

Monday, Dec. 16

“Human teeth were used as prehistoric jewelry in Turkey”

Archaeologists have shed new light on two 8,500-year-old human teeth that once formed part of a necklace or a bracelet. Three teeth were found at a site in Turkey between 2013 and 2015 and bore what appeared to be drill holes. Researchers have conducted macroscopic, microscopic and radiographic analyses of teeth to confirm that two of the teeth were indeed once used as beads or pendants. Evidence suggests that the two teeth pendants were probably extracted from two mature individuals after their deaths. The wear on the teeth’s chewing surfaces indicates that the individuals would have been between 30-50 years old. This is the first time that researchers have found evidence of this practice in the prehistoric Near East.

Tuesday, Dec. 17

“Thousands of strange holes discovered off California coast”

Scientists have discovered thousands of mysterious holes in the seabed off Big Sur, Calif. Researchers from the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute (MBARI) were surveying the deep seafloor off Big Sur when they discovered the strange holes. The larger holes, described as pockmarks, are on average about 600 feet across and 16 feet deep. Some of the pockmarks were first discovered in 1999. However, subsequent surveys have revealed over 5,200 pockmarks spread across 500 square miles. Thousands of smaller holes, known as micro-depressions, have been discovered. Researchers have spotted around 15,000 micro-depressions, which are, on average, 11 feet across and three feet deep. Scientists are anxious to understand how the holes formed in the seabed because the area where they were found is the site of a proposed wind farm.

Wednesday, Dec. 18

“Earth’s Magnetic North Pole Has Officially Moved”

Earth’s magnetic north pole has been moving East at an unusually fast pace, heading from the Canadian Arctic toward Russia. The rapid change of the magnetic poles has caused concern, since everything from smartphone apps to air navigation to army operations all use the official location of the magnetic north pole. The northern magnetic pole has been drifting toward Russia at a speed of 34 miles per year but has slowed recently to 25 miles per year. The magnetic poles are a result of Earth’s molten iron outer core, which moves and flows as the Earth spins. Currently, Earth’s North and South poles match the magnetic North and magnetic South poles. However, wandering and flipping of Earth’s magnetic poles is common and has happened many times in Earth’s history.

Thursday, Dec. 19

“Dogs discover Jurassic reptile’s fossil on beach”

An amateur archeologist discovered what he believes to be a 65-million-year-old Jurassic reptile’s fossil along the beach, all thanks to his two dogs that led him to the find. Jon Gopsill was walking his pets Poppy and Sam along the coast of Stolford, Somerset, England when they stumbled upon a fossil from the Jurassic period, the porpoise-like sea creature known as the ichthyosaurus. The 5-foot, 6-inch long skeleton was believed to have resurfaced after a recent storm. It’s not possible to identify the ichthyosaur fossil’s exact species based on the images taken by Gopsill alone, but based on multiple features of the fossil which are easily identifiable, professionals are quite certain it is an ichthyosaur of some type.