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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: Art Bell's Update On Phoenix Sightings

From: **Mark Cashman** <mcashman@ix.netcom.com>
Date: Fri, 23 Jan 1998 00:17:54 -0800
Fwd Date: Fri, 23 Jan 1998 16:35:24 -0500
Subject: Re: Art Bell's Update On Phoenix Sightings

> From: "Keith Woodard" <qwoodard@worldnet.att.net>
> To: "UFO UpDates - Toronto" <updates@globalserve.net>
> Subject: Re: UFO UpDate: Re: Art Bell's Update On Phoenix Sightings
> Date: Tue, 20 Jan 1998 19:56:48 -0800

> Hi Mark,

Hi Keith...

> Are you talking lighter-than-air, or ultralight as well?

Either way is a problem in some of the weather conditions under which these sightings have occurred.

A balloon with a hundred or more foot lighter than air wing would be incredibly hard to maintain in any sort of wind because the slightest pitch up or down or lateral would drastically increase the surface area available for the wind to affect. Because these transitions would be very rapid and probably chaotic, I would tend to doubt that even fly by wire systems would do well.

An ultralight has similar problems. All it takes is a brief look at an ultralight coming in for a landing to realize that even with a mere 20 foot wingspan, the ultralight can have serious control problems in even mild crosswinds. But many of the observations of large boomerang type objects have been of things 100 feet or more across, with the objects at altitudes which fall readily into the stereo vision range. Obviously those would be even more unstable.

> It won't take much for me to fold on this issue because I have no
> engineering aptitude at all, and I know zilch about aviation. Is
> that generally true of gliders, that they can't handle any kind
> of wind? It surprises me a little, because I've seen HANG
> gliders do okay in strong winds. And it seems like the huge size
> of these things might afford some stability, not to mention all
> manner of advanced stabilization systems they might have
> developed.

Hang gliders ride the winds. There is some ability for a hang glider to remain stable in specific areas of updraft (near ridges, for instance), but in a strong 40-50 mph wind I suspect that a hang glider would be hard pressed to do anything but go with the flow.

The trade-off is weight/power vs. surface area. Now these aircraft, if they existed, would have a wing area easily as large as a 747, but at that weight, using conventional power plants to

produce the energy needed to stay in the air at the reported altitudes, they would make a sound like thunder. Once we get that far, we have to then say, well, they don't need that much power because they're lighter. But as they get lighter, the wind becomes more effective against their surface area and they become less stable in winds.

> The other thing is that the Board of Sponsors of the Federation
> of American Scientists includes half the country's living Nobel
> laureates, so I wouldn't think they'd put this forward if it
> didn't make at least a modicum of sense. You're probably much
> more knowledgeable than I about this, so tell me what you think.

Well, I'm not going to try to knock at people who have demonstrated their knowledge and their ability in various fields, except to say that a true judgement of the practicality of this sort of aircraft in the flight regimes required to account for sightings such as the extensive Hudson Valley reports would fall to aeronautical engineers. I'm not one of those, but I do have a keen amateur interest, and the "giant flying wing" sets off my BS detector whenever its proposed as an alternative for sightings like those in the Hudson Valley.

Mark Cashman, creator of The Temporal Doorway at
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