

Best of Last Week – Regime shift in Arctic Ocean, COVID-19's impact outside of lungs, SARS-CoV-2 spreads 10 meters

July 13 2020, by Bob Yirka



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It was a good week for Earth science as a team at Stanford University discovered [a 'regime shift' happening in the Arctic Ocean](#)—blooms of

phytoplankton have drastically altered the Arctic's ability to transform atmospheric carbon into living matter. Also, a team with members from the U.S., the U.K. and Canada observed [the first direct evidence of ocean mixing across the Gulf Stream](#)—and it could have important implications for weather, climate and fisheries. And a combined team from CNRS and the University of Poitiers [solved the mystery of the dead-water phenomenon](#)—where ships are sometimes mysteriously unable to move forward due to an odd ocean phenomenon.

In technology news, a team at Rutgers University [used astrocytes to change the behavior of robots controlled by neuromorphic chips](#)—the other type of brain cells have only recently been found to play an important role in brain function. Also, a German company called Festo announced that [it had created bionic birds](#)—lifelike robotic birds that are guided by an ultra-sideband radio system. And a team at the Cockrell School of Engineering at the University of Texas at Austin developed [a new room-temperature liquid-metal battery that they claim could be the path to powering the future](#).

In other news, an international team of medical experts gave [the first comprehensive review of COVID-19's effects outside of the lungs](#). They include thrombotic complications and impacts on other organs. Also, an international team of researchers found evidence showing that [Polynesians and Native Americans had made contact before the arrival of Europeans](#)—their genetic study suggested Polynesians had made their way to what is now Colombia. And a team at University College London found that [neurological complications of COVID-19 can include delirium, brain inflammation, stroke and nerve damage](#).

And finally, if you are like billions of others the world over looking to reduce your chances of being infected with the SARS-CoV-2 virus, you may want to check out the results of a study conducted by an international team of researchers—they found that [COVID-19 can](#)

[spread 10 meters or more via breathing.](#)

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