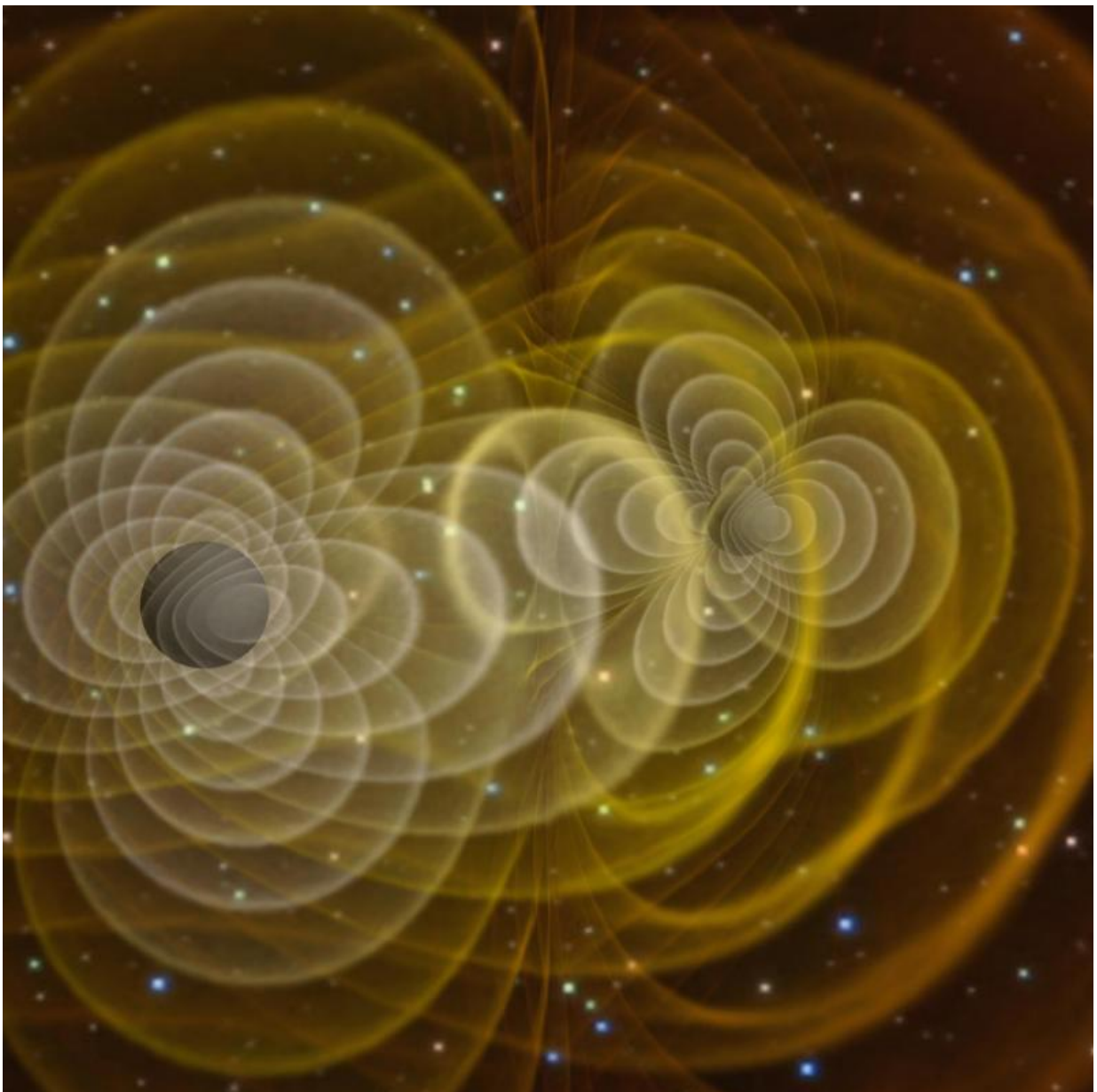


Best of Last Week – Gravitational waves detected, hidden galaxies found and lipids combating Alzheimer's disease

February 15 2016, by Bob Yirka



A simulation of two merging black holes, creating gravitational waves. Credit: LIGO.

(ScienceX)—It was, of course, a huge week for physics as [gravitational waves were detected for the first time](#), by workers at both LIGO detectors in the U.S. Credit for the discovery goes to researchers working on the LIGO Scientific Collaboration—a group who will almost certainly win a Nobel Prize for their efforts, along with other accolades. The waves came about, the team found, during the final moments before two black holes merged and their detection has led to a new era, in which the field of gravitational wave astronomy exists.

In other news, a team in the U.K. created [the first photonic Maxwell's demon](#)—an implementation of the hypothetical being that appears to violate the second law of thermodynamics. A team at the U.S. DOE demonstrated that [the chiral magnetic effect generates quantum current](#)—and in the process, they found a novel approach to generating electricity in a host of new materials. And a team at Harvard and Raytheon BBN Technology announced that they had found [a metal that behaves like water](#)—and it is graphene.

In other news, a large team of researchers from a wide variety of institutions in the U.S. announced that they had found that [Neanderthal DNA has a subtle but significant impact on human traits](#)—theirs was the first study to compare Neanderthal DNA present in modern Europeans with clinical records. Also, a team at the University of California announced that they had developed a system that allows for [GPS tracking down to the centimeter](#). And another team asked whether [an 80-year-old ether experiment might have detected a cosmological](#)

[temperature gradient](#). They think it might have captured evidence of the theorized gradient that is believed to be caused by movement of the solar system. Also, a team at Penn State found that [language juggling rewires the bilingual brain](#)—doing so, they found, alters how the brain works. And an international team of researchers announced that they had discovered [hidden galaxies behind the Milky Way](#)—up till now, we couldn't see them because our own galaxy was in the way.

And finally, if you are among the aging population that is worried about developing Alzheimer's disease, a team of researchers in the Czech Republic found that [lipid-based diets effectively combat Alzheimer's disease in a mouse model](#)—which suggests you might do well to eat more fish oil.

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