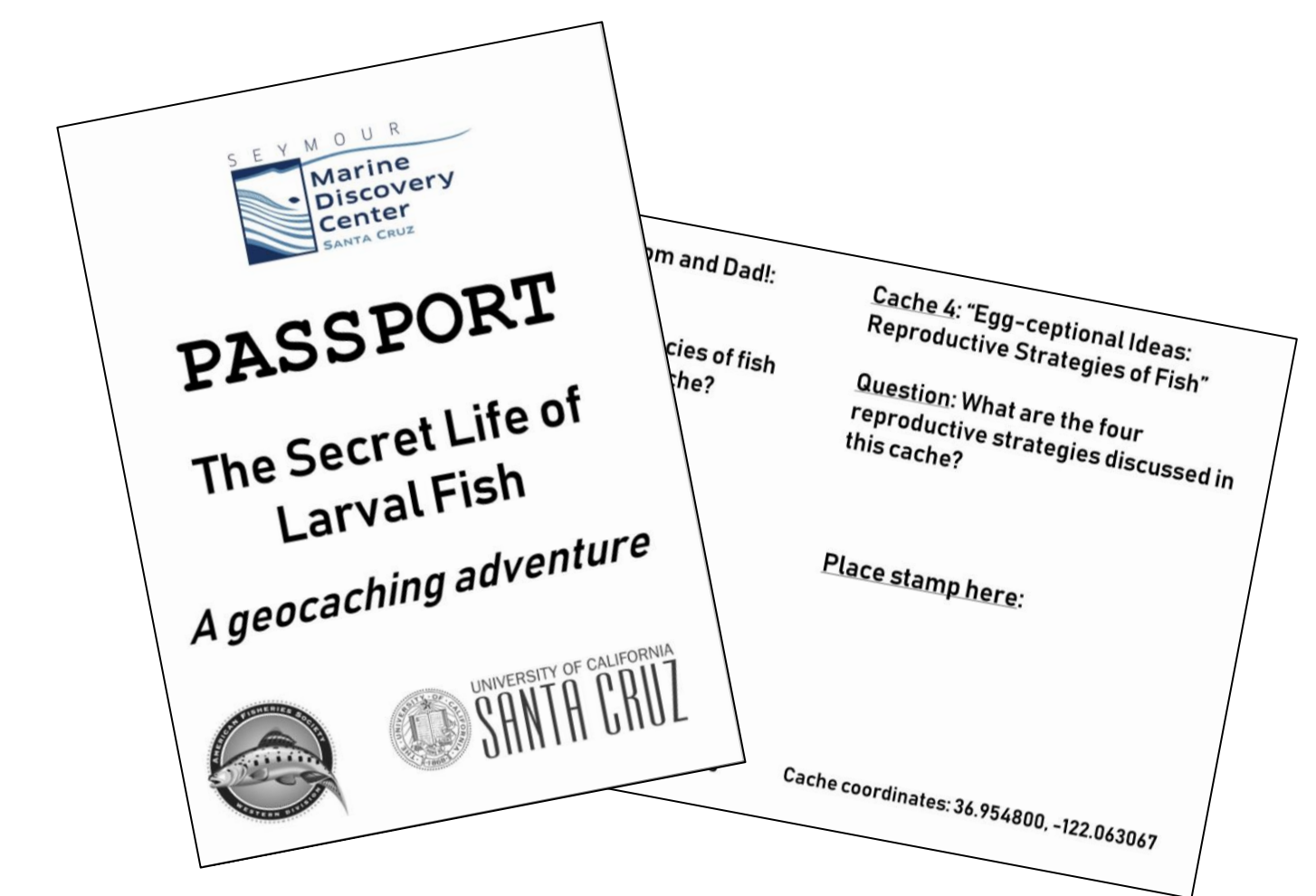
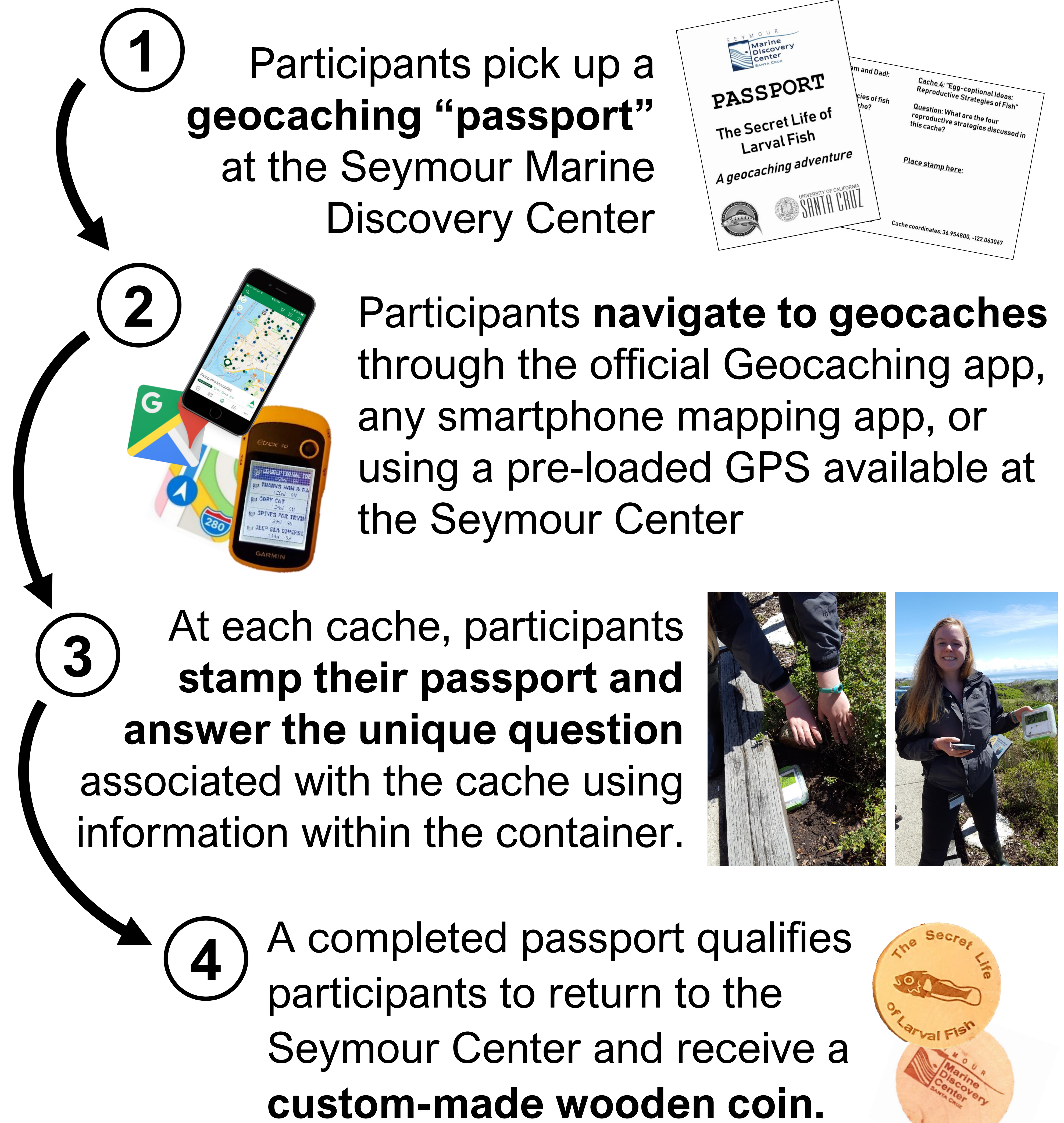
Visitors should be able to:

1. Define the words *plankton* and *larvae*
2. Understand that larval fish do not look and act the same as adults
3. Understand that larval fish have special adaptations for life in the plankton



### Project Goals

1. Create an interactive, long-lasting learning opportunity in Santa Cruz
2. Communicate the importance of larval fish to the public
3. Raise awareness of overlooked aspects of California fish species



**Figure 1.** Number of interactions since caches were placed on April 4, 2018. In total, the five caches have been interacted with 77 times.

“This is a great little series. Very thoughtfully done and approachable for all ages.”

“We hadn’t thought about the many different ways fish work to ensure the survival of their genes until today. Thanks for another informative fishy cache!”

“I learned a lot about larval fish today, including the uses of spines! I wouldn’t have guessed they were used for flotation.”