

# SUTER SCIENCE SEMINARS 2024-25

## Wild Heart: Bringing Empathy and Grace to Environmental Storytelling

**Morgan Heim**

*Senior Fellow, International League of Conservation Photographers  
Astoria, OR*



**Friday, September 6, 2024**

**10:15 a.m. • Science Center, room 106**

*Often in conservation and science storytelling, we believe that if we make information easier to understand more people will care. This has led to a visual approach that leans heavily on documenting process, keeping photographer and viewer at an emotionally safe distance, and presenting versions of stories that don't do justice to the stakes involved. In this presentation, we will dive into the heart of environmental storytelling, showing how vulnerability and curiosity can allow us to tap into deeper and more universal value sets to more adequately convey what life is like for wildlife and people navigating an ever-changing world. Some of the stories involve the heartbreaking choice scientists must make when trying to save one owl at the cost of another, the camaraderie and joy of life amid ruins as scientists study the return of the birds, and what you can accomplish if you stop taking yourself too seriously, as did one scientist who decided to become a deer. Along the way, you will learn how to tap into your curiosity and creative processes and unlock new ways of seeing the world.*

Morgan (Mo) Heim is a wildlife photojournalist and filmmaker focusing on coexistence and how human-influenced environmental change impacts wildlife. She holds degrees in zoology and environmental journalism, which she draws upon in her search to find the beauty, humor and perseverance in wildlife stories. She is the founder of Neon Raven Story Labs, a storytelling and strategy platform for conservation, and in 2020 co-launched Her Wild Vision Initiative aimed at raising the voices of diverse women in the craft of conservation visual storytelling. Commendations for her work include being named a National Geographic Explorer in 2024 and awardee in Wildlife Photographer of the Year. Mo lives in Astoria, Oregon, where the waves are big, the mountains close, and the weather not nearly as bad as everyone thinks it is.



Suter Science Center  
1194 Park Rd.  
Harrisonburg VA 22802  
540-432-4400