

Best of Last Week—landscape hidden beneath ice, using AI to predict AI research, fasting is safe for diabetics

October 30 2023, by Bob Yirka

Lifting the lid image demonstrates where the study site is beneath the ice.
Credit: Stewart Jamieson

It was a good week for natural history research as a team of geologists from the U.K. and the U.S. [found a hidden landscape](#) of hills and valleys

carved by ancient rivers and frozen in time beneath the ice of Antarctica. Also, a trio of geophysicists at Nanyang Technological University, in Singapore, working with a pair of colleagues from Universidad Nacional, in Costa Rica, recorded [the first known slow-slip events](#) off southern Costa Rica. They recorded five events off the Osa Peninsula where the Cocos Plate subducts under the Caribbean Plate. And a team led by a group at Northern Arizona University found, via analysis of satellite data, [a surprising effect of fires](#) in North America's boreal forests—the switch to deciduous forests is only temporary.

In technology news, an international team of AI researchers found that artificial intelligence applications can be used to [predict the future of artificial intelligence research](#) by helping scientists to keep up with scientific progress, as documented by the overwhelming number of articles published in journals every year. And a team with members from the University of Texas at Austin and Georgia Southern University developed a way to line clay pots with pine tree resin obtained from trees owned by the Navajo Nation and incorporate them with silver-based particles [to purify water to make it drinkable](#). Also, a team of engineers at the University of British Columbia developed [a breakthrough robot skin](#) that is soft and allows touch sensitivity and dexterity. And a combined team of engineers from several institutions in the U.S. found that smart speaker data is used in ways consumers might not expect—they found that [Amazon collects speaker data to infer user interests](#), which they use to create targeted personalized ads.

In other news, a team of medical scientists led by researchers at Université Sorbonne Paris Nord and Université Paris Cité, France, report that enough evidence has been found to inform the public about the [adverse effects of ultra-processed foods](#). Also, a pair of space scientists at The Pennsylvania State University, studying data from Curiosity rover, found [new evidence of ancient rivers on Mars](#). And finally, a team at the University of Illinois Chicago found that

intermittent fasting is not only [safe for people with type II diabetes](#), but effective in weight loss efforts.

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