

Biology Seminar



12:30 - 1:30 pm
Friday, October 3, 2025
BGS 0165



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Grey seals of Sable Island: A case study of density-dependence in a long-lived mammal

Sable Island, Nova Scotia hosts the largest breeding colony of grey seals (*Halichoerus grypus*) worldwide. Individually marked cohorts of seals have been systematically monitored there since 1984, and the population has undergone dramatic growth until recent years. The extraordinary long-term dataset resulting from this program allows empirical testing of predictions around density-dependent effects on fitness. This talk will present insights from the Sable Island research program to highlight the importance of long-term studies. Adult mortality has increased as density has increased, with the most recently marked cohort showing the beginnings of a precipitous decline. This may be an indication of the increased influence of non-age-related mortality on the population.

