

Biology Seminar

12:30 - 1:30 pm

Friday, February 26, 2021

Seminar to be held via ZOOM



Patricia L. R. Brennan

Sexual conflict and genital evolution in vertebrates

Sexual conflict is expected to be widespread in nature as males and females do not fully share their evolutionary interests. The copulatory arena, due to its evolutionary importance and direct fitness consequences, is rife with evidence of conflict. Dr. Brennan's lab has uncovered several examples of the consequences of sexual conflict in genital evolution in several vertebrates that include modifications in functional morphology and physiology. In waterfowl, sexual conflict over forced copulations has led to the evolution of unique functional morphology of male genitalia and coevolution between males and females that result from an evolutionary arms race as males try to bypass female choice and females resist male coercion. More recently her lab has described similar antagonistic coevolution in dolphins, snakes, and sharks. This research fills a gap in our understanding of the most mechanically direct interaction between males and females and examine why copulatory interactions can often be so uncooperative.

