Tips for Pattern Journal

Format:
1. Title of Pattern
   • Location of where the pattern was observed
   • Time and date of observation
2. Brief statement of pattern (one or two sentences)
3. Description of pattern
4. Drawing
5. Graph

Statement of Pattern
• A pattern is recurring and has to be repeatedly observable. It is not just an observation of some phenomenon in nature.
• Think of the dependent vs. independent variable when formulation you pattern statement.
• When you state a pattern make sure you also include the negative (something is absent form an area or doesn’t happen at a certain time). For example: Ice plant is found along the edge of the cliff but not further inland. To just say ice plant is found at the cliff is not a pattern.

Description of the pattern
• Focus on the important features of the pattern
• For every observation you are including in your description, ask yourself: does this convey information regarding the pattern I stated.
• Do not include everything you see in front of you, but include enough information so that the pattern is understandable in the context in which you observed it.
• Include species names if you know them otherwise describe the species.

Drawing
• Reader should be able to state pattern from looking at the drawing
• Think about the way you draw you pattern – your drawing should not be a ‘photographic’ representation what you see in front of you it should focus on the important features
• Leave out anything that doesn’t inform pattern
• Think about the perspective you use: cross sections, aerial views, etc
• Label your drawing
• Behavioral patterns are often tricky to draw - be creative

Graph
• Independent variable on axis horizontal, dependent variable on vertical axis
• Orientation of axes (high to low, small to large, etc…)
• Label the axes
• Include a title and/or figure legend
• Draw theoretical curves, you don’t need to draw curves that look like real data (don’t make up statistical tests)
• Think about linear vs. non-linear relationships when you draw a curve