

**Invitation to a Guest Lecture  
at the joint colloquium of the Institute of Biology and Environmental Sciences and the  
Department of Neuroscience**

**Module bio890: Current topics in biology**

**Prof. Dr. Sandra Bouwhuis**

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**Terns in trouble –  
how climate change, mercury pollution and avian influenza  
threaten an indicator species**

The common tern (*Sterna hirundo*) is a colonially breeding, piscivorous and migratory seabird, used as an indicator species to monitor various aspects of the status of the Wadden Sea. At one of her breeding locations, the Banter See in Wilhelmshaven (Germany), she has been the focus of a long-term study since 1992. Individual-based and longitudinal data on phenology, physiology, migratory behaviour, reproductive performance and survival, collected along an 8-generation deep pedigree, allow us to study the causes and consequences of within-individual change in life-history traits and between-individual variation in life-history strategies. In this talk, I will give an overview of current projects, which aim at understanding how anthropogenically induced stressors, such as climate change, environmental pollution and the emergence of novel pathogens affect common terns. Given that this paints a rather bleak picture, I will also show how we hope to use our research to reach the general public and inspire conservation efforts.



**26.11.2024, 16:00 Uhr, W04 1-162**

Host: Prof. Dr. Gabriele Gerlach (Animal Biodiversity and Evolutionary Biology), IBU

Members of all institutes are cordially invited to join the lecture.