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Everybody needs good neighbours Competition, conflict and cooperation in crabs

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Isobel Booksmythe Evolution, Ecology and Genetics, Research School of Biology

Gould Seminar Room (Room 235) Gould building, 116 Daley Road, ANU



Birds do it, bees do it – cooperative behaviour is seen in many vertebrate species, and is a defining feature of the social insects. Other invertebrates are less renowned for their teamwork, but fiddler crabs are only too happy to help – at least for the right crab in the right circumstances.

Inhabiting mangroves and mudflats in dense, mixed-sex populations, where each defends an individual burrow, these charismatic crustaceans have a dynamic social life worthy of any soap opera. Of course, despite the crabs' tropical distribution life ain't all sunshine and rainbows, and conflict is common in their daily territorial interactions. In this talk I will describe the territorial clashes, truces and alliances (plus some rather awkward dating moments) that it has been my pleasure to investigate during my PhD.

Presented by

Division of
Evolution, Ecology
& Genetics
Research School of
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STAFF LECTURE