



SIGMA XI
THE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH SOCIETY

Distinguished Lecture Seminar

David Pfennig, Ph.D.

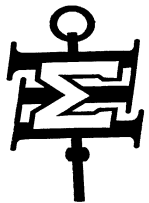
Professor of Biology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill



David Pfennig is professor of biology at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and a Sigma Xi Distinguished Lecturer. His research focuses on how the interplay between evolution, ecology, and development shapes biodiversity. He has published numerous scientific papers, as well as a book — *Evolution's Wedge* (with Karin Pfennig) — that seeks to integrate evolution and ecology. His research has been featured on The National Geographic Channel, on PBS's *Nature* series, and in *The New York Times*, *Newsweek*, *National Geographic*, *Scientific American*, *New Scientist*, and *Discover*, among other publications.

Plasticity, Epigenetics, and Evolution

Genes are widely regarded as the fundamental unit of heredity and source of all biological information. Yet, many organisms can respond to changes in their environment by altering their features—during their lifetime—via ‘developmental plasticity.’ Moreover, these environmentally modified traits can sometimes be passed to offspring in the absence of changes in genes; that is, acquired traits can be inherited ‘epigenetically’. In this talk, we will examine whether and how such environmentally induced changes to organismal development affect evolution. As we will see, research into developmental plasticity and epigenetics has major implications not only for evolution, but also for human health.



Thursday, April 8, 2021

Zoom Link: <https://Fairfield.zoom.us/j/98145316775>

Meeting ID: 981 4531 6775

5:00 – 6:15 p.m.

