

Life, Earth & Environment Seminar Series

When: Friday 1st September, 11 am – 12 pm

Where: Natural Resources Building, Lecture Theatre 2 (EM2)

WITH GREAT SOCIALITY COMES GREAT ECOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES: THE TWO SIDES OF NOISY MINER COOPERATION

Associate Professor Paul McDonald

University of New England

This talk focuses on two areas of research being undertaken into this common, but fascinating species. Noisy Miners have one of the most complex social systems of any bird, which facilitates large numbers of individuals cooperating with each other across a range of social pathways, including cooperative breeding, social foraging and anti-predator vigilance. Unfortunately, these traits have enabled miner populations to take advantage of human-altered landscapes throughout south-east Australia, effectively excluding other woodland bird species from vast tracts of habitat. In this seminar, I will discuss some of the means by which miners achieve this incredible social connectivity, whilst also discussing research investigating amelioration techniques to reduce their influence on avian biodiversity.



Biography

Paul completed his PhD at ANU working on sex allocation in Brown Falcons in 2004, before he completed postdocs at the University of Bangor in Wales, NTNU in Norway and then Macquarie University focusing on cooperative behaviour. He joined UNE in 2010 as a Lecturer in Animal Behaviour.