

Best of Last Week: 3D printing wood, keyhole mining and why COVID-19 patients test positive months later

May 10 2021, by Bob Yirka

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It was a good week for human evolutionary and biological sciences as a team of researchers from the U.S. and Spain suggested that [most human origin stories are not compatible with known fossils](#)—they also note that

there is a lack of consensus among scientists studying hominin origins. An international team studying ancient DNA has reported [the origins of the first Bronze Age civilizations in Europe](#). And a team of Italian archaeologists announced that they had [discovered the remains of nine Neanderthals in a cave near Rome](#)—a finding that sheds light on the history of the population of the Italian peninsula.

In technology news, 3D printing company Desktop Metal announced that it will begin [using wood to print objects](#)—with ink made from lignin and cellulose dust. And a team with members from the University of Cambridge, the University of Oxford, University College London and Avignon Université, wondered whether [energy-efficient federated learning could save the world](#). They looked into alternative ways for AI systems to learn that do not involve massive datasets. Also, a combined team from Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology and Northwestern University developed [an on-skin device able to measure the rate, loss and temperature of sweat in real-time](#). And an international team of researchers announced that they had developed [a new "keyhole surgery" technique to extract metals from underground](#).

In other news, an international team of medical researchers looked into [why COVID-19 is so hard to treat](#) and found evidence showing that the SARS-CoV-2 virus has a unique infectious profile. And NASA announced that the [Perseverance Mars rover had captured video and audio of Ingenuity's fourth flight](#)—the first time one craft on another planet captured sounds made by another craft.

And finally, if you are one of the many [people who have had COVID-19 and have tested positive for the virus many months later](#), you might want to check out the results of work by a team with members from the Whitehead Institute and MIT—they found that sequences from the SARS-CoV-2 virus could integrate into the genome of host cells.

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