

Oxford ELLT Reading

Text 1: Sharks

Sharks are critical in helping ecosystems recover from extreme climatic events, according to a new study. The conclusions came after scientists were able to determine the importance of the apex predator to a unique ecosystem following an ocean heatwave in 2011, which wiped out a quarter of the world's largest seagrass meadows in Shark Bay, Western Australia.

A team of experts from Florida International University (FIU), the University of Washington and Deakin University in Australia, knew from a previous study how tiger sharks in the bay protected the meadows by altering the behaviour of dugongs and turtles, which graze on the seagrass, into less destructive feeding patterns. They wanted to know what would happen if there were no sharks.

"We wanted an answer to the question: can the absence of large predators make climate change effects worse?" said Rob Nowicki, a research affiliate at Mote Marine Laboratory, who conducted the study as a PhD student at FIU. "Can it cause an already bad situation to spiral downwards?"

After the heatwave, which destroyed the seagrass canopy, much of the dugong population temporarily left the bay, setting the stage for a unique field experiment. In a paper published in the *Journal of Animal Ecology*, the scientists explain how they used a damaged area of the bay, where new heat-resistant seagrass had grown, as their laboratory. Using calculations based on the grazing rate of dugongs when sharks are absent, they were able to mimic the feeding rate artificially. Scuba divers with digging equipment reproduced the dugongs' grazing patterns, periodically excavating the freshly grown seagrass, a practice the scientists called underwater gardening.

"This allowed us to mimic the behaviour dugongs would have if the sharks in the bay magically disappeared, or were overfished," said Nowicki. They found that the most important and bigger seagrass canopy did not recover, because it was being disturbed too often by the divers' grazing. The research shows that when top predators are gone, not only does the structure of the ecosystem break down, but the grazing rate of herbivores makes it impossible to recover.

"It is likely this is happening in places that did not have 15 years of study and did not have this climate event," said Nowicki. "We are making the case that protecting predator species and keeping these species relationships can actually lead to resilience to these events."

Dr Mike Heithaus, a marine biologist at Florida International University who has studied the bay for two decades, said: "When everything is working well, we might not realise how important predators are. But when things go wrong – like a climatic event – that's when you can see the importance of predators."

"The tiger sharks are protecting the seagrass from being grazed. The big seagrass is not the dugongs' favourite food, which is the little seagrass that moves in when there is a disturbance. But we find that the bigger seagrass doesn't come back when it is disturbed so often by the grazing."

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Questions

1. The word excavating in the paragraph is the closest meaning to:

- A. Digging up
- B. Clearing out
- C. Relocating
- D. Planting

2. The phrase break down in the paragraph is closest in meaning to:

- A. Decrease
- B. Destroy
- C. Collapse
- D. Improve

3. The term apex predator in the paragraph is closest in meaning to:

- A. An animal that is frequently hunted by other animals
- B. A predator that is very skilled in hunting for its prey.
- C. A hunting animal with a declining population.
- D. A predator at the top of the food chain; it is not hunted by any other animal.

4. According to the paragraph, how much of the seagrass meadows was destroyed by high levels of heat ?

- A. 10%
- B. 25%
- C. 45%
- D. 50%

5. According to the paragraph, what did the team of experts want to know?

- A. What would happen with the introduction of a new apex predator
- B. What would happen if turtles and dugongs stopped eating seagrass
- C. What would happen if the dugong population increased

- D. What would happen if there were no predators, such as sharks.
6. According to the paragraph, what were the divers trying to copy or imitate during their study of the dugongs? USE TWO WORDS
7. According to the paragraph, what had been growing in a damaged area of the bay? USE UP TO FOUR WORDS
8. Which of the following can be inferred from paragraph about the herbivore's rate of grazing?
- A. With no predators, the grazing rate means the plants cannot recover.
 - B. The rate is increasing due to rising global temperatures.
 - C. The divers had trouble measuring the grazing rate with their equipment.
 - D. Herbivores are gradually losing weight.
9. The paragraph supports which of the following statements about the divers' discovery after conducting their experiment:
- A. The seagrass canopy could not recover.
 - B. More sharks were encouraged to move to the area.
 - C. The divers felt disturbed by the seagrass.
 - D. There were no clear results of the experiment.
10. Which of the following is NOT TRUE, according to the passage? (make sure you read the WHOLE PASSAGE)
- A. Dugongs and turtles have destructive eating patterns.
 - B. The heatwave caused the dugongs to relocate.
 - C. The absence of sharks has affected the dugong population
 - D. Dugongs prefer bigger seagrass over little seagrass.

For questions 11 to 14 answer True or False (Make sure you read the whole passage)

- 11. According to Nowicki, predator species are beneficial for marine habitats.
- 12. Dr Mike Heithaus is a marine biologist at the University of Washington.
- 13. The research was funded by the Journal of Animal Ecology.
- 14. 'Underwater gardening' is the process of planting new seagrass.

15. Which of the sentences below best expresses the essential information in the following sentence? Sharks are critical in helping ecosystems recover from extreme climatic events

- A. Sharks are vital in helping to cause extreme events in the climate
- B. Sharks play an important part in aiding ecosystems to regrow after extreme climatic events.
- C. Sharks are critical in improving extreme ecosystems.
- D. Sharks assist with causing extreme vegetation to recover in eventful climates.

16. According to paragraph, all of the following statements are true about the evolution of the earth's atmosphere, EXCEPT:

- A. Rob Nowicki conducted his research while studying his bachelor's degree
- B. The team knew some information about the sharks from a previous study.
- C. The problems with dugongs grazing happened in areas that did not have 15 years of study.
- D. Dr Mike Heithaus has studied the bay for 20 years.

Text 2: Male Football Fans

Male football fans are "highly sexist and misogynistic" towards women's sport.

A study has found that increased media attention of women's sport has made some male fans very angry. Researchers from Durham University asked 1,950 male football fans about their opinions on women's sport. The research found that some of the male fans had positive views about women's sport, but that sexist and misogynist attitudes towards women's sport were more common.

The researchers who completed the study suggest that these negative attitudes show a backlash against the increased attention of women's sport, particularly since the 2012 London Olympic Games and the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup.

The study was managed by researchers from Durham University, the University of Leicester, and the University of South Australia. One of the most important researchers involved in the study, Dr Stacey Pope, from Durham University's Department of Sport and Exercise Sciences, said: "This is the first study to look at British male football fans and their attitudes towards women's sports. It is interesting because women's sport is much more visible than it was twenty years ago, and it can be seen on many different streaming services. Unfortunately, the research shows that sexism and misogyny are still very common when men talk about women's sport."

The study was designed as a survey where male football fans answered questions about women's sport. The answers were split up into three attitude groups.

A: Positive attitudes.

B: Very sexist and misogynistic attitudes.

C: Secret sexist and misogynistic attitudes.

Men with positive attitudes said that they liked the media attention of women's sport, with many saying the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup was a positive turning point. But men who had sexist and misogynistic attitudes towards women's sport believed that it was inferior to men's sport, particularly in relation to football. Some male fans even suggested that women should not take part in sport at all, or if they did, it should be in "feminine" sports such as athletics.

The final group of fans said that they often had sexist and misogynistic views about women's sport. However, they would adapt what they said depending on the social situation or who they were with. For instance, in public they would say nice things about women's sport but in private moments with their friends, they were likely to change to a more negative attitude.

Researcher, John Williams, from the University of Leicester, said: "The increase in media coverage of women's sport on streaming services was supported by some men. But we can see that many other men found women's sports coverage to be threatening. Therefore, we can see that more attention on women's sport will help gender equality and hopefully promote social justice."

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Questions

1. The word misogynist in paragraph 1 is closest in meaning to?

A Prejudiced

B Unfair

C Unkind

D Myopic

2 The word backlash in the paragraph is closest in meaning to?

- A Violence
- B Protest
- C Anger
- D Adverse reaction

3 The phrase turning point in paragraph 5 is closest in meaning to?

- A Response
- B Change
- C Agenda
- D Movement

4 The word adapt in the paragraph is closest in meaning to?

- A Reflect on
- B Strengthen
- C Withdraw
- D Alter

5 Why is the study important?

- A No research has previously been done on this subject
- B Women's sport is more popular nowadays
- C There is now more women's sport on TV
- D It is the first study completed on women's sport in 20 years

6 Why were the answers divided into different categories?

- A To measure the level of sexist and misogynistic attitudes
- B To more clearly identify male football fans' views on women's sport
- C To try and reflect the researchers' expectations
- D To help gather a higher volume of data

7 Which sentence A-D best reflects the positive views some men have about women's football?

- A The 2015 Women's World Cup was high in quality
- B The 2015 Women's World Cup was enjoyable
- C The media coverage is very good
- D The 2015 Women's World Cup changed attitudes

8 What does John Williams say about women's sport?

- A It has a positive impact on media coverage of sport in general
- B Some men may feel there is too much media coverage
- C It brings benefits to society beyond sport
- D It will help eliminate sexism

9 What do some men believe about women's participation in sport?

- A Women should always be included in sport.
- B Women should join in when they can.
- C Women should not participate in sport.
- D Women should never talk about sport.

10 Which of the following is TRUE, according to the passage? (Make sure you read the whole passage)

- A Some men believe that women's football should be banned
- B Some men believe that it is not appropriate for women to play football
- C Some men believe that women perform better in athletics
- D Some men believe that women's sport cannot be compared to men's sport

11 What does Dr Stacey Pope say about men in relation to women's sport? Choose the answer that most accurately matches the information in the passage.

- A They have sexist attitudes towards women's sport
- B They rarely give opinions about women's sport
- C Sexist attitudes are still quite prevalent
- D Not all men have sexist attitudes

12 Which of the sentences below best expresses the essential information in the following sentence? But we can see that many other men found women's sports coverage to be threatening.

- A Some men were afraid of women's sport.
- B Many men thought that women's sport put men's sport at risk.
- C Some men did not understand women's sport.
- D Many men thought that women's sport was entertaining.

13 Which of the sentences below best expresses the essential information in the following sentence? Therefore, we can see that more attention on women's sport will help gender equality

- A More coverage of women's sport will help men and women become more equal.
- B More attention on women's sport will be beneficial.
- C Men and women can achieve gender equality through better media coverage of women's sport.
- D Equality between genders can only be achieved through increased awareness of women's sport.

14 Which of the following is TRUE, according to the passage? (Make sure you read the whole passage)

- A The research says that sexism and misogyny are not very common when men talk about women's sport.
- B Men are sexist when they talk about women's sport.
- C The research shows that sexism and misogyny are still frequent when women's sport is discussed by men.
- D Misogyny and sexism is commonplace in everyday life.

15 Which of the following is not supported by the information given in the passage?

- A The third group categorised in the survey probably dislikes coverage of women's sport.
- B The first group categorised in the survey probably enjoys coverage of women's sport.
- C The second group categorised in the survey are open about their views about women's sport.
- D All of the groups categorised in the survey prefer football to any other sport.

16 Which of the following can be inferred from the paragraph about "feminine sports"?

- A Some sports have traditionally been seen as more appropriate for women.
- B Some men believe women are not capable of achieving a high standard in some sports.
- C In some sports, women's competitions are more popular than men's.

D Some men believe certain sports are more suited to women than others.