Abstract: In this talk I will address how evolutionary thinking can complement efforts to understand ecological community structure and how we can apply models derived from evolutionary game theory to gather important information on the way populations we are working to conserve respond to applied management techniques. I will present three major examples from my work to demonstrate how these models can be effective at (1) investigating similarities in the evolutionary process of convergent species, (2) studying the effectiveness of habitat restoration in a central Australian desert, and (3) gather real-time information on the impacts of recreation on wildlife habitat selection.

Bio: Sonny Bleicher is a behavioral and evolutionary ecologist. His major research interest is the ecology of fear, how predation risk affects community and population dynamics on evolutionary scales. He defended his PhD in evolutionary ecology from the University of Illinois at Chicago, received his master in dryland ecology from Ben Gurion University of the Negev in Israel, and his bachelor’s in environmental science at the Rochester Institute of Technology. He has worked as a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Sydney studying foraging behavior in carnivorous marsupials, at the University of Arizona studying human-wildlife conflict, and at the University of Jyvaskyla studying interpretation of predator cues and how it changes based on environmental conditions. He also managed a mountain lion monitoring program in the San Francisco Bay Area for a non-profit conservation organization.