

# Best of Last Week—Brain riddle solved, AI-assisted stories are better, gene behind neuro-disorders found

July 15 2024, by Bob Yirka

---

Rates of relative brain mass evolution. Credit: *Nature Ecology & Evolution* (2024). DOI: [10.1038/s41559-024-02451-3](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41559-024-02451-3)

It was a good week for biology research as an international team of geneticists and AI experts reframed the narrative of Neanderthals and

other ancient humans through their study of the [history of genetic intermingling](#)—adding what they describe as whole new chapters to the shared hominin history. Also, a combined team of evolutionary researchers from the University of Reading and Durham University claimed to have [solved the brain size riddle](#). They found evidence that the largest animals do not have proportionally bigger brains—except for humans. And a team of climate researchers in the U.S. announced [the first local extinction](#) due to sea level rise in the U.S. The Key Largo tree cactus, which lived near the sea in the Florida Keys, has disappeared.

In technology news, a team of chemists and engineers at Northwestern University moved closer to [producing green hydrogen](#) via water electrolysis. They combined complementary electron and X-ray-based characterization techniques. And a team of roboticists at Tencent Robotics X, in China, introduced a new framework for [enabling animal-like agile movements](#) in four-legged robots. They also demonstrated its superiority by implementing it in a quadruped called MAX. Also, a team of engineers at the University of Texas at Austin developed a new [carbon storage technology](#) that they claim is the fastest of its kind. And a team of researchers from the University of Exeter Business School and Institute for Data Science and Artificial Intelligence working with the UCL School of Management, conducted a study involving 600 volunteers and found that [stories written with AI assistance](#) are more creative, better written and more enjoyable than those written by humans alone.

In other news, a large team of medical researchers at the University of California, San Francisco, and CellSight Technologies found that patients who develop long COVID show signs of [uncharacteristic immune cell activity](#) in many of their organs, and some have traces of SARS-CoV-2 RNA in their guts for up to two years after their initial infection. Also, a team of medical researchers at the Water Technology Center in Karlsruhe, Germany, found that Europe's drinking water is

contaminated by "forever chemicals." And finally, an international team of medical researchers found a gene whose variants potentially cause neurodevelopmental disorders in hundreds of thousands of people around the world.

© 2024 Science X Network

Citation: Best of Last Week—Brain riddle solved, AI-assisted stories are better, gene behind neuro-disorders found (2024, July 15) retrieved 27 July 2024 from <https://sciencex.com/news/2024-07-week-brain-riddle-ai-stories.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.