

SUTER SCIENCE SEMINARS 2025-26

• EMU Faculty Sabbatical Spotlight

Tracking the Untrackable: Animal Movement and Behavior at the Smallest Scales

Jim Yoder, PhD

Professor of Biology

Program Director, Natural Sciences

Eastern Mennonite University

Harrisonburg VA



Tuesday, April 21, 2026

12:10 p.m. • West Dining Room • bring your own lunch

Characteristics of animal movement (when, what direction, how long & fast, and why) have long been a focus of research in ecology, wildlife biology, and animal behavior. But only recently have new technologies allowed for detailed tracking of the smallest of animals. Dr. Yoder will briefly share his own journey of studying animal movement from birds and mammals at large spatial scales to tephritid fruit flies using harmonic radar in Australia. He will also focus on his newest research project studying tick movement and behavior, also utilizing harmonic radar. What can we hope to learn by tracking these fascinating, but feared, creatures at the smallest scale?

Dr. Yoder is the Program Director for EMU's Department of Natural Sciences, advising environmental science and biology majors and teaching evolution, ecology, and conservation biology. He earned his Ph.D. from Ohio State University, where he studied the effects of habitat fragmentation on ruffed grouse movements at large spatial scales. His research interests include conservation, landscape and behavioral ecology, animal movement, invasive species, stream restoration, nitrogen and carbon footprint tracking, and insect movement using harmonic radar. He has also led intercultural programs in New Zealand, the Navajo Nation, and Washington, D.C. (upcoming), as well as research trips with undergraduates to Australia. In his free time, he enjoys cooking and hiking with his wife and their dog, Oscar.



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