



Week ending Friday, January 22, 2021

AI Dog Training

Colorado State University scientists say they are working to use artificial intelligence (AI) to train pet dogs. Jason Stock and Tom Cavey programmed an AI to recognize when dogs were sitting, lying down or standing. After achieving 92 percent accuracy, they created an automated trainer by combining a movable camera to observe the dogs, a speaker to bark out commands and a treat delivery tube to reward good behavior. But some animal experts caution that computers can't recognize and promote the welfare of dogs or encourage their positive emotional state like humans can.

Earthquakes

At least 90 people perished and 932 others were injured when a magnitude 6.5 temblor struck Indonesia's Sulawesi Island.

- Earth movements were also felt in Taiwan, India's western state of Maharashtra and northern

territory of Jammu and Kashmir, southern Iran, southwestern Turkey, northwestern Argentina and Los Angeles.

Carbon Capture

Researchers are urging governments and industry to develop systems to collect carbon dioxide pollution at power plants and factories, condense it and then pump it into deep wells to prevent the greenhouse gas from worsening climate change. They say it needs to be a priority to meet the goals of the Paris climate accord. "Carbon capture and storage is going to be the only effective way we have in the short term to prevent our steel industry, cement manufacture and many other processes from continuing to pour emissions into the atmosphere," said Stuart Haszeldine of Edinburgh University. Research is also underway to remove CO₂ from the atmosphere, but the process is expensive and would require an enormous investment to curb global heating.

Tropical Cyclones

Southern Mozambique, Zimbabwe and northeastern South Africa were on alert late in the week for strengthening Cyclone Eloise, which earlier soaked the northern third of Madagascar. The storm appeared to be taking a course that could be unprecedented in modern tropical cyclone history.

- Queensland's Coral Sea coast was lashed by Tropical Storm Kimi, which spun up just offshore.
- Tropical Storm Joshua churned the central Indian Ocean and was a threat only to shipping lanes in the remote region.

Plausible Alibi

A tagged racing pigeon once believed to have flown from a competition in the United States to the Australian city of Melbourne, 8,000 miles away, briefly faced a death sentence as officials deemed it a foreign biohazard. Since the bird had seemingly bypassed the country's strict quarantine regulation forbidding the importation of live animals or birds, plans were made to euthanize it. But sharp eyes from racing experts saw that the tag, allegedly from a U.S. bird organization, was not authentic. So "Joe," named after new U.S. President Joe Biden, was found innocent and will be given the chance to fly freely around the neighborhood where it was first spotted.

Tropical Shift

Earth's tropical rain belt is being significantly shifted by climate change, which a NASA-National Science Foundation team says will eventually lead to profound but uneven changes in the planet's weather patterns. Writing in the journal *Nature Climate Change*, the researchers say the rain belt will move north in parts of the Eastern Hemisphere but will move south in areas in the Western Hemisphere because of the different and complex regional consequences of global warming. Lead author Antonios Mamalakis says the shifts will have "cascading effects" on water resources and agriculture. The team calls for future studies to pinpoint what those effects will be and where they will occur.

Java Blast

Indonesia's Mount Semeru volcano spewed vapor and ash almost 3 miles above the island of Java as clouds of superheated debris cascaded down from its summit crater. No damage or injuries were reported.

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