

cordially invite you to a

## DySoC/NIMBioS Interdisciplinary Seminar

with

**Dr. Todd Freeberg**

on

### ***“Songbird social psychology: Flock complexity affects Carolina chickadee behavior”***

**Monday, August 27, 2018**

3:30-5 p.m.

*Reception & refreshments at 3 p.m.*

Hallam Auditorium, Room 206  
1122 Volunteer Boulevard



Dr. Todd Freeberg is professor and associate head of the Department of Psychology and is a joint faculty member in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology. His research focuses on relationships between complexity of social groups and the diversity of communicative signals used by individuals in those groups. He is an Associate Editor for the journals *Animal Behaviour* and the *Journal of Comparative Psychology*.

**Abstract:** We have known for decades that animal behavior is influenced by the genetic and developmental backgrounds of individuals. In human behavior, it is also clear that the immediate social context of an individual powerfully influences her or his behavior. It is becoming increasingly clear that social context also plays an important role in non-human animal behavior. This presentation will outline a few of the experiments that we have conducted recently on the vocal and problem-solving behavior of Carolina chickadees, a small songbird common to the southeastern United States. We have found that chickadee flock size and composition influence the complexity and use of calls by individuals and also their ability to solve novel foraging problems. Our work provides support to the hypothesis that social complexity drives communicative complexity and may drive social intelligence.