

Best of Last Week – A shake in the Milky Way, giving octopuses ecstasy, and cell stress and bacteria causing cancer

24 September 2018, by Bob Yirka



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It was a big week for space science as an international team reported that Gaia had [detected a shake in the Milky Way](#)—data from the satellite revealed previously unknown structures in our galaxy. Also, a trio of researchers from the U.S. and Canada created a simulation that showed [nuclear pasta was 10 billion times harder to break than steel](#)—the humorously named structures that exist beneath the surfaces of neutrons stars. And a team in the U.K. reported the [first detection of matter falling into a black hole at 30 percent of the speed of light](#) in the galaxy PG1211+143. Also, in a NASA-led effort, researchers found that [the closest planet ever discovered outside the solar system could be habitable with a dayside ocean](#)—they found that Proxima b likely has enough water to support life. And a team at the Georgia Institute of Technology ran a simulation that allowed them to [look back in time to watch for a different kind of black hole](#)—a type that develops during the birth of a galaxy.

In other news, a pair of researchers made headlines with their study about [how octopuses given the mood drug ecstasy revealed a genetic link to the evolution of social behaviors in humans](#)—the study run by Gül Dölen and Eric Edsinger showed an ancient link between humans and the sea creatures that plays a role in social behavior. Also, a team at Northwestern University found new data that suggested [humans have four personality types](#): average, self-centered, reserved and role model. And a team of geoscientists at the University of Massachusetts Amherst reported that they had found [an unexpected 'deep creep' near the San Andreas and San Jacinto faults](#)—offering a possible explanation regarding why they move in different ways than would be expected. Also, officials in Germany announced that the country had begun running [the world's first hydrogen powered train](#)—a zero emission train built by French TGV-maker Alstom.

And finally, if you, like millions of others, experience frequent stress in your life, you might want to check out a report by a team at Technical University Munich—they found that [colon cancer is caused by bacteria and cell stress](#).

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