

VIVIAN DEMUTH

Moose Research

We had to put Winter ticks on them, the first wild moose to be captured and penned in Algonquin Park. Controlled. For the scientist's post-doc. It was winter, cold. We watched them weaken. They were starved deliberately. Why aren't those photos in the public's eye?

I was temporary. The other technicians, all women, became unruly, screamed louder than wind. In the end, the moose were cut into pieces, liver, heart, blood. Did the moose think us human, stumbling blind through snow to attach more ticks to their relatives?

The scientist's eyes sparkled when he raved about his research. Photos in books of his children petting the moose. He thought diet played a role in the moose's death with ticks. Wasn't that obvious? The women tech went on strike. Holy flying furies.

They refused to harm the moose. I dreamed of my mother's coat of arms, the deer family, and prayed. But I was sent to another job, interviewed deer hunters. Examined ungulate jaws while those Algonquin moose were killed. Babes too. For knowledge.

Science meant nothing to the surviving park moose. It never benefitted them. Later, another scientist stated there was no connection between the number of moose and ticks. The scientists stabbed the surface. When will we leave others alone?

The moose and ticks can take care of themselves. I wanted to work in nature. With animals. Instead, I worked with the dead. Commodities, an outdoor, voiceless market. We talked with the research moose. Learned their language. Guttural bawling moans.

A few years ago, I heard a wild moose while picking nettles. I fled immediately but she gave chase. Protecting her young. The moose show us when it is okay to run. Earth's eco-cycles teach a different lesson than blue-ribboned science experiments.

Vivian Demuth's ecofeminist novel, Bear War-den, has been published April 2015 by Inanna Publications. Her poetry book, Fire Watcher (Guernica Editions, 2013) was a finalist for the 2013 Banff Mountain Fiction and Poetry Award. Vivian is also the author of an ecological novel, Eyes of the Forest (Smoky Peach Press, 2007). Her fiction and poetry have been published in journals and anthologies in Canada the United States, Mexico, and Europe and has been broadcast on CBC radio. She has worked as a park ranger and park warden, an outdoor educator, and as a fire lookout in the Rocky Mountains.