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Video



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ASTRONOMY

A Giant Comet Is Headed Our Way

Scientists have discovered the largest comet ever seen.

Astronomers have named the comet C/2014 UN271. It is also called Bernardinelli-Bernstein (BB) after its discoverers.

The comet is four billion years old and is travelling at 35,000 kilometres per hour. It is huge. At about 128 kilometres across, it is much larger than an average comet. Many comets are only a few hundred metres in size. BB's mass is estimated at 500 trillion tonnes, which is equivalent to the mass of 2800 Mount Everests.

Comets are icy rocks that orbit the Sun. They often orbit at a very great distance where they can't be seen. Periodically, their orbits bring them closer to the Sun.

As a comet approaches the Sun, the icy material on the outside of the comet warms

and turns into gases that reflect light. This produces a visible tail. If the comet approaches close to Earth, we can see their long tails streaking across the night sky.

It can take a comet anywhere from 20 years to millions of years to complete an orbit. One of the most famous comets is Halley's comet, which appears every 75 years.

The comet makes its closest approach in 2031, but it will miss Earth by 1.6 million kilometres. That is greater than the distance between Saturn and the Sun. The comet will only appear as a faint glow in the night sky without a telescope.

The comet was first observed last year, but scientists recently got a good look using the **Hubble**Space Telescope (HST). They have made some interesting observations. For example,



they determined the large size of the comet's **nucleus**, and the fact the comet is coloured black, like burnt toast.

When the comet completes its orbit and heads back to the outer reaches of the solar system, it will be gone for a while. Astronomers estimate BB takes three million years to complete a single orbit of the Sun.



DID YOU KNOW

Halley's comet is named after English astronomer Edmond Halley who famously predicted the comet's return in 1758.



WORD POWER

ORBIT: The curved path an object takes around a star, planet or moon. Orbits are often very predictable.

HUBBLE SPACE TELESCOPE: A large telescope that orbits Earth.

NUCLEUS: The solid, central part of a comet made up of rock, dust, and frozen gases.



ASTRONOMY

A Giant Comet Is Headed Our Way

1.	What have scientists discovered? What has it been called?
2.	Describe the comet.
3.	What happens when a comet approaches the Sun?
4.	How close will the BB comet come to Earth?
5.	How long does it take for BB to complete an orbit?
	RITICAL THINKING What are your thoughts on the BB comet that is approaching Earth?



Comets

According to NASA, the current number of known comets is 3743.

Comets that pass by the Sun again and again are called periodic comets. Their orbits are often the same and we know when they will pass by Earth. Some comets only pass near Earth once. These are called non-periodic comets.

The letters in the designation tell us what type of comet it is. The letter P for periodic comets and D for periodic comets that were lost or which broke into pieces. Other letters are C for non-periodic comets, and X for comets where we do not know their orbits. It uses A for objects people say are asteroids.

Below is a list some comets that will be coming near to the Sun in the next 10 years.

Comet designation	Comet name	Period (years)	Perihelion distance (AU)	Next perihelion
P/2001 Q6	NEAT	22.61	1.408179	2024/06/20
P/2002 T6	NEAT-LINEAR	21.17	3.387103	2024/08/28
P/2004 D029	Spacewatch-LINEAR	20.4	4.09475	2025/03/06
P/2003 QX29	NEAT	22.74	4.239	2025/07/21
P/2021 R8	Sheppard	5.24	2.131	2026
P/2005 T3	Read	20.58	6.202	2026/08/15
P/2004 A1	LONEOS	22.2	5.462544	2026/11/07
C/1942 EA	Väisälä	85.4	1.287079	2027/07/10
P/2004 V5-A	LINEAR-Hill	22.42	8.8	2027/07/31
P/2004 V5-B	LINEAR-Hill	22.42	9.2	2027/08/02
P/2006 HR30	Siding Spring	21.86	11.7	2028/11/12
P/2005 S2	Skiff	22.48	7.9	2028/12/22
P/2009 Q5	McNaught	20.4	10.5	2030/02/02
P/2015 B4	Lemmon-PANSTARRS	25.72	11.7	2030/12/04
P/2009 T2	La Sagra	20.94	14.2	2030/12/21
C/1921 H1	Dubiago	22		2031
P/2009 03	Hill	21.89	12	2031/04/08
P/2008 Y3	McNaught	22.75	8.7	2031/10/12
P/2008 03	Boattini	23.42	5.1	2031/11/03

A perihelion is when it is closest to the Sun.

One astronomical unit (AU) represents the average distance between the Earth and the Sun. An AU is about 150 million kilometres.



Use	e the infornation on the previous page to answer the questions below.
1.	What is the designation of the next comet to come close to the Sun?
2.	What is the period of the Spacewatch-LINEAR comet?
3.	Which comet will come the closest to the Sun?
4.	How many comets will pass by the Sun in 2031?
5.	What is the comet designation of the Skiff comet?
6.	Which comet has the shortest period?
7.	Which comet on the list has the longest period?
8.	What is the name of the C/1921 H1 comet?
9.	What is the name of the comet that will pass by the Sun on 2026/08/15?
10.	What is the period of the Hill comet?



INNOVATION

Using Geothermal Energy to Make Wine

hen you think of a vineyard, you might think of rows of grapevines under a hot sun. Grapes also grow in cold climates. B.C., Ontario, and Quebec are known for their wine-growing regions.

Cold weather is a risk.
During the winter, many vineyards in Canada cover their grapevines with a material that, when combined with a blanket of snow, keeps the grapevines from freezing in the winter. A period of especially cold weather can still cause problems, damaging or killing these valuable plants.

One vineyard in Quebec has a clever solution. They have started using geothermal energy to add a layer of protection to their grapes.

Geothermal energy is energy from the Earth. There is a lot of energy within the Earth in the form of heat. The Earth has a hot, molten core. The deeper you go under the surface, the warmer it gets.

Geothermal energy works by digging a hole deep into the crust of the Earth. Water is pumped down the hole from 500 metres to several kilometres below the surface. There, the Earth **superheats** the water. Hot water rises back to the surface where it can be used to heat a building or be converted into steam that can power a generator.

Even two metres below the surface, temperatures stay a constant 5 to 8 degrees Celsius throughout the year, including in winter. The owners of the vineyard created a network of pipes that go underground, and then come up above ground and intertwine with the grape bushes. A material called **glycol** is pumped through the pipes. The glycol warms up underground and carries that



heat to the surface.

Sara Gaston is the general director of the vineyard. She says their vines can withstand cold down to -18 degrees Celsius. When temperatures drop down to the minus thirties, their geothermal heat system becomes very important.



DID YOU KNOW

Another example of geothermal energy at work is hot springs.



WORD POWER

VINEYARD: An area dedicated to growing grapes that are used to make wine.

SUPERHEATS: To heat a liquid above the boiling point without converting into vapour.

GLYCOL: A chemical compound that stays liquid even when temperatures are very cold.



INNOVATION

Using Geothermal Energy to Make Wine

1.	What do vineyards in Canada do to protect their grapevines? Does it work?
2.	What does one vineyard in Quebec use?
3.	What is geothermal energy?
4.	How does geothermal energy work?
5.	How is geothermal energy used at the vineyard?
	RITICAL THINKING Do you think this technology can be used for other crops? Explain your answer.



NEUROSCIENCE

Scientists Discover Important Facts about Epilepsy

pilepsy is a brain illness that causes a person to have **seizures**. Seizures can happen at any time and without much warning.

For doctors and scientists, epilepsy is a challenge. They don't fully understand what causes epilepsy or how to cure it. There are treatments, but medicines only work in about two out of every three people who have epilepsy. Surgery has risks and is not guaranteed to be successful.

Scientists at Trinity College Dublin may have a solution. The researchers believe they have discovered an important cause of epilepsy. It has to do with blood and the brain.

The brain is just two percent of a human's body mass, but it uses almost 20 percent of the body's energy. To keep up with this high energy demand, brain cells are nourished by a large network of **capillaries**.

These capillaries bring blood, packed with oxygen and nutrients, to brain cells.

To protect the brain from unwanted chemicals, viruses, and bacteria, there is a thin **membrane** that separates the brain from the capillaries. This membrane is called the blood-brain barrier (BBB). Its job is to ensure that only oxygen and desired nutrients make it into the brain.

The Trinity College scientists theorized epilepsy occurs when the BBB gets damaged and starts to leak. This would allow unwanted chemicals to enter the brain from the blood. Enough of those chemicals could trigger a seizure. The theory seems to be true.

The team discovered that some people who have epilepsy are missing a protein called claudin-5. This protein is important for the BBB to work properly. To test this



idea, the scientists removed the gene responsible for making claudin-5 in some lab mice. These mice soon developed seizures.

The scientists also found a possible way to fix the problem. They used a medicine called RepSox on cells in the BBB. They found that RepSox helped these cells begin producing more claudin-5.

More work needs to be done to see if this approach results in fewer seizures in people.

?

DID YOU KNOW

It is estimated that about 260,000 Canadians have epilepsy.



WORD POWER

SEIZURE: An abnormal state in which you become unconscious and your body moves in an uncontrolled and violent way

CAPILLARY: The smallest size blood vessels in the body that provide nutrients to cells.

MEMBRANE: A thin sheet or layer of tissue in the body.



NEUROSCIENCE

Scientists Discover Important Facts about Epilepsy

1.	What is epilepsy?
2	Why is epilepsy a challenge for doctors and scientists?
۷.	willy is opinopsy a challenge for doctors and scientists:
3.	How does the brain get the energy it needs?
4.	What is the blood-brain barrier?
5.	What did the team of scientists discover about some people who have epilepsy?
C	RITICAL THINKING
1.	What are your thoughts on the possible connection between the BBB and epilepsy?

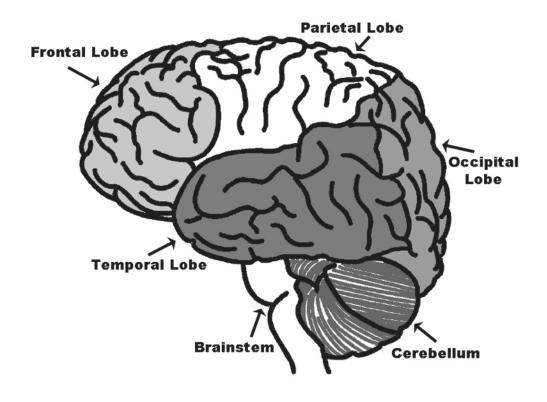
This Is Your Brain

The brain is the most complex part of the human body. Although the blood may be responsible for some functions, this three-pound organ controls just about everything you do, even when you are asleep. The brain is also the location of all reason and intelligence, and has parts that are responsible for perception, concentration, memory, and emotions.

The **brainstem** controls basic survival functions, such as heart rate, breathing, digesting food, and sleeping. The cerebellum is responsible for balance and muscle coordination.

The **cerebrum** is the largest part of the brain. It holds memories and allows you to plan, imagine, think, recognize friends, read books, and play games. It controls your voluntary muscles. It is divided into two hemispheres and each hemisphere is divided into sections (lobes).

- The **parietal lobe** receives and processes sensory information from the body, including touch, pain, and calculating location and speed of objects.
- The **occipital lobe** processes images from the eyes and links that information with images stored in memory.
- The frontal lobe is involved in motor skills (including speech) and cognitive functions. When you
 plan a schedule, imagine the future, or use reasoned arguments, the frontal lobe does most of the
 work.
- The **temporal lobe** controls memory storage area, emotion, hearing, and language.



balance and muscle

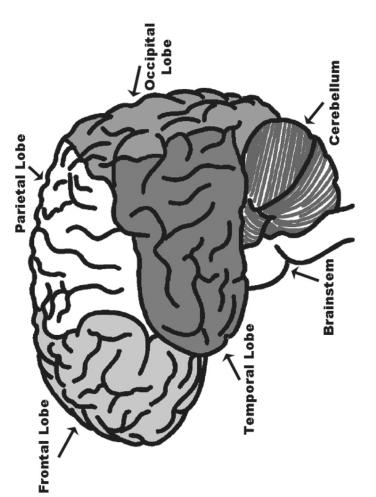
coordination

3. Responsible for

Connect each description with the correct part of the brain.

- 1. Controls memory storage
- area and emotion

2. Receives and processes sensory information



Processes images from the eyes 5.

> 6. Involved in motor skills and cognitive functions

survival functions Controls basic

4.

ENVIRONMENT

Mushroom Leather

eather is used to make many products, including shoes, jackets, handbags, and couches. It is tough and fashionable. Real leather is made from the skin of animals like cows, buffalo, pigs, and alligators.

Leather has its critics.
Animal rights groups protest the killing of animals to make leather. Also, raising cows requires large amounts of water and land. Cows also produce a fair amount of methane.

This has sent scientists searching for new ways to make leather-like materials. Mycoworks may have a solution. This company has developed a process that uses mushrooms to make a material that closely imitates the look and feel of leather.

To make their mushroom leather, Mycoworks grows mycelium cells. These are the thin thread-like cells

that make up a mushroom. The cells are grown in a 3-D structure that is specially engineered to make the mycelium threads become densely intertwined. This causes them to form a tough material that has the strength and durability of traditional leather. Mycoworks calls their product Fine Mycelium.

Fine Mycelium can be grown in trays in a matter of weeks. It can be grown into different shapes and sizes. Once done growing, it is **tanned** to make it look and feel like animal leather. It has a flexible grainy surface like real leather. Mycoworks also points out their product is sustainable and won't contribute to climate change because it is **carbon-neutral**.

One problem with Mycoworks' mushroom leather is that it is currently still very expensive. It is used mainly in high-fashion products like



handbags that cost over a thousand dollars.

Mycoworks isn't the only company looking to create useful materials from plants. Lululemon recently announced a line of yoga mats and bags also made from mycelium. Other companies have begun creating their own leather-like materials from things like pineapple leaves and cactuses.



DID YOU KNOW

Leather making has been around for more than 7000 years.



WORD POWER

METHANE: A greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change.

TANNING: A process using chemicals that help make leather stronger, more flexible, and longer-lasting.

CARBON-NEUTRAL: A process that removes as many greenhouse gas emissions as it produces.



ENVIRONMENT

Mushroom Leather

1.	For what is leather used? What is it made from?
2.	What problems do critics have with leather?
3.	What has Mycoworks developed?
4.	How are mycelium cells used to make mushroom leather?
5.	What are some of the benefits of Fine Mycelium?
C 1.	RITICAL THINKING What are your thoughts on using "leather" made from mushrooms?

Uses of Leather

Leather is used for many products. Do some research. See how many products you can list that are made from leather.



ZOOLOGY

Measuring the Emotions of Animals

ou get home and your pet dog is wagging his tail. He is happy to see you, or is he?

We often attribute emotions to animals. A pig squeals in fear. A squirrel chatters in excitement. Exactly what animals feel—and whether they have emotions at all—has been a debate among scientists for centuries.

For much of human history, most Western thinkers have assumed animals don't have emotions. They have assumed emotions are a product of **sentience**, and therefore a distinctly human experience.

Part of the problem is that emotions are **subjective** and difficult to measure. Since most animals don't have the ability to speak—at least in any way humans can understand—they can't tell us what they are feeling.

Some scientists are coming up with new scientific

methods to **objectively** assess and measure animal emotions. Martine Hausberger led a team of scientists who investigated the emotional states of horses. They used electroencephalogy (EEG), a method for measuring brain waves. They attached a headset device onto horses' heads so their brain waves could be measured as they went about their day.

They found that horses that roamed freely outdoors with other horses had more brain waves called theta waves. In humans, theta waves are believed to reflect calm and well-being. Horses that lived in stalls and had little contact with other horses had more gamma brain waves. In humans, these waves are associated with anxiety and stress.

Other research has found that picking up a mouse by its tail can make it unhappy



for the rest of the day, and an unexpected sugar treat can improve a bee's mood.

The research is important for people who support animal rights. Knowing that animals have emotions could drive changes in how we treat animals in our care.



DID YOU KNOW

EEGs are used in humans to check the brain for problems like epilepsy, stroke, or sleep issues.



WORD POWER

SENTIENCE: The ability to be aware of oneself and to experience the world around us with feelings and sensations.

SUBJECTIVE: Based on or influenced by personal feelings or opinions.

OBJECTIVE: Not influenced by feelings because it is factual and can be measured.



ZOOLOGY

1.	Why have most Western thinkers assumed animals don't have emotions?				
2.	What is part of the reason for this thinking?				
3.	How did the team of scientists investigate the emotional states of horses?				
4.	What did they discover?				
5.	Why is the research important?				
Cl	RITICAL THINKING				
	Do you think that animals have emotions? Give reasons for your answer.				

Science News Quiz

A GIANT COMET IS HEADED OUR WAY

1.			e comet is much smaller than	an average comet.		
	True False	<u> </u>				
2.	Comets are icy ro	Comets are icy rocks that orbit				
U	ISING GE	OTHERM	AL ENERGY TO	MAKE WINE		
1.	Geothermal ener	gy is energy from _		<u>.</u>		
2.	The owners of the vineyard created a network of pipes that go underground, and then come up above ground and intertwine with the grape bushes. True False					
S	CIENTIST EPILEPS		VER IMPORTA	NT FACTS ABOUT		
1.	Epilepsy is a bra	in illness that cau	ses a person to have what?			
	A. Anxiety attack	S	B. Seizures	C. Headaches		
2.		ntists theorized ep nd starts to leak.	ilepsy occurs when the			
M	IUSHRO	OM LEATH	HER			
1.	How long does it	take to grow Fine	Mycelium in trays?			
	A. Hours		B. Days	C. Weeks		
2.	One problem wit	h Mycoworks' musl	hroom leather is that it is curr	ently still very		
M	IEASURII	NG THE E	MOTIONS OF A	ANIMALS		
1.	Part of the reaso True False		animals have emotions is tha	at emotions are objective.		
2.	In humans, theta	a waves are believe	ed to reflect	and well-being.		



A Giant Comet Is Headed Our Way

1. What have scientists discovered? What has it been called?

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2. Describe the comet.

The comet is four billion years old and is travelling at 35,000 kilometres per hour. It is huge. At about 128 kilometres across, it is much larger than an average comet. BB's mass is estimated at 500 trillion tonnes, which is equivalent to the mass of 2800 Mount Everests.

3. What happens when a comet approaches the Sun?

As a comet approaches the Sun, the icy material on the outside of the comet warms and turns into gases that reflect light. This produces a visible tail. If the comet approaches close to Earth, we can see their long tails streaking across the night sky.

- 4. How close will the BB comet come to Earth? The comet makes its closest approach in 2031, but it will miss Earth by 1.6 million kilometres. That is greater than the distance between Saturn and the Sun.
- 5. How long does it take for BB to complete an orbit?

Astronomers estimate BB takes three million years to complete a single orbit of the Sun.

Comets

- 1. P/2001 Q6
- 2. P/2004 C029
- 3. Väisälä
- 4. Four
- 5. P/2005 S2
- 6. Sheppard
- 7. Väisälä
- 8. Dubiago
- 9. Read
- 10. 21.89 years

Using Geothermal Energy to Make Wine

1. What do vineyards in Canada do to protect their grapevines? Does it work?

During the winter, many vineyards in Canada cover their grapevines with a material that, when combined with a blanket of snow, keeps the grapevines from freezing in the winter. A period of especially cold weather can still cause problems, damaging or killing these valuable plants.

- 2. What does one vineyard in Quebec use?

 They have started using geothermal energy to add a layer of protection to their grapes.
- 3. What is geothermal energy?

Geothermal energy is energy from the Earth. There is a lot of energy within the Earth in the form of heat. The Earth has a hot, molten core. The deeper you go under the surface, the warmer it gets.

4. How does geothermal energy work?

Geothermal energy works by digging a hole deep into the crust of the Earth. Water is pumped down the hole from 500 metres to



several kilometres below the surface. There, the Earth superheats the water. Hot water rises back to the surface where it can be used to heat a building or be converted into steam that can power a generator.

5. How is geothermal energy used at the vineyard?

The owners of the vineyard created a network of pipes that go underground, and then come up above ground and intertwine with the grape bushes. A material called glycol is pumped through the pipes. The glycol warms up underground and carries that heat to the surface.

Scientists Discover Important Facts about Epilepsy

1. What is epilepsy?

Epilepsy is a brain illness that causes a person to have seizures. Seizures can happen at any time and without much warning.

2. Why is epilepsy a challenge for doctors and scientists?

They don't fully understand what causes epilepsy or how to cure it. There are treatments, but medicines only work in about two out of every three people who have epilepsy. Surgery has risks and is not always successful.

- 3. How does the brain get the energy it needs?

 To keep up with its high energy demand,
 brain cells are nourished by a large network
 of capillaries. These capillaries bring blood,
 packed with oxygen and nutrients, to brain
 cells.
- 4. What is the blood-brain barrier?

 To protect the brain from unwanted chemicals, viruses, and bacteria, there is a thin membrane that separates the brain from

the capillaries. This membrane is called the blood-brain barrier (BBB). Its job is to ensure that only oxygen and desired nutrients make it into the brain.

5. What did the team of scientists discover about some people who have epilepsy? The team discovered that some people who have epilepsy are missing a protein called claudin-5. This protein is important for the BBB to work properly.

This Is Your Brain

- 1. Controls memory storage area and emotion Temporal lobe
- 2. Receives and processes sensory information

Parietal lobe

3. Responsible for balance and muscle coordination

Cerebellum

- 4. Controls basic survival functions
 Brainstem
- 5. Processes images from the eyes Occipital lobe
- 6. Involved in motor skills and cognitive functions

 Frontal lobe

Mushroom Leather

1. For what is leather used? What is it made from?

Leather is used to make many products, including shoes, jackets, handbags, and couches. Real leather is made from the skin of animals like cows, buffalo, pigs, and alligators.

2. What problems do critics have with leather?
Animal rights groups protest the killing of

animals to make leather. Also, raising cows requires large amounts of water and land. Cows also produce a fair amount of methane.

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Measuring the Emotions of Animals

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Part of the problem is that emotions are subjective and difficult to measure. Since most animals don't have the ability to speak—at least in any way humans can understand—they can't tell us what they are

feeling.

3. How did the team of scientists investigate the emotional states of horses?

They used electroencephalogy (EEG), a method for measuring brain waves. They attached a headset device onto horses' heads so their brain waves could be measured as they went about their day.

4. What did they discover?

They found that horses that roamed freely outdoors with other horses had more brain waves called theta waves. In humans, theta waves are believed to reflect calm and wellbeing. Horses that lived in stalls and had little contact with other horses had more gamma brain waves. In humans, these waves are associated with anxiety and stress.

5. Why is the research important?

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Science News Quiz

A GIANT COMET IS HEADED OUR WAY

- At about 128 kilometres across, the comet is much smaller than an average comet.
 False – Much larger than an average comet
- 2. Comets are icy rocks that orbit THE SUN.

USING GEOTHERMAL ENERGY TO MAKE WINE

- 1. Geothermal energy is energy from **THE EARTH**.
- The owners of the vineyard created a network of pipes that go underground, and then come up above ground and intertwine with the grape bushes.



True

SCIENTISTS DISCOVER IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT EPILEPSY

- 1. Epilepsy is a brain illness that causes a person to have what?
 - B. Seizures
- 2. The team of scientists theorized epilepsy occurs when the **BLOOD-BRAIN BARRIER** gets damaged and starts to leak.

MUSHROOM LEATHER

- 1. How long does it take to grow Fine Mycelium in trays?
 - C. Weeks
- 2. One problem with Mycoworks' mushroom leather is that it is currently still very **EXPENSIVE**.

MEASURING THE EMOTIONS OF ANIMALS

 Part of the reason we don't know if animals have emotions is that emotions are objective.

False — Subjective

2. In humans, theta waves are believed to reflect **CALM** and well-being.

