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## UFO UpDates Mailing List

### Re: Arnold Saw Pelicans

From: Brad Sparks <[RB47Expert@aol.com](mailto:RB47Expert@aol.com)>  
Date: Fri, 16 Jul 1999 19:44:30 EDT  
Fwd Date: Sat, 17 Jul 1999 08:58:54 -0400  
Subject: Re: Arnold Saw Pelicans

I posted the following on James Easton's UFO Research List and on the Project 1947 List where he also posts, but as far as I know there has been no response.

Brad Sparks

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List Members,

James Easton has announced a new theory explaining the Arnold case as white pelicans. My response posted on his UFO Research List was as follows:

Subj: Re: News Release  
Date: 7/13/99 5:38:13 PM Pacific Daylight Time  
From: [RB47Expert@aol.com](mailto:RB47Expert@aol.com)  
To: [UFORL@listbot.com](mailto:UFORL@listbot.com)

UFO Research List - <http://web.ukonline.co.uk/voyager/>

James,

I think Arnold's second sighting was not 5 days later but a MONTH and 5 days later, on July 29, 1947.

The bird theory runs into the following fundamental problems, among others:

(1) ARC-LIGHT OR SUNLIKE BRIGHTNESS. Arnold described a blinding light that caught his attention that lit up his plane and was so bright it reminded him of arc welding light. He thought at first it was sunlight reflecting off metal from an airplane in near-collision, so he quickly looked around to try to avoid crashing. Birds could not possibly be this bright, especially from the distance necessitated to avoid Arnold's 110-120 mph plane from overtaking them.

(2) MORE THAN 100-DEGREE FLIGHT PATH. Arnold's reported azimuths of the objects' flight path covers more than 100 degrees of sky from first sighting north of Mt. Rainier till disappearing just after passing Mt. Adams to the south. Duration at the very extremes was from 1 to 3 minutes. So taking the birds' speed at 60 mph that's 1 mile/min or 1 to 3 miles of flight path running roughly perpendicular to Arnold's heading as he reported. For this length to cover 2 radians (100 degs) of sky the distance must be 0.5 to 1.5 miles from Arnold's plane.

But at Arnold's speed of 2 mi/min, this distance would be closed IN 1/4 to 3/4 MINUTE, or one-fourth of their total flight path. Thus, the birds would NEVER HAVE EVEN MADE IT ACROSS MT. RAINIER before Arnold had flown over them or the projection of their path, which is contrary to Arnold's testimony in every account he gave in 30+ years.

(3) ARNOLD'S PLANE WOULD HAVE OVERTAKEN BIRDS. As we've just calculated, Arnold's plane flying east at 110-120 mph would have overtaken 60 mph birds flying north-south in the 1-3-minute duration of the sighting. If we try to juggle flight paths -- contrary to Arnold's observations -- we still cannot escape the simple flight dynamic constraints of basic physics:

Suppose the birds flew east at their full speed of 60 mph in order to delay Arnold's plane overtaking them. This would only reduce Arnold's relative velocity with respect to the birds down to about 60 mph. Arnold's plane would still overtake the birds in just one-half the sighting, in 0.5 to 1.5 minutes' time. Moreover, this is an impossible example in any event, because the birds would have to fly in the same direction as Arnold, eastward, and thus would NEVER HAVE BEEN SEEN TO THE NORTH OR SOUTH AT ALL, flatly contrary to Arnold's observations indicating more than 100 degrees of arc covered from north to south, from north or Rainier to south of Mt. Adams. Arnold would also have seen the birds' elevation angle dropping as he flew over them till they disappeared underneath his plane -- which he certainly did NOT report (the objects were near the horizon in the distance the entire time).

(4) ALTITUDE TOO HIGH FOR SPEED. Arnold reported the objects were at roughly his altitude of about 9,200 feet. This is most likely too high for white pelicans or if just within their flight ceiling, it is too high for them to sustain 60 mph maximum speed in level flight.

Notice I'm carefully refraining from getting into heated arguments over the SHAPES, FLIGHT PATTERNS and ANGULAR SIZE. These could be argued endlessly so I don't think it fruitful to pursue.

Brad Sparks

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