

# **Best of Last Week: Largest drone unveiled, drug stops SARS-CoV-2 transmission and impact of social distancing on brain**

December 7 2020, by Bob Yirka

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A colorized scanning electron micrograph of the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Credit: NIAID

It was a good week for historical research as a team at Germany's state archaeology museum reported on the finding by World Wildlife Fund

divers of [a Nazi Enigma code machine on the seabed in the Baltic Sea](#). Also, a team of researchers at the University of Colorado's Anschutz Medical Campus came up with [a new theory on the famous "Venus" figurines](#)—they suspect they were made during the Ice Age to depict the ideal female form during a time of scarcity. And a team with the ERC project LASTJOURNEY reported on newly discovered [Amazon rock art that showed the rainforest's earliest inhabitants living with giant Ice Age animals](#).

In technology news, Alabama based Aevum unveiled its Ravn X Autonomous Launch Vehicle this past Wednesday, which the company claims is [the largest unmanned craft in the world](#)—it will be used to launch satellites into orbit from the air, saving millions in launch costs. Also, a team at Lancaster University described their research involving [a promising crystalline material that could store solar energy from the sun for months or years](#). And a combined team from Aalto University and Ote Robotics unveiled [RealAnt—a low-cost quadruped robot that can learn via reinforcement learning](#), thereby allowing it to better navigate its environment. Also, a team of neuroscientists from MIT, Harvard University and IBM described [a way to make object-recognition models perform better](#) by helping them overcome errors due to nearly imperceptible changes.

In other news, a team at Brown University showed [how airflow inside a car may affect COVID-19 transmission risk](#)—and suggested that opening windows was the best way to protect those inside. Also, a team at the Institute for Biomedical Sciences at Georgia State University announced that [the oral drug Molnupiravir completely blocks SARS-CoV-2 transmission](#), thereby preventing those who have been infected from spreading the disease.

And finally, if you have been following the advice of medical experts regarding social distancing during the pandemic, you may want to check

out research done by an international team of researchers—they have been studying [what social distancing does to the brain](#).

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