

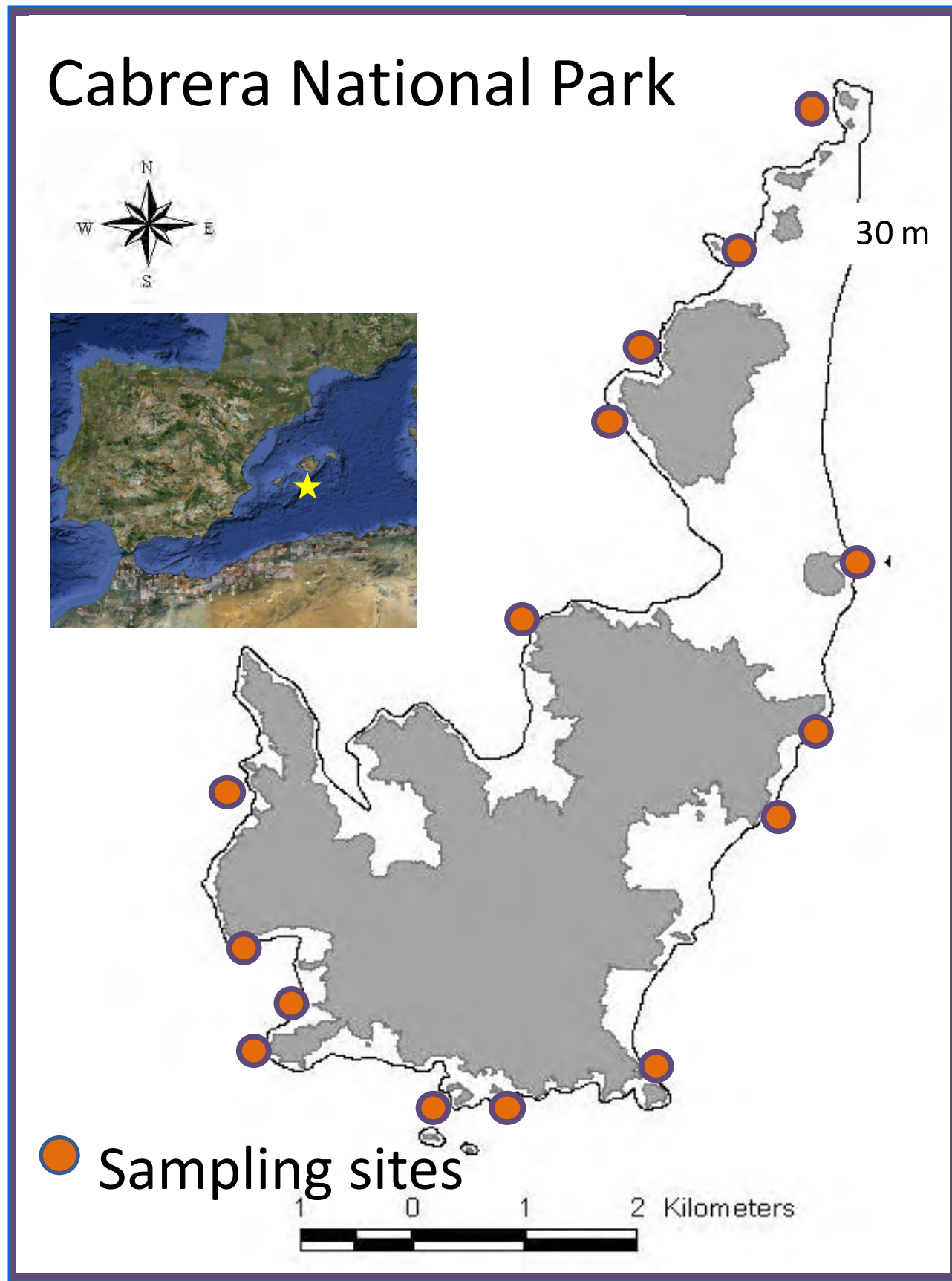


## PICTURES POSTER AREA

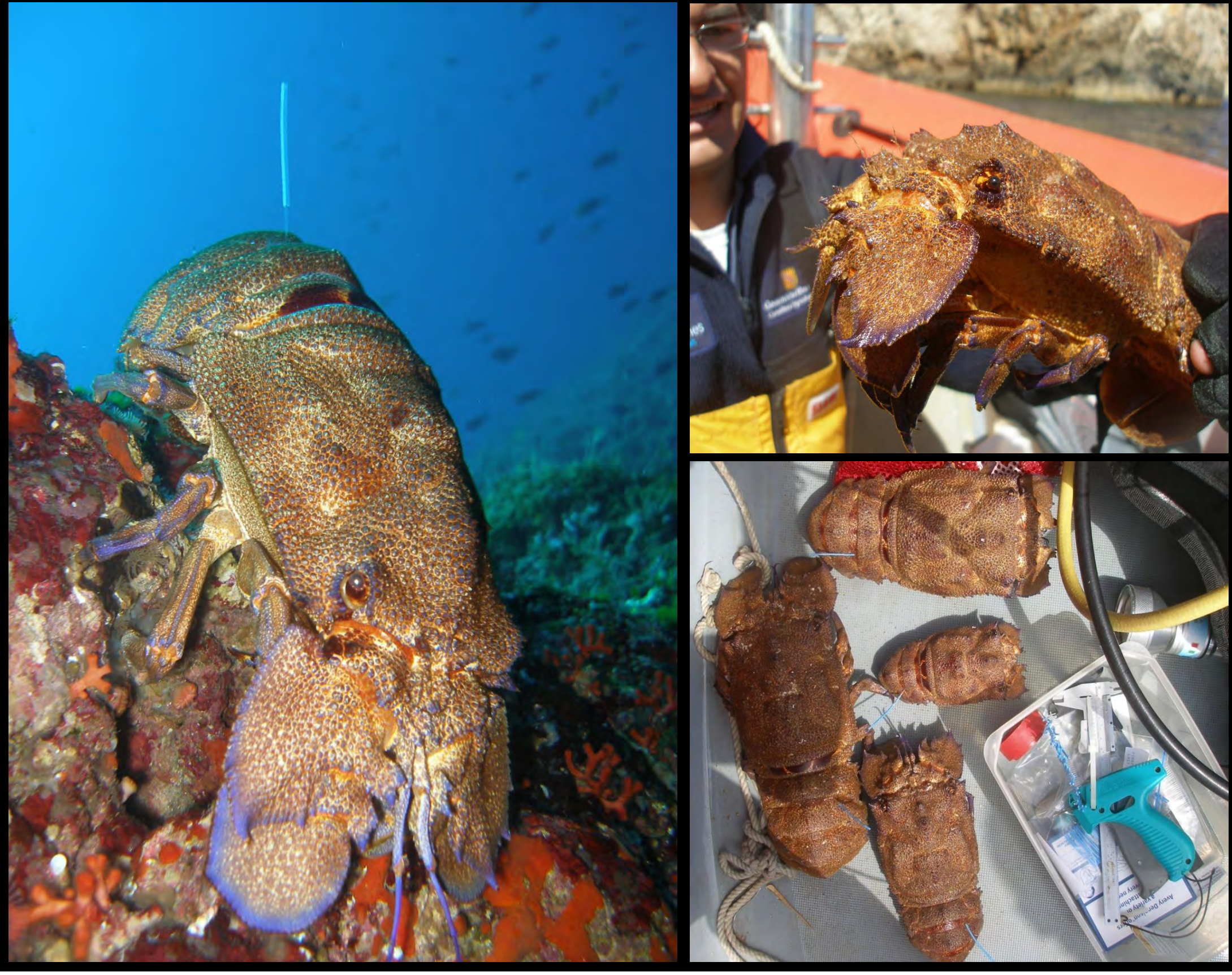
### A WELL ESTABLISHED MPA ALLOWED US TO STUDY THIS RARE SPECIES

Populations of large decapods have **diminished** due to **intense fishing** pressure and habitat modification along densely inhabited Western Mediterranean coastlines. Fortunately, populations have increased in well established marine protected areas (MPAs), including that of **one of the most sought large decapods**, the slipper lobster *Scyllarides latus* (Latreille, 1803).

### WHERE WE DOVE



### HOW WE DO IT?

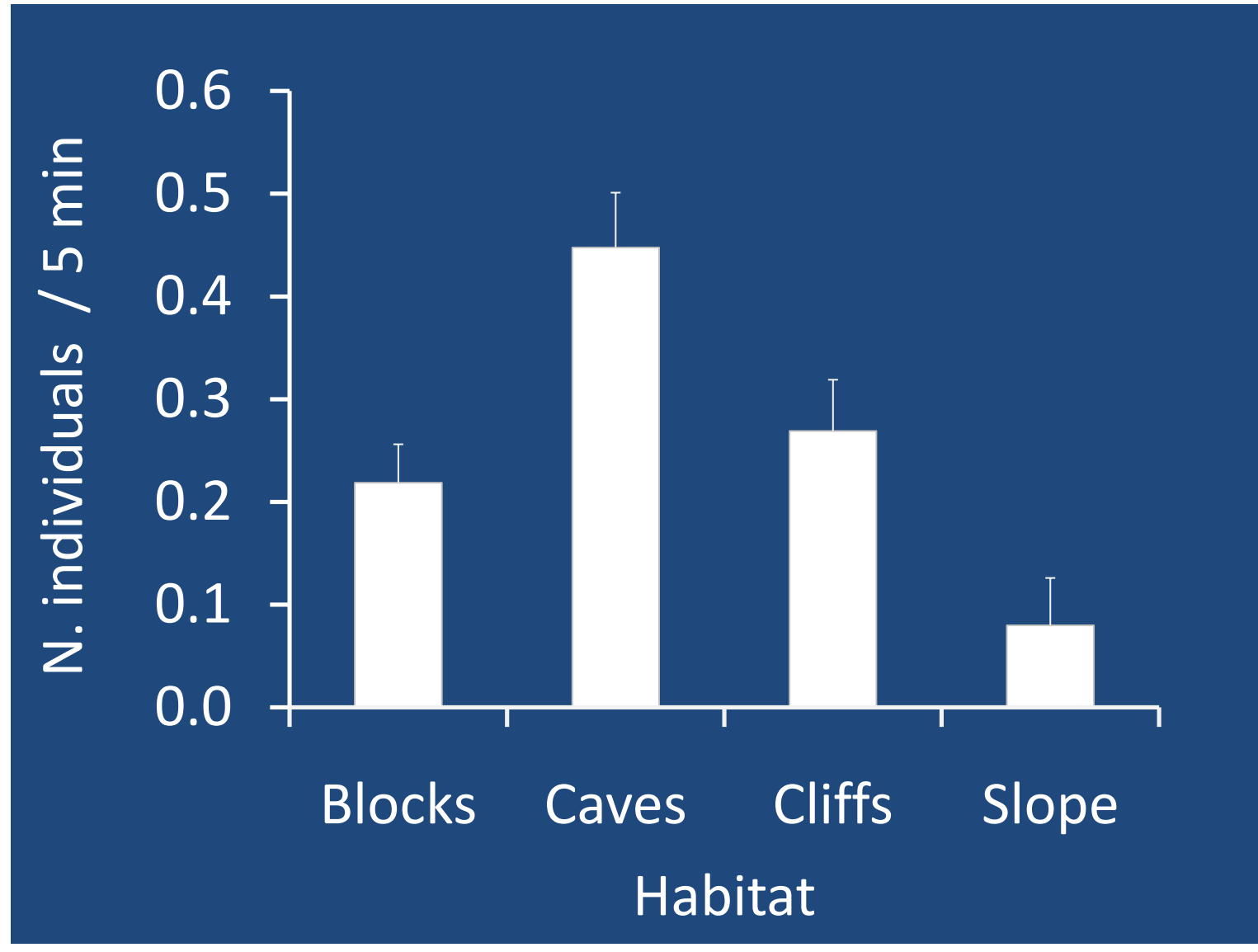


A **four year** monitoring study was conducted to assess seasonal dynamics and habitat preference of *S. latus*. We did monthly underwater visual census surveys (in transects of 5' duration) at depths between 0 and 50 m (N= 1677 transects).

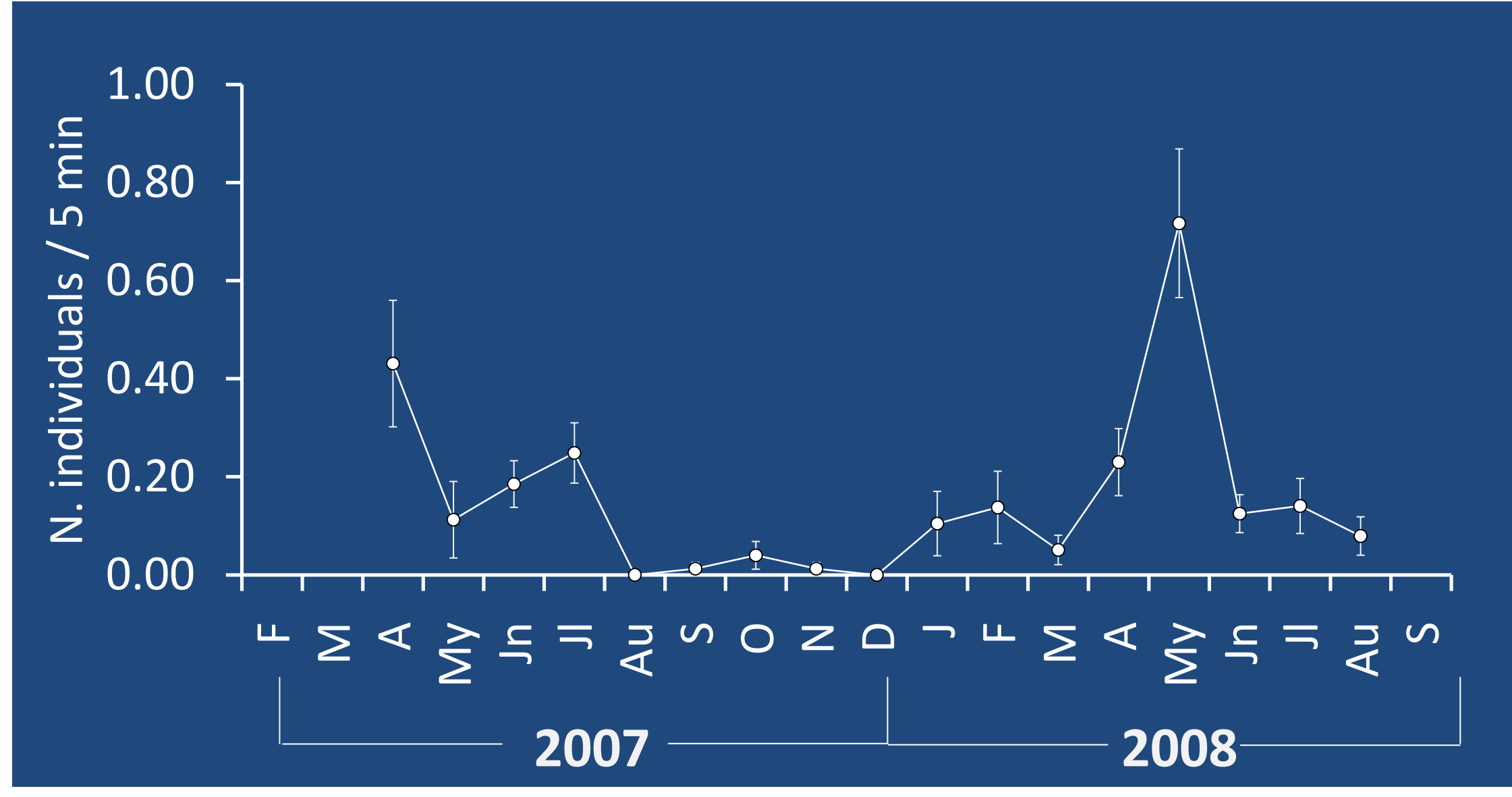


Different **developmental stages** of clutches. All individuals in this caption were captured in July, indicating an **extended** reproductive period of the species (see graph below).

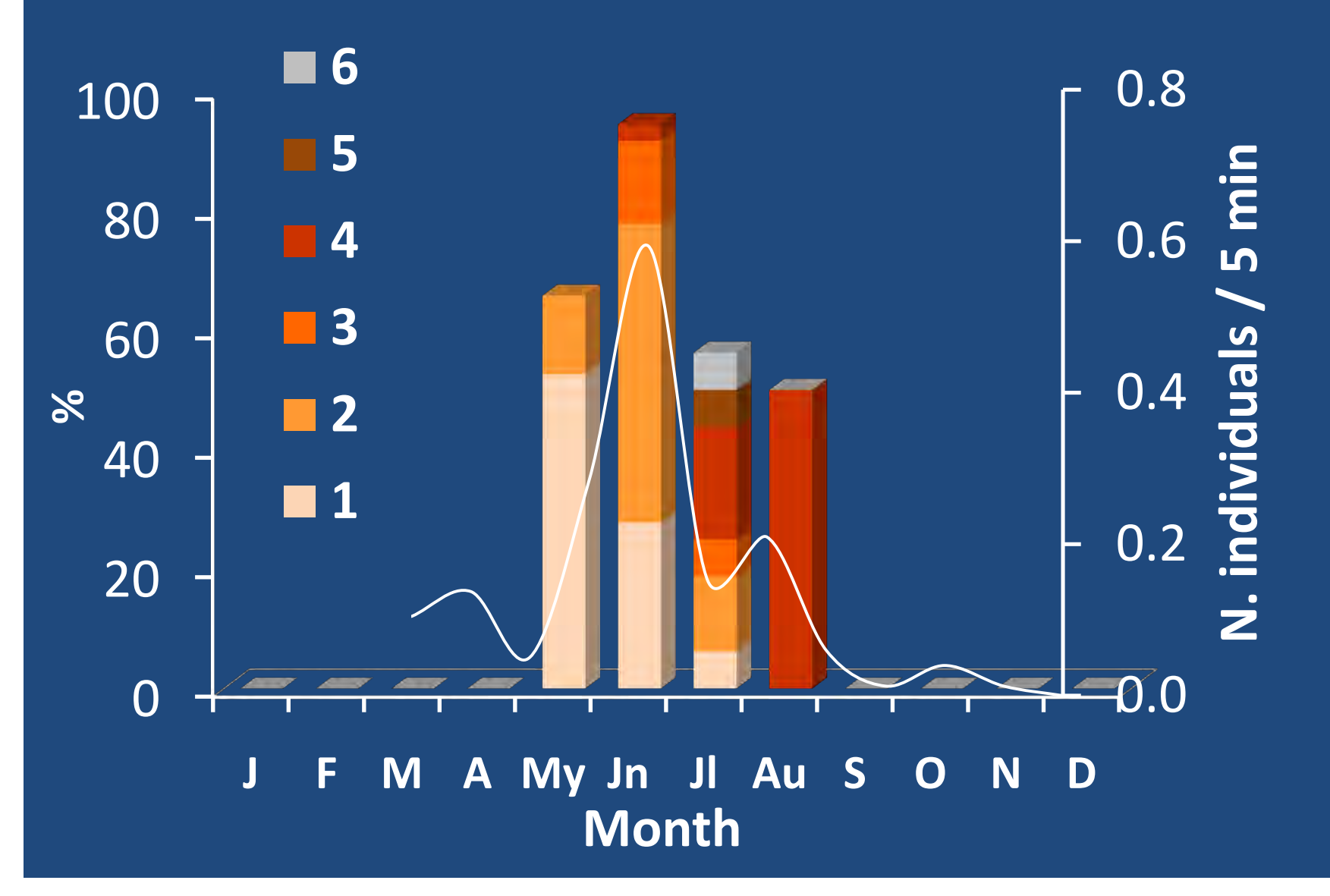
## GRAPH POSTER AREA



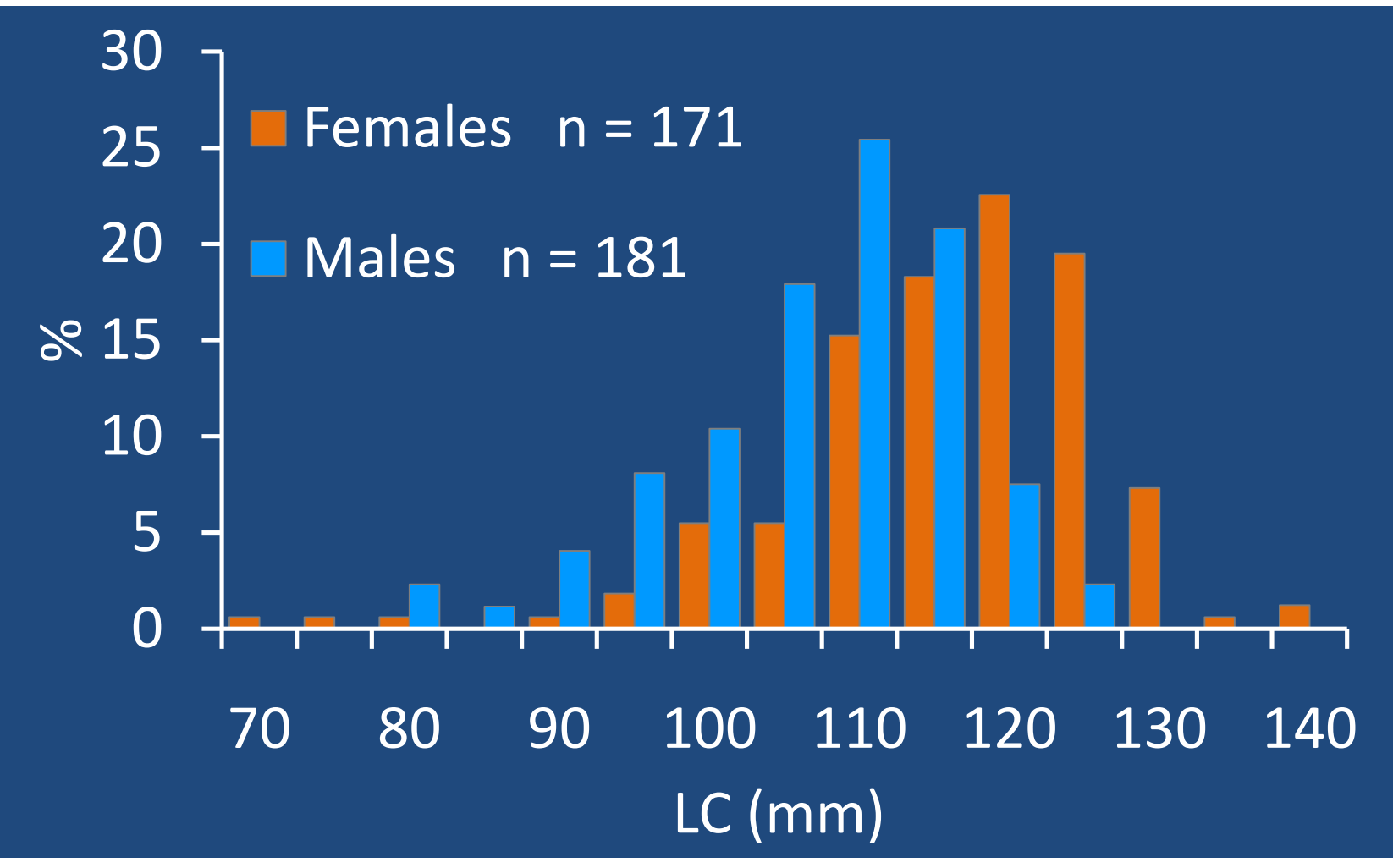
The preferred **depth** is **less than 35 m**, with clear preference for **caves** between 5-20 m. The **littoral slope** (20 – 35 m) is a **transitional habitat**.



Density of *S. latus* shows a **marked seasonality**. Late spring values are 5 to 15 times above average, matching the reproductive pattern. **No lobster were observed during winter surveys.**



**Reproduction** extends from **mid spring** to **mid-summer**. High incidence of **mating aggregations** observed in **May**. Females reach maturity at 98 mm CL and 6 years. **Gonad maturation, mating and egg incubation** take place in **shallow habitats**, while **spawning** may occur in **deeper** habitats.



**Size distribution** indicates that females are larger.

## PAY ATTENTION! THIS IS INTERESTING

**Reproductive behaviour** helps explain why slipper lobsters are under threat: At the time of reproduction they move to shallow water where they are extremely **vulnerable** to harvest by **recreational fishermen**. From a conservation point of view **fishing should not be allowed during this period**. **Settlement and juvenile** habitats for this species are **unknown**. Tag-recapture monitoring and monthly surveys lead us to believe that the apparent **absence** of this species in shallow areas during **winter** is due to confinement to hidden shelters and a reduction in daily activity. There is **no evidence** of **movements to deeper** water during this period.

