

Smith says Yellowstone needs (4) its top dog to keep the elk on their toes.

30 Beschta agrees. “It’s one thing for us to put wolves back into Yellowstone because we took them out,” he says. “It’s another to put them back because the ecosystem requires it.” (5) Without wolves in the park today to scare the elk off overbrowsing, “the clock would be running out on remaining cottonwoods,” he warns. “They’d eventually disappear. Bringing the wolves back has been an  
35 incredible plus.”

Further research should tell whether climate and fire history are also affecting floral revival, but some scientists believe they’ve already found (6) the key — and not just to the Yellowstone ecosystem. “Wolves seem to have an excessive impact here, and I’m sure the same is true of top predators that have been lost  
40 elsewhere,” says Beschta. “Perhaps now we can start to appreciate just how important a role these kinds of \*carnivores play.”

(注) elk: ヘラジカ    predation: 捕食    ungulate: ひづめのある動物    browse: 草を食べる  
cottonwood: ハコヤナギ    willow: ヤナギ    go gangbusters: 異常に茂る  
warbler: ムシクイ    aquatic: 水中の    carnivore: 肉食動物

問 1 下線部(1)の内容を具体的に説明せよ。

問 2 下線部(2)を和訳せよ。

問 3 下線部(3)を和訳せよ。

問 4 下線部(4)が指すものを日本語で記せ。

問 5 下線部(5)を和訳せよ。

問 6 下線部(6)の内容として最も適切なものを、次の①～④から1つ選べ。

- ① 捕食の頂点にいる肉食動物の交代は容易に行われうるということ。
- ② 捕食の頂点にいる肉食動物が大きな役割を果たしているということ。
- ③ 捕食動物の過剰な増加が生態系を乱すということ。
- ④ 気候の変化や火災が生態系に影響をおよぼしているということ。