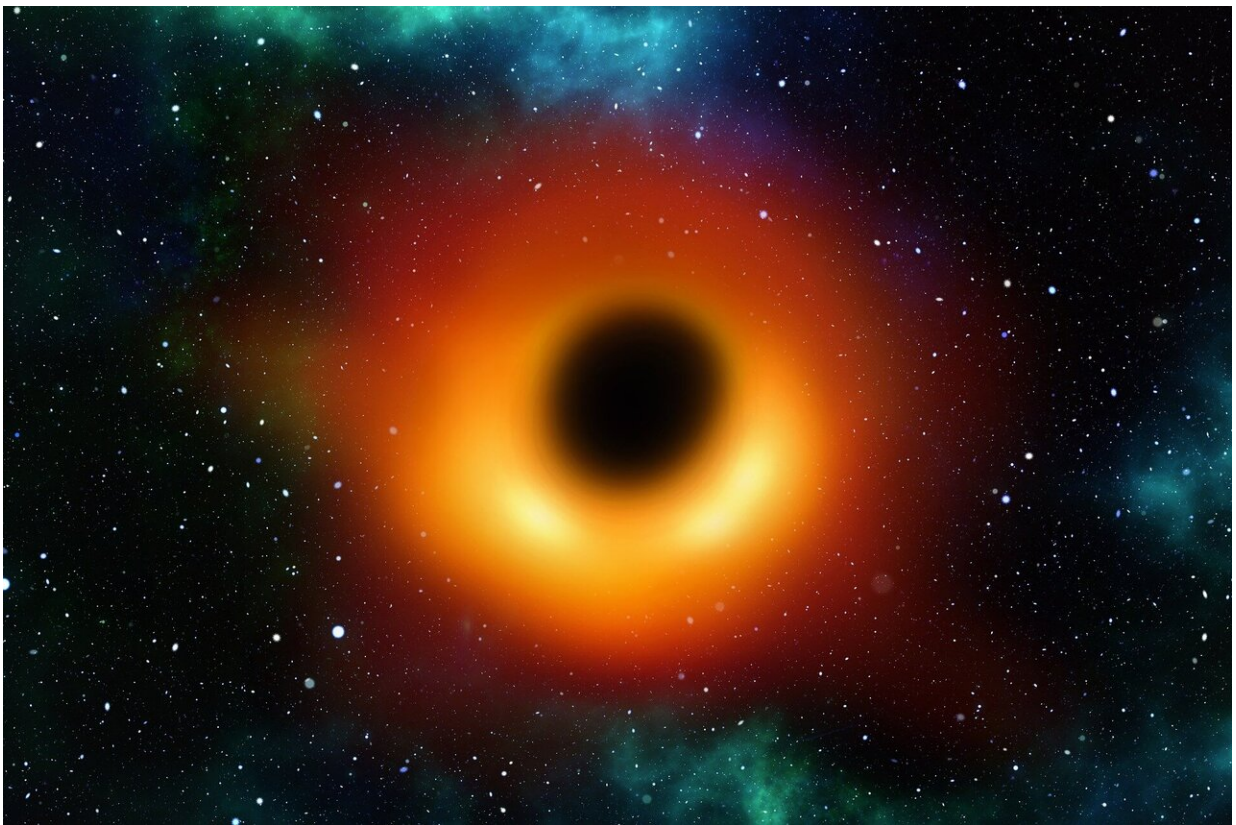


Best of Last Week: A flying car, diamond batteries, and vitamin C impact on muscle mass in older people

August 31 2020, by Bob Yirka



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

It was a good week for space science as a pair of researchers, Jakub Scholtz with Durham University and James Unwin with the University

of Illinois at Chicago, wondered: [Could Planet 9 be a primordial black hole?](#) They suggest it might be based partly on the behavior of trans-Neptunian objects. Also, a team working at the University of Warwick [has found 50 new planets using a machine learning application](#)—an approach that was used for the first time.

In technology news, a team at Japan's SkyDrive Inc. unveiled a video demonstrating [a "flying car" in flight with a person aboard](#)—they also announced that they have plans to sell it commercially by 2023. Also, battery manufacturer NDB developed [nuclear-waste-fueled diamond batteries that could last thousands of years](#). And a team at the University of Cambridge announced that they had developed [a wireless device that makes clean fuel from sunlight, carbon dioxide and water](#). An international team of researchers announced that they had developed [a 26-layer convolutional neural network for human action recognition](#)—thus far, it has been trained to recognize clapping, jogging, walking, running and boxing.

In other news, a pair of researchers, Padmanabha Prasanna Simha with the Indian Space Research Organization and Prasanna Simha Mohan Rao from the Sri Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences and Research, found that [the effectiveness of cloth masks in slowing the spread of COVID-19 depends on the type of covering](#)—they also found that almost any mask is better than nothing at all.

A team at the University of Alberta found that [an antiviral drug used to treat cat coronavirus also works against SARS-CoV-2](#)—they are preparing to start clinical trials to see how well it works in humans. And a team with members from MIT, MIT Lincoln Laboratory and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory found that [cosmic rays may stymie quantum computing](#) because they are enough to force decoherence in qubits.

And finally, if you are one of the millions of people around the world over age 50, you may want to take note of the results of a study conducted by a team at UEA's Norwich Medical School—they found that [consuming more vitamin C could help people over 50 retain muscle mass](#).

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