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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: Art Bell's Update On Phoenix Sightings

From: "Keith Woodard" <qwoodard@worldnet.att.net>
Date: Fri, 23 Jan 1998 20:33:27 -0800
Fwd Date: Sat, 24 Jan 1998 18:17:18 -0500
Subject: Re: Art Bell's Update On Phoenix Sightings

> To: UFO UpDates - Toronto <updates@globalseve.net>
> From: Mark Cashman <mcashman@ix.netcom.com>
> Subject: re: UFO UpDate: Re: Art Bell's Update On Phoenix Sightings
> Date: Fri, 23 Jan 1998 00:17:54 -0800

> > From: "Keith Woodard" <qwoodard@worldnet.att.net>
> > To: "UFO UpDates - Toronto" <updates@globalseve.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.

Give me a break, Mark! Don't you know this is the Internet?
Where do you get off arguing on the merits! We're supposed to be
confining ourselves to ad hominem attacks:-)

I'm not completely convinced, but your arguments are excellent.
I may wind up emailing FAS, and maybe some skeptics, to see if
they can counter any of your points. I'll keep you and Updates
posted if I make any headway one way or the other.

Thanks,

Keith

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