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## UFO UpDates Mailing List

### Re: Kenneth Arnold's testimony

From: **Ted Viens** <[drtedv@freewwwweb.com](mailto:drtedv@freewwwweb.com)>  
Date: Thu, 04 Dec 1997 14:09:01 -0800  
Fwd Date: Thu, 04 Dec 1997 18:20:54 -0500  
Subject: Re: Kenneth Arnold's testimony

> Date: Wed, 3 Dec 1997 22:34:25 -0500  
> From: James Easton <[pulsar@compuserve.com](mailto:pulsar@compuserve.com)>  
> Subject: UFO UpDate: Re: Kenneth Arnold's testimony  
> To: UFO UpDates - Toronto <[updates@globalserve.net](mailto:updates@globalserve.net)>

> Regarding...

> >Date: Wed, 03 Dec 1997 13:39:08 -0800  
> >From: Ted Viens <[drtedv@freewwwweb.com](mailto:drtedv@freewwwweb.com)>  
> >Subject: Re: UFO UpDate: Re: Kenneth Arnold's testimony

> Ted wrote:

> >The receptor cells in the eye have an angular diameter of 0 degrees  
> >1 minute plus or minus. etc...

> Ted,

> Using the same scientific formula, please tell us how large  
> Kenneth Arnold's UFOs must have been at a minimum, based on  
> Arnold's later claim that, "I observed, far to my left and to the  
> north, a formation of very bright objects coming from the vicinity  
> of Mt. Baker, flying very close to the mountain tops and  
> travelling at tremendous speed".

> "At first I couldn't make out their shapes as they were still at  
> a distance of over a hundred miles".

> James.  
> E-mail: [pulsar@compuserve.com](mailto:pulsar@compuserve.com)

If you would do "your own" homework, you would be able to tell me that an object with an angular diameter of one minute of arc would be some 46.5 meters across at 160 km. And before I could even explore the underlying fallacy implicit in your question, I would have to say what is so unbelievable about 50 or so meters? The fallacy is that you are saying that an object must have the same angular diameter as a receptor cell to be seen. This, of course, is not true. An object must only create enough contrast in one receptor cell from its neighbors to be seen. The angular diameter could be much less than one minute and it still would be seen. For example, a bright green dot only 2 mm across 1600 km away (0.00026 arcseconds) in the blackness of space would still be seen. We just wouldn't be able to tell whether it was 500 m across or much smaller. Two bright green dots 1600 km away would still appear as one dot if they were less than 1 km apart. As they moved more than 1 km apart we would begin to see them as two separate dots even though we still could not tell that size they

really are.

Stepping back from this diversion into facile trigonometry, I am still saying that, as the principle proponent of the significant theory generating this thread, you are not responsibly doing your homework. You have several accounts of what happened from Arnold himself, yet you apparently haven't attempted to synthesize a best-fit time and position chart over a reasonably detailed map of what might have really happened. I am sure that Bruce and others here would love to collaborate with you in doing this, sharing what they have already done and debating the accuracy of Arnold's estimated distances and bearings. This would be valuable to many here interested in this issue.

You are also oversimplifying your discussion of the relative position of the plane and objects. From a fixed observer nearby small objects moving slowly and distant large objects moving quickly would have the same angular dimensions and sweep through the same bearings and make it impossible for the observer to tell them apart. This is a false model for what happened. The observer is also in motion. If Arnold did see the objects with a large aspect ratio and they were big birds, he would be so close to them that in a couple of minutes they would have gone from way ahead of him to way behind him even if they were flying in the same direction. This is the one unavoidable characteristic necessary for them to be birds that is not reported.

If you are seriously proposing a bird theory, then it would be appreciated if you would do more homework. If you merely desire to discredit Arnold, then why go through all this work? Simply declare that it never happened. Say that Arnold was lying. If you are merely continuing this thread for the fun of holding a position that you may not believe in then please tell us and I will focus elsewhere.

Bye... Ted..

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