

Best of Last Week—plant can reduce food insecurity, robot to care for elderly, 'Chinese dragon' fossil identified

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Dinocephalosaurus fossil. Credit: Nicholas C. Fraser, Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing

It was a good week for biology research as a team of botanists at Pennsylvania State University discovered that [a common plant](#) could

help reduce food insecurity. Called Carolina azolla, the plant is able to double its biomass in just two days and also captures nitrogen from the air. A team of medical researchers and chemists at the University of California–Santa Barbara developed molecules that could be used for [a new class of antibiotics](#) to overcome drug-resistant bacteria.

In technology news, a team of computer engineers at the University of Science and Technology Beijing developed an architecture for use in [sub-picowatt logic computing](#) based on self-biased molybdenum disulfide transistors. And robotics engineers at Universidad Carlos III and robot maker Robotnik developed [a novel elder care robot](#) that could provide personal assistance for those needing care, thereby enhancing seniors' quality of life. Also, a combined team of roboticists from Universidad Complutense de Madrid and Universidad Carlos III de Madrid developed [a humanoid-type robot](#) that can create realistic sketches in real time.

In other news, a team of gerontologists at the University of Southern California found that [a fasting-like diet](#) can lower risk factors for disease and also reduce the biological age for humans. And an international team of paleontologists identified [a 240-million-year-old 'Chinese dragon'](#). Unearthed in 2003, the fossilized marine reptile *Dinocephalosaurus orientalis* was found to have 32 separate cervical vertebrae. Also, a combined team of medical researchers from Trinity College Dublin and FutureNeuro discovered that disruptions to the integrity of blood vessels in the brain are the [underlying cause of brain fog](#) linked with long COVID. And finally, the editors at the journal *Frontiers in Cell and Developmental Biology* retracted a paper after readers pointed out that supporting images had been [generated improperly](#) by an AI image generator—the images depicted disproportionately large rat genitalia and were nonetheless included in the paper.

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