



Apr 14th, 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

An Observational Study of the Sexual Behavior of Somali Wild Asses

Michelle M. Carrillo '07
Illinois Wesleyan University

Brian Walter, Faculty Advisor
Illinois Wesleyan University

Cheryl Asa, Faculty Advisor
Illinois Wesleyan University

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/jwprc>

Carrillo '07, Michelle M.; Walter, Faculty Advisor, Brian; and Asa, Faculty Advisor, Cheryl, "An Observational Study of the Sexual Behavior of Somali Wild Asses" (2007). *John Wesley Powell Student Research Conference*. 9.
<http://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/jwprc/2007/posters/9>

This Event is brought to you for free and open access by The Ames Library, the Andrew W. Mellon Center for Curricular and Faculty Development, the Office of the Provost and the Office of the President. It has been accepted for inclusion in Digital Commons @ IWU by the faculty at Illinois Wesleyan University. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@iwu.edu.

©Copyright is owned by the author of this document.

Poster Presentation P19

AN OBSERVATIONAL STUDY OF THE SEXUAL BEHAVIOR OF SOMALI WILD ASSES

Michelle M. Carrillo and Brian Walter* and Cheryl Asa*
Biology Department, Illinois Wesleyan University
and Saint Louis Zoo

An observational study focusing on the sexual behavior of Somali Wild Asses, *Equus africanus somaliensis*, was conducted at the Saint Louis Zoo. The incentive for this study was the fact that there is little literature on the sexual behavior of these critically endangered wild asses. The objective was to focus on how sexual behaviors correlate with reproductive hormones. As is shown in behavioral studies of domesticated horses, hormones such as progesterone and LH influence the receptivity and subsequent sexual behaviors of female equids, as well as the males. To provide a baseline for this study, the asses were observed routinely throughout the week and hormone levels were monitored daily by fecal samples. It was concluded that those sexual behaviors which infer receptiveness towards mating correlated with peaks of progesterone levels of the female asses. In the future, conclusions made in this study can be used as a means of comparison to the sexual behaviors exhibited by other wild equids, such as the Grevy's Zebra, *Equus grevyi*, which ultimately could be useful in the preservation of both these endangered species.