Rachel Chock  
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**Effects of competition on reintroduction success of the endangered Pacific pocket mouse**

Multiple species that occupy similar niches in the same community must compete either directly or indirectly for resources. The intensity and outcome of these interactions determines whether competitors are able to stably coexist, or if one will be driven to local extinction. These processes have not previously been considered in reintroduction biology and have the potential to improve applied conservation science and management. I am studying how the small, specialist forager Pacific pocket mouse (*Perognathus longimembris pacificus*) maintains a stable population in a community of larger generalist competitors. Determining which species is the closest competitor will aid in management strategies for this critically endangered pocket mouse. For my PhD I am working with Greg Grether at UCLA and Debra Shier from the San Diego Zoo Institute for Conservation Research on incorporating research from interspecific interactions into policy for the captive breeding and reintroduction of the Pacific pocket mouse.

The La Kretz Graduate Grant will help fund my studies of agonistic interactions, territoriality, cache pilfering, and niche partitioning between little pocket mice and sympatric rodent species. This research will clarify the interspecific relationships that help structure the community and maintain species diversity. Findings will contribute to the selection and management of reintroduction sites for captive bred Pacific pocket mouse populations to areas within their historic range.