

Ökologie der Furcht

»When wolves were reintroduced to Yellowstone Park at first, the thinking was we shouldn't doing this because we do not fully understand yet all the ways this species is important. But we know that it is and it has been absent and we finally have this opportunity to reintroduce them into Yellowstone.

So of course all the biologist were studying this like crazy ... conversation biologists ... and the first thing that happened was: all the game, who hasn't been subjected to any threat, they were at the top of the food chain. All of a sudden, they all became more alert and more responsive. And they stopped grazing constantly in the exact same part of the river. They had to move more because now there was this threat of the wolf. So what happened is: They start moving more. They start grazing higher up in hills were they are less likely to be just picked off in these low grass lands. What happens is, the banks of the riverbeds gets firmer. What means the flow of the river becomes stronger. Which means beavers can come in and start to build their dams. Also because the game is not grazing in the same area, trees that previously had been chewed up in their early sapling stages start growing. So songbirds returned. All these species of birds come back into Yellowstone that had been absent because they did not have the right canopy cover. And because the beavers come in that creates more pocket environments for other animals and that brings other big predators who were eating what the beavers were attracting. So, basically, this one species who had become dominant, and very comfortable and at the top of their food chain, just the presence of them having to confront

regularly and respond creatively to a little fear completely changed the health and the landscape and the sustainability of the ecosystem. So maybe its like just that – the willingness to respond creatively to fear without eradicating the source of the fear.«

— *Esparanza Spalding, Radiolab-Podcast »The Cataclysm Sentence« vom 18.04.2020*

»Spatial and temporal variation in predation risk means that the landscape of fear creates an additional source of variation.«

— *Boyce, Mark S. 2018. Wolves for Yellowstone: dynamics in time and space. In: Journal of Mammalogy 99, 5: 1028-1031, S. 1028.*