**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**

**COLLEGE OF SCIENCE**

**BIOLOGY DEPARTMENT SEMINAR**

**Spring 2015**

### Elizabeth Freeman, New Century College, George Mason University

***“****The Secret Lives of Rhinos of Addo Elephant National Park****”***

The black rhinoceros (rhino) is an elusive creature that captivates many people as a charismatic reminder of prehistoric times, and in recent years, as an iconic species for conservation efforts. Habitat destruction and poaching nearly drove black rhinos to extinction in the 1990s. Although they are slowly repopulating their historical range, poaching rates have drastically increased in the past five years. Because rhinos are slow breeders, it is difficult to combat the high rates of poaching, and thus even more important to understand the factors that naturally affect population growth. Elizabeth Freeman will discuss a study monitoring the health, physiology and genetics of a reintroduced population of the southwestern black rhino subspecies (*Diceros bicornis bicornis*) in Addo Elephant National Park (AENP), South Africa. Using non-invasive techniques Freeman and colleagues were able to reveal previously undocumented information about the habits of these secretive pachyderms. The knowledge they have gained can help improve the conservation and management of the black rhinos.

**TUESDAY February 3, 2015**

**3:00-4:15 PM**

**Johnson Center Room Meeting Room F**