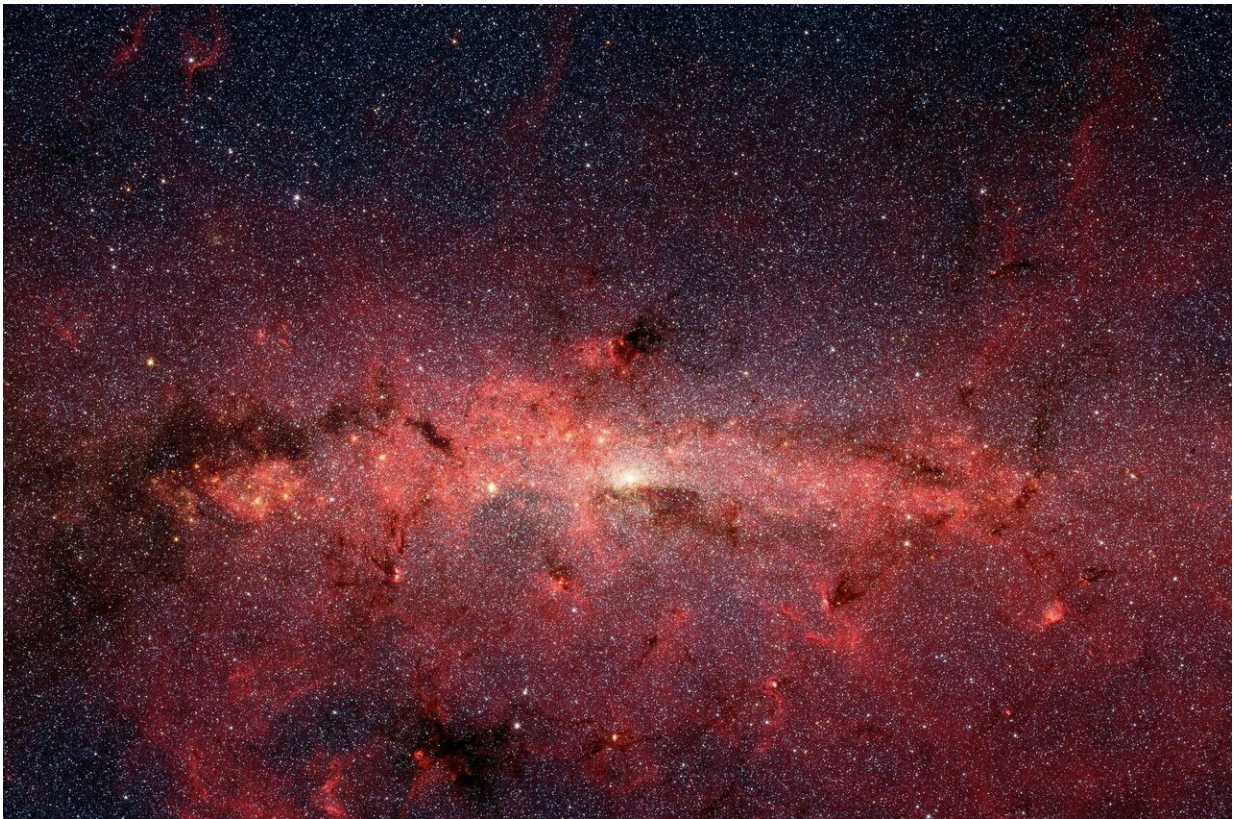


Best of Last Week: Audio from Mars, origin of 'Oumuamua and COVID supercarriers

March 22 2021, by Bob Yirka



Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

It was another good week for space science as the team of researchers working with NASA's Perseverance rover released [audio recordings of the vehicle driving on Mars](#)—the loud clangs and bangs are the sounds of

the rover's metal wheels negotiating rocky material below. Also, Arizona State University astrophysicists Steven Desch and Alan Jackson found evidence of [the origin of the extra-solar system object named 'Oumuamua](#) that passed through the solar system in 2017—they believe it came from a Pluto-like planet from another solar system. And a team at MIT found [evidence of complex carbon-based molecules in space](#)—polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in the Taurus Molecular Cloud.

In technology news, a team at MIT published [a review of recent advancements in the development of solid-state batteries](#) and in so doing, suggested that they are ready to compete with lithium-ion batteries. Also, a team with members from the University of Maryland, Peking University and the University of Michigan found [patterns in the use of emojis that could predict the dropout rate of remote workers](#)—the finding highlights a way to measure job satisfaction among professionals working at home during the Pandemic. And a team at Seoul National University developed [an interactive data visualization tool to help users discover new music](#) and thereby improve their experience on streaming services. Also, a team at IBM developed [an AI debating system that was able to compete with expert human debaters](#)—called Project Debater, the system was also found able to sway the opinions of a panel of listeners on an important social topic.

In other news, a team at the University of Leicester found that [slow walkers are four times more likely to die from COVID-19](#)—those with a slow natural gait, they found, were both more likely to develop serious symptoms and to die from them. And an international team [discovered plants beneath the mile-deep Greenland ice](#)—evidence that Greenland must have been ice-free sometime in the past million years.

And finally, if you are still waiting for your turn to be vaccinated against COVID-19, you might want to check out the results of an effort by a team at the University of Colorado at Boulder—they found that [just 2%](#)

of infected people carry 90% of the COVID-19 virus. In other words, most people are not very contagious—it is the supercarriers that are responsible for most of the transmission of the disease.

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