

# Case Files

A collection of UFO/UAP cases that provide some of the most interesting evidence of the phenomena

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# The Cecconi UFO Incident - 1979

This incredibly detailed case study of cigar-shaped UFOs comes from Marcus Lowth's "**The Cecconi UFO Incident: Photographic Evidence Of An Extraterrestrial Vehicle?**"

The sheer amount of these encounters around the same time (1977-1979), along with the witnesses and data indicate, to me at least, what should have been considered a "UFO flap".

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## The Cecconi UFO Incident

At around 11:30 am on the morning of 18<sup>th</sup> June 1979, Pilot Marshal Giancarlo Cecconi was piloting his G-91R aircraft on the return to Treviso San Angelo Airport after carrying out a photographic reconnaissance mission over the Ligurian Apennines. Suddenly, a radio signal was received by Cecconi requesting he make contact with the radar crew at Istrana Airfield as they had detected an unidentified object seemingly moving at low altitude.

He contacted the radar team, who, according to an article by Antonia Chiumiento in the March 1988 edition of *Flying Saucer Review* (Vol. 33 No. 1) titled *An Italian Pilot's Sighting: And Another Italian Government Cover-Up?*, informed him that the object was "behaving strangely" and was "appearing intermittently on the radarscope".



***The UFO with the airfield below***

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He headed toward the area, and it wasn't long before he could see the large, black, cigar-shaped object, clearly standing out against the clear blue of the late morning sky. Ceconni would later describe the object as being a "dull black" in color and reminding him of a "fuel tank" with a slight flatness to the upper part. He also picked up on what he believed was a dome of some kind, either transparent or white in color and which looked similar to a "drop of water". The object was approximately 25 feet long and around 10 feet wide and didn't appear to reflect the sun.

His plane was equipped with four VINTEN cameras – one on each side of the cockpit, one facing front, and the fourth on the underside of the plane. Shortly after first viewing the unusual object, he began snapping photographs with these cameras.

While this was happening, the staff at the control tower at San Angelo Airfield were in constant communication with Ceconni. In fact, they informed him that several personnel on the ground had the object in their sights using binoculars and that it appeared to be leaving a "bluish trail" behind it.

From Ceconni's perspective, the object had returned to the same position in the sky and he decided to turn his plane and approach it once more in order to capture more photographs. However, by the time he had done so, the strange aerial vehicle had completely disappeared, "as

though (it had) dematerialized". At the same time, it had also disappeared from the radar screens at Istrana Airfield.

In total, the entire episode lasted around five minutes from Ceconni giving visual confirmation of the object to it seemingly vanishing into thin air.

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***Another photo of the UFO***

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Although he was "reluctant" to speak of the incident in too much detail, he did supply Chiumiento with the basics of the incident under the promise that he was, for the time being at least, to keep it



By June 1985, the Ministry of Defense would respond, essentially confirming the pictures were authentic, including official copies of the three photographs in their reply. Chiumiento's investigation, however, would take a further twist.

According to the analysis he carried out on the officially confirmed pictures, they differed slightly from the picture he had witnessed in late 1979. In fact, not just slightly. He would state that they were "remarkably different" from the picture he and his fellow investigators had viewed several years previously.

He would point out that, as we mentioned earlier, the object managed to ensure that no matter where Ceconni took his photographs from, the object made sure it was always in the same position as if denying the chance to get a true shape of it. However, the investigator would state that this was "not shown by the changes of position in relation to the ground and to the horizon" that are in the officially released pictures. Whether Chiumiento is correct is perhaps open to debate.

Incidentally, at the time that Chiumiento was investigating the Ceconni Case, he was the Vice President of the *Italian National UFO Research Center*. He would go on to form the *Centro Italiano Studi Ufologici* (CISU). And it is this organization that reexamined the case in 1994, a decade and a half after it occurred.

When Ceconni first met with CISU in September 1994, perhaps one of the first things that he confirmed to the team was the three photographs published in *Epoca* were part of the 80-plus photographs he had taken on that June morning in 1979. This, then, would suggest that Chiumiento may have recalled the photograph he had seen incorrectly, and so also incorrectly suggesting the pictures published had been altered or were outright different.

It would also come to light the Ceconni no longer had in his possession the copy of the photograph he had taken on the day they were developed by the Air Force. He wasn't certain if it had become lost or had been stolen, but its whereabouts were now a mystery.

The CISU investigators would also speak with the author of the *Epoca* article, Remo Guerrini, who had seemingly obtained around 30 photographs from the Italian Ministry of Defense (with permission to print three of them) due to his "excellent relations" with the Air Force. He claimed, however, that he didn't know where the photographs were at the time of the interview.



## ***Another picture taken by Ceconni***

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By August 1995, though, things took another twist. Ceconni's picture that had mysteriously gone missing just as mysteriously reappeared. Just over two weeks later, in the 19<sup>th</sup> August edition of *Il Giornale*, an article on the case appeared with the recently discovered photograph. Within days, the national media published similar articles. Interest in the case had seemingly been reignited.

Despite this apparent renewed interest in the case, as well as the UFO subject, in general, many of the articles approached the case and subject with a sensationalist type of attitude, consequently, assuring that such accounts were not treated in a serious manner. Of course, whether this is very much a calculated approach, possibly due to the influence of outside forces is perhaps a subject for debate. There are several cases on record where UFO investigators have accused local and national media of toning down, over-dramatizing, or even suppressing reports of such incidents.

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# Italian UFO Reports Around The Same Time

There are several other sightings that are certainly worth documenting here that happened in Italy around the same time as the Ceconni incident.

On the evening of 4<sup>th</sup> June, for example, according to a *Centro Ufologico Nazionale* report, just under two weeks before the encounter at around 11 pm in Bellaria, several motorists witnessed bizarre flashing lights in the woods that lined the roadside. Many would even stop their vehicles in order to investigate.

Not long after venturing into the woods, however, they came upon a bizarre "hemispherical" object that was simply hovering around 30 feet above the ground. Witnesses would later estimate the strange object was around 30 feet across. They eventually withdrew from the scene.

The following morning, though, a number of people returned and were amazed to see that a "deep imprint" remained on the ground where the UFO was seen hovering.

Another account, that appears in *Return to Magonia* by Chris Aubeck, occurred ten days after the Ceconni incident, during the afternoon of 25<sup>th</sup> June in Adrano, Catania, when several local people witnessed two strange lights behind the car they were traveling home in after attending an expedition on Mount Etna. At first, they believed the lights were the headlights of another car and were looking to ask why this apparent other motorist was following them. However, as the lights got nearer, they realized that the lights were actually brightly glowing humanoid figures. This realization caused the witnesses to get back in their car and flee the scene.

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## Strange Encounters In Italy In July 1978

It is perhaps also worth our time looking at some of the strange incidents reported the following month in July 1978.

Although the exact date is not certain, an incident in Corsico in the early days of the month left a night security guard in shock at what he witnessed while conducting his rounds. As reported in *Itacat*, on the night in question he suddenly noticed a “dark form” in the middle of a clearing and immediately reached for his gun fearing thieves were on the premises.

He cautiously approached the shadowy form, noting how it was the size of a truck although it was shaped like an “upturned cup” and appeared to be resting on “several leg-like protrusions”. As he came closer, he further noted a dome shape on the top. However, it was when he saw the two “medium-sized men” moving around the object that he halted his progress.

Although the two figures appeared human, they each wore a strange, tight-fitting diver-type outfit and they moved with an apparent quickness as they appeared to be surveying the ground. Then, without warning, the two figures disappeared inside the strange object which then began to rise into the air. It originally hovered several feet from the ground before shooting directly upward and disappearing at great speed.

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## Strange Figures In Silver Suits

Another incident occurred on the evening of July 4th 1978, this time near Mount Etna when, according to an article by Richard Hall in issue no. 153 of the *MUFON Journal*, four Italian Navy personnel based in the region felt a “sudden compulsion” to drive up the slopes of the volcano. As they did so, they witnessed “three red pulsating objects” moving around in the skies overhead, one of which even landed.

When viewed up close, the four men could see that the object was a “domed disc-shaped craft with red and yellow lights”. Then, the incident got even stranger. In front of them, as if appearing from out of nowhere, were two “tall golden-haired, white-robed beings accompanied by three shorter, large-headed beings wearing helmets and silvery suits”. The two robed figures began to make hand gestures toward the men. However, realizing they were witnessing something perhaps beyond their comprehension, the men turned their vehicle around and made their way back down the mountainside.

Richard Hall would write of a very similar sighting that occurred on the 18<sup>th</sup> July in Lurate Caccivio in the book *The UFO Evidence: Volume II: A Thirty-Year Report*, when a “red-orange object” was witnessed by several residents overhead. It was also noted that the object was “revolving” as it hovered and made a distinct “hissing sound” as it departed.

Several weeks later, at a little after 8 am on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September 1978, according to a report made to the *Centro Ufologico Nazionale*, a resident of San Michele claimed to have seen a cigar-shaped object approximately 30 feet long. At the time of the sighting, the object was rising upward from a field of maize. When the witnesses later examined the field, there was a clear indentation where the object was seen to rise up from.

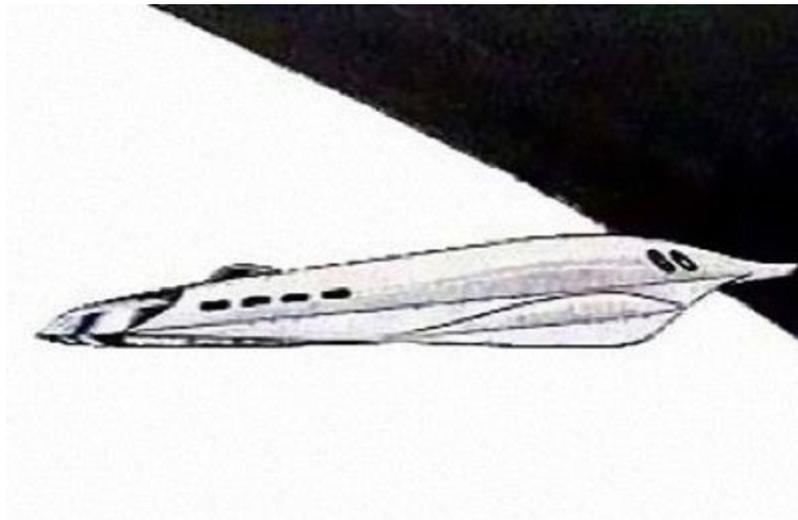
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# Cigar-Shaped Objects Further Afield Around The Same Time

There were further sightings, specifically of cigar-shaped objects around the same time as the Ceconni incident.

We might, for example, wish to note a sighting of an unidentified cigar-shaped object that was witnessed by a cosmonaut – Victor Afanasyev – on his way to the Soviet *Salyut 6* space station in April 1979 – only several weeks before Ceconni’s encounter. The cosmonaut would recall how the strange object “followed us during half of our orbit”. He would continue that he, and others on board, viewed it from the “light side”. However, upon entering the shadow side, the elongated object “disappeared completely”.

He would further claim that the object was made of some kind of metal, was approximately 120 feet long, and was most certainly the result of “engineering”. Afanasyev would even manage to capture several pictures of the object, although these pictures have never been made available to the public. He also reported immediately back to mission control what he was seeing. The transcript of that conversation has also never been aired publicly.



***Sketch of the object witnessed by the Soviet cosmonaut***

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According to the one-time Soviet cosmonaut, upon returning to Earth following his mission, he was told by his superiors that he was not to speak of the encounter publicly. However, following the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, Afanasyev finally decided to speak of the incident. He would state that the sightings remained classified simply because “we have yet to identify” the strange craft.

There were other sightings, though, that while taking place very much on Earth, unfolded in various other places around the planet. It is to those encounters that we turn our attention to next.

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# Cigar-Shaped Object “Following” Interstate 84 In Connecticut

A little over a year before Ceconni’s encounter, at around midnight on the 1<sup>st</sup> March on the other side of the Atlantic in Middlebury, Connecticut, an incident unfolded featuring an almost identical cigar-shaped object. The incident was originally reported to the *National UFO Reporting Center* (NUFORC) over a decade later upon the arrival of the Internet.

According to the report, the witness was driving home after finishing their shift at work, heading toward Waterbury along Interstate 84. However, as they approached Middlebury, they noticed a “long, cigar-shaped object” hovering over the trees to the left of the road. He would estimate it was around 15 feet away from him.

Due to the clear, crisp night that was lit brilliantly by the moon, the witness could see the object clearly, as its dark grey exterior stood out against the sky. He would estimate it was around 100 feet long and approximately 15 feet high, and each end was rounded giving it a distinct cigar shape. He could see no wings and no visible means of propulsion. He also noted how there were “three equally spaced, large portholes”, through which he could see inside the object, although he could only actually see blue lights.

It appeared to be moving in the same direction as he, almost “flying parallel” to his vehicle. At this point, the witness rolled their window down in order to see if they could hear the object. However, the only sound he could hear was his own vehicle. At this stage in his report, the witness noted that even though the road he was driving on was one of the busiest in the region, his was seemingly the only vehicle on it during the sighting. This is potentially an interesting detail as other UFO sightings feature similar realizations from the witness, almost as if the sighting was a targeted event.

As he continued down the road – traveling between 80 and 90 miles per hour – the object began to nudge ahead in front of him. As it did so, the witness noticed another porthole, this one on the back of the strange craft. This time, instead of a blue glow, the witness observed a green light shining out of the single porthole “in a cone shape” which stretched out behind it like a searchlight. He would further note that these lights appeared “soft” and “not difficult to look at”.

The craft appeared to be following the course of the highway, with the witness noting how it turned sharply as the road did, although the way it did so was “smooth” and perhaps not as one might expect such a rigid object to move.

It would eventually head off into the distance, remaining in sight for two to three minutes. The witness contemplated informing the police of the incident but then decided against making an official report. He did tell his wife and his family but otherwise kept the incident to himself until he finally decided to report it online.

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# The Intriguing Encounter Of General Hernan Gabrielli Rojas

Another encounter from 1978 (from the files of UFO investigator and researcher Scott Corrales) featuring a cigar-shaped object is particularly intriguing, not least as it involves a retired general of the Chilean armed forces, General Hernan Gabrielli Rojas.

Rojas claimed in an interview in the early 2000s that he had “squared off against a gigantic UFO” during a training flight in the north of the country. At the time of the mission, Rojas was a captain and was leading two F-5 fighter jets on the exercise. During the flight, a huge line appeared on the planes’ radar screens. Rojas would explain how usually, a cruiser would be around 1 cm in length on the screen, but this line went from one side to the other. He would later state the strange craft was approximately the same size as 10 to 15 aircraft carriers.

Assuming their radars were malfunctioning (despite how unlikely it would be that both would malfunction at the same time), Rojas radioed ground control at Antofagasta and asked them to check their radar. They too had the huge object on their screens. Only a moment later, the pilots looked out to the skies and noticed a “deformed, cigar-shaped object”, approximately 15 to 20 miles ahead of them which appeared to be “swathed in smoke”.

Although they approached the object, it somehow remained the same distance from the jets. It would eventually disappear with great speed toward Easter Island. A moment later, the line disappeared from the radar screens.

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## Abducted By A Cigar-Shaped Object In Brazil

Around two years earlier, on the evening of 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1976 in Sao Paulo, Brazil, an incident involving a cigar-shaped object and an apparent alien entity occurred, one that resulted in a possible alien abduction. The incident comes to us from an article in *Apex* by Mario Martins Ribeiro.

According to the report, 18-year-old Paulo Coutinho had failed to return home from a night class on the night in question. When one of his friends discovered his schoolbooks and notepads on a street and returned them to the missing teenager’s parents the following morning, they began to fear the worst for their son and ultimately reported him missing to the police. Despite them carrying out searches and inquiries for most of the day, by evening, there was still no sign of the missing teenager.

Then, things took a decidedly strange turn. The missing boy’s father, Jose Alves, claimed to have had a sudden feeling of certainty that his son was safe and would return shortly. Furthermore, he also had a sudden feeling that clues to his son’s whereabouts could be found in their backyard.

Before he could test this feeling, though, a sudden sound of a man groaning in confusion or pain was heard coming from the yard. When the family opened the gate to enter the garden, they discovered Paulo on the back steps in an obviously confused state.

He was quickly taken to a nearby hospital where he was assessed and stabilized, making a recovery to his usual self a short time later. Remarkably, several ballpoint pens that Paulo was carrying in his pockets at the time were found to have strong signs of radiation.

Paulo would eventually state that throughout the previous day he had heard a strange whistling noise, no matter where he went. Later that evening, after walking his girlfriend home after his night class at around 11:30 pm, he noticed a strange light moving in the skies overhead. By the time he realized the light was approaching him, he had become paralyzed to the spot and was unable to move. It would eventually come to a stop around 25 feet from where he stood. A moment later, a strange figure emerged.

He noted how the strange creature was “very short” with a particularly big head with large eyes. He also recalled that it had “pointed ears” and a pig-like upturned nose. It wore a tight one-piece blue bodysuit that appeared to have an emblem of some kind on the chest.

The next thing he knew he was floating in the air seemingly toward a huge, red, cigar-shaped object, which appeared to be more of a metallic grey color the closer he got to it. He would estimate the object was around 650 feet in length. Before he could take in any more detail, he had entered the craft through an apparent door and immediately found himself laying in a “dark gray circular area” with three of the figures stood over him. When he attempted to get to his knees, the paralysis once more took over his body.

He claimed they informed him, telepathically, that he would come to no harm. The three beings then turned and headed toward a wall. Bizarrely, still on his knees, he began following them, seemingly against his own will. As they approached the wall it disappeared allowing them to enter a much larger room. Once inside several examinations and procedures were performed. The next thing he realized, he was lying on the ground outside and could his parents’ voices.

Interestingly, a neighbor of the family claimed that around 7:30 pm the previous evening, she had witnessed a “strange luminous object” hovering over the Coutinho house while she was standing on her back porch. After several moments, the object calmly moved off into the distance.

Perhaps also of interest are Paulo’s claims that he had a “numb and prickling” sensation through his body when he awoke on the steps of the yard. Many abductees – particularly those who have experienced temporary paralysis as Paulo did – report very similar feelings.

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## Cigar-Shaped Object Over Yuba City

The following month in Yuba City, California another cigar-shaped UFO incident <sup>[3]</sup> was reported. According to the report, at around 11 pm on 12<sup>th</sup> July, a courting couple returned home after an evening out when they noticed a “dark object moving slowly back and forth” in the sky. The

witness estimated it was at an altitude that was just above tree level and appeared to be “a few blocks” from their location. Despite this closeness, though, the witness immediately noticed that the cigar-shaped craft appeared to be completely silent.

The witness told his girlfriend to remain where she was while he dashed inside to obtain his binoculars if only to rule out that it wasn't a plane or a helicopter. When he got it into view, he could clearly see there were “windows down the side” very similar to the appearance of windows on a commercial airliner. However, that is where the similarity to an airplane ended, with the object having no wings or apparent means of propulsion. Every now and then a strange searchlight-like light would illuminate the trees below.

After several moments, the object began to turn and began upwards. The witness claimed it was this moment when he “became convinced that it was really from another world”, describing how the object “zoomed up (into the sky) to the size of a star”. As the witness kept watching the now faraway object through the binoculars, he could see how it flashed a red and blue light. He would explain that had he not had the binoculars, he wouldn't have been able to follow it, and that anyone viewing it with the naked eye would assume it was merely a star or a planet.

The witness would return outside several times over the next few hours in case the object was back but it didn't return. Following the encounter, though, the witness would spend considerably more time studying the skies than he had previously and would witness several strange lights over the years. Whether these were other “otherworldly” vehicles is perhaps open to debate.

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## Cigar-Shaped “Mothership” Over Germany

Around nine months later, on the evening of 7<sup>th</sup> March 1977, a 16-year-old boy witnessed a cigar-shaped object over Jemgum, a small village in Germany close to the border with the Netherlands. The incident is from the files of MUFON investigator, Illobrand von Ludwiger.

The teenager was stood in front of his parent's house on the day in question when he noticed a “bright spot in the sky”. He watched it for several moments before seeing “a small square” emerge from the bright spot. This small square then “glided” toward the ground.

At this point, the witness ran inside the house to grab his binoculars. When he viewed the descending object, he noticed that a “thin, bluish-white ray of light” connected it to the larger object from which it had come. He then turned his attention back to the larger object, which was clearly “cigar-shaped and surrounded by an orange-colored halo”. The witness elaborated that the exterior appeared to be reflective and that a dark “wide-band” went along the middle of the side of the object. In this band, several lights – yellow, green, red, and blue – flashed quickly.

With the teenager was his 8-year-old brother, who suddenly called out to the older boy having noticed another similar object in the south region of the sky. This object was moving at a considerable pace directly for the cigar-shaped craft. Then, it suddenly stopped and hovered.

At this point, the younger boy ran inside to shout his mother (Mrs. S) who ultimately also witnessed the strange objects when she followed her son out to the yard. After several moments, she would call her husband (Dr. S), who also came outside. With him, he had his binoculars, and it wasn't long before he too eyed the bizarre vehicles through their magnified glare.

They all witnessed another "ray of light" which was seemingly sending another, smaller object toward the ground (although nearby housing blocked the family's sight of exactly where the object may have landed). A moment later, another much brighter light reached the ground from the large vehicle overhead. The family watched in amazement as several small objects began rising into the air as if riding the light. These activities would continue for around 30 minutes. Then they began to turn in the sky.

Mrs. S would later recall that "everything was shimmering, as if the object itself was glowing", adding it "appeared red-hot and vibrated" and that "colors were shining out of the heat". The objects eventually disappeared from sight.

## Sources

- Marcus Lowth "The Cecconi UFO Incident: Photographic Evidence Of An Extraterrestrial Vehicle?" <https://www.ufoinsight.com/ufos/cover-ups/cecconi-ufo-incident>
- A new photo reopens the "Cecconi case", The first results of our investigations <https://digilander.libero.it/Alien/Misteri/Ufo/CECCONI.htm>
- The UFO Case of Maresciallo Cecconi - June 18, 1979, John Greenwald, The Black Vault <https://www.theblackvault.com/casefiles/the-ufo-case-of-maresciallo-cecconi-june-18-1979>
- Silent cigar-shaped object with row of lights moving slow then unbelievable speed, UFO Evidence <http://www.ufoevidence.org/cases/case330.htm>
- Luminous and silent cigar flew low in a summer night along the freeway Rome-Ostia, National UFO Reporting Center <http://www.nuforc.org/webreports/028/S28648.html>
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# Rendelsham Forest - 1980

- **Date:** 26 December and 28 December 1980
- **Time:** 03:00 GMT (23:00 EDT)
- **Location:** Suffolk, England, United Kingdom

The **Rendlesham Forest incident** is the name given to a series of reported sightings of unexplained lights and the alleged landing of a craft or multiple craft of unknown origin in Rendlesham Forest, Suffolk, England, in late December 1980, just outside RAF Woodbridge, used at the time by the U.S. Air Force. Dozens of USAF personnel were eyewitnesses to various events over a two- or three-day period. It is the most famous UFO event to have happened in Britain, ranking amongst the best-known UFO events worldwide.



Security fencing at the site of the former East Gate of RAF Woodbridge, where the incident began in December, 1980. The original East Gate, circa 1983, is shown on the left (while the USAF was still operating the base) and the current east gate (after the based closed), circa 2014, is on the right.

Along with the Berwyn Mountain UFO incident, it has been compared to the Roswell UFO incident in the United States, and is sometimes referred to as "Britain's Roswell".

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) denied the event posed any threat to national security, and stated that it was therefore never investigated as a security matter. Later evidence indicated that there

was a substantial MoD file on the subject, which led to claims of a cover-up; some interpreted this as part of a larger pattern of information suppression concerning the true nature of unidentified flying objects, by both the United States and British governments.

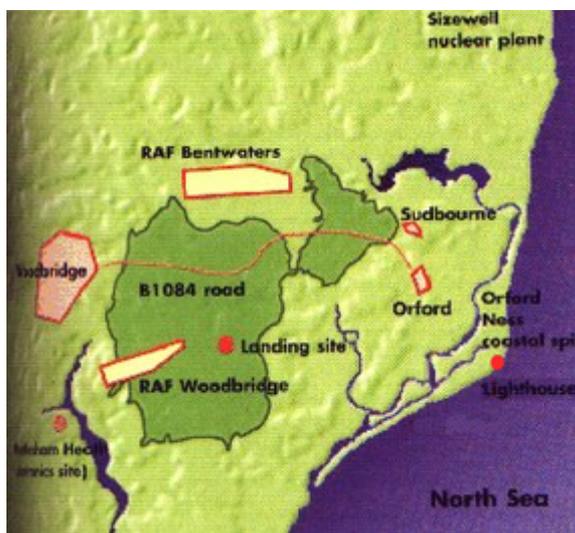
One person to take this view was eyewitness and Deputy Base Commander Colonel Charles Halt. Another was former NATO head and UK Chief of the Defence Staff Lord Peter Hill-Norton, who stated whatever happened at this USAF base was necessarily of national security interest. However, when the file was released in 2001 it turned out to consist mostly of internal correspondence and responses to inquiries from the public. Sceptics note that the lack of any in-depth investigation in the publicly released documents is consistent with the MoD's earlier statement that they never took the case seriously.

Included in the released files is an explanation given by defence minister Lord Trefgarne as to why the MoD did not investigate further.

The sightings have been explained as misinterpretation of a series of nocturnal lights – a fireball, the Orford Ness lighthouse and bright stars.

## Location

Rendlesham Forest is owned by the Forestry Commission and consists of about 5.8 square miles (15 km<sup>2</sup>) of coniferous plantations, interspersed with broadleaved belts, heathland and wetland areas. It is located in the county of Suffolk, about 8 miles (13 km) east of the town of Ipswich.



Map of the local area

The incident occurred in the vicinity of two former military bases - RAF Bentwaters, which is just to the north of the forest, and RAF Woodbridge which extends into the forest from the west and is bounded by the forest on its northern and eastern edges. At the time, both were being used by the United States Air Force and were under the command of wing commander Colonel Gordon E. Williams. The base commander was Colonel Ted Conrad, and his deputy was Lieutenant Colonel Charles I. Halt. Halt's memo to the Ministry of Defence on the incident, and his personal involvement in the second night of the sightings, has given the case credibility.

The main events of the incident, including the supposed landing or landings, took place in the forest, which starts at the east end of the base runway or about 0.3 miles (0.5 km) to the east of the East Gate of RAF Woodbridge, where guards first noticed mysterious lights appearing to descend into the forest. The forest extends east about 1 mile (1.6 km) beyond East Gate, ending at a farmer's field, where additional events allegedly took place.

Orford Ness lighthouse, which skeptics identify as the flashing light seen off to the coast by the airmen, is along the same line of sight but 5 miles (8.0 km) further east of the forest's edge.

All these locations are shown on the above map of the local area.

A modern aerial view of the region can be found [here](#).

Below is an aerial view of the area of the Rendlesham Forest UFO sighting sourced from [Ian Ridpath's excellent website on the Rendelsham Forest incident](#). The orange line shows the route from East Gate into the forest taken by the three witnesses in the early hours of 1980 December 26, shortly after a bright light was seen apparently plunging to Earth over the forest. The three men parked their vehicle in the region of the arrowhead and proceeded on foot to the east. The area outlined in white contained only young trees at the time. The point labelled 'Landing site' on the eastern edge of the forest is where marks on the ground and on the trees were found after daybreak later that day.



## Date

Retired Sgt. John Burroughs (LE) states that the events took place over three successive nights (pm into am); 24–25, 25–26 and 26–27 December 1980. However, one of the key pieces of primary evidence (the "Halt memo", described below) suggests that the first sightings were on the night of the 26th–27th. The memo was written almost two weeks after the event and its author later agreed that he had probably made a mistake in his recollection of the dates. This discrepancy in dates has not only confused subsequent researchers but also led to confusion at the time, for example in the MoD's investigation and analysis of contemporaneous radar records.

Halt also describes seeing the UFO on the morning of the 29th, but it seems that his experience was in the early hours of the 28th.

# Main Events

## 26 December

Around 3 a.m. on 26 December 1980 (reported as the 27th by Halt, see below) strange lights were reported by a security patrol near the East Gate of RAF Woodbridge apparently descending into nearby Rendlesham Forest. Servicemen initially thought it was a downed aircraft but, upon entering the forest to investigate they saw, according to Halt's memo, a strange glowing object, metallic in appearance, with coloured lights. As they approached, it moved through the trees, and

“the animals on a nearby farm went into a frenzy”

The craft left three impressions or depressions in the ground that were visible the next day. One of the servicemen, Sgt. Jim Penniston, later claimed to have encountered a "craft of unknown origin" and to have made detailed notes of its features, touched its "warm" surface, and copied the numerous symbols on its body. The object allegedly flew away after their brief encounter. Penniston also claimed to have seen triangular landing gear on the object. While undergoing regression hypnosis in 1994 Penniston subsequently claimed that the "craft" he encountered had come from our future, and was occupied by time travellers, not extraterrestrials.

Sgt. Penniston's report made shortly after the incident contains no mention of physically encountering an unknown craft, nor of interacting with it. This report and associated sketches are neither signed nor dated, nor are they representative of AF Form 1169, Statement of Witness.

Shortly after 4 a.m. local police were called to the scene but reported that the only lights they could see were those from the Orford Ness lighthouse, some miles away on the coast.

After daybreak on the morning of 26 December, servicemen returned to a small clearing near the eastern edge of the forest and found three small impressions in a triangular pattern, as well as burn marks and broken branches on nearby trees.



The photo above purports to have been the clearing where the UFO allegedly landed; the day after the incident. This is also the location where plaster casts of 3 imprints in the ground were taken.

Three plaster casts were taken by Airman Penniston of the three impressions found in a triangular pattern on the ground, and the photo below is presumably one of the three. The casts have been shown in television documentaries. At 10.30 a.m. the local police were called out again, this time to see the impressions on the ground, which they thought could have been made by an animal.



## 28 December

Several servicemen and Halt returned to the site again in the early hours of 28 December 1980 (reported as the 29th by Halt) with radiation detectors which detected radiation in the depressions

and on the near side of a tree, although the significance of the readings they obtained is disputed.

The deputy base commander Lt Col Charles I. Halt investigated this sighting personally and recorded the events on a micro-cassette recorder (see "The Halt Tape", below). The site investigated by Halt was near the eastern edge of the forest.

It was during this investigation that a flashing light was seen across the field to the east, almost in line with a farmhouse. The Orford Ness lighthouse is visible further to the east in the same line of sight.

Later, starlike lights were seen in the sky to the north and south, the brightest of which seemed to beam down a stream of light from time to time.

There are claims that the incident was videoed by the USAF; but, if so, the resulting tape has not been made public.

## Primary and Secondary Sources

The first public report of the incident was published in the tabloid newspaper News of the World, on 2 October 1983, beneath the sensational headline UFO lands in Suffolk – and that's official. The story was based on an account by a former US airman, using the pseudonym Art Wallace (supposedly to protect himself against retribution from the USAF), although his real name was Larry Warren.

### **The Halt Memo**

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS 81ST COMBAT SUPPORT GROUP (USAF)  
APO NEW YORK 09755



REPLY TO  
ATTN OF.

CD

13 Jan 81

SUBJECT:

Unexplained Lights

TO:

RAF/CC

1. Early in the morning of 27 Dec 80 (approximately 0300L), two USAF security police patrolmen saw unusual lights outside the back gate at RAF Woodbridge. Thinking an aircraft might have crashed or been forced down, they called for permission to go outside the gate to investigate. The on-duty flight chief responded and allowed three patrolmen to proceed on foot. The individuals reported seeing a strange glowing object in the forest. The object was described as being metallic in appearance and triangular in shape, approximately two to three meters across the base and approximately two meters high. It illuminated the entire forest with a white light. The object itself had a pulsing red light on top and a bank(s) of blue lights underneath. The object was hovering or on legs. As the patrolmen approached the object, it maneuvered through the trees and disappeared. At this time the animals on a nearby farm went into a frenzy. The object was briefly sighted approximately an hour later near the back gate.

2. The next day, three depressions 1 1/2" deep and 7" in diameter were found where the object had been sighted on the ground. The following night (29 Dec 80) the area was checked for radiation. Beta/gamma readings of 0.1 milliroentgens were recorded with peak readings in the three depressions and near the center of the triangle formed by the depressions. A nearby tree had moderate (.05-.07) readings on the side of the tree toward the depressions.

3. Later in the night a red sun-like light was seen through the trees. It moved about and pulsed. At one point it appeared to throw off glowing particles and then broke into five separate white objects and then disappeared. Immediately thereafter, three star-like objects were noticed in the sky, two objects to the north and one to the south, all of which were about 10° off the horizon. The objects moved rapidly in sharp angular movements and displayed red, green and blue lights. The objects to the north appeared to be elliptical through an 8-12 power lens. They then turned to full circles. The objects to the north remained in the sky for an hour or more. The object to the south was visible for two or three hours and beamed down a stream of light from time to time. Numerous individuals, including the undersigned, witnessed the activities in paragraphs 2 and 3.

CHARLES I. HALT, Lt Col, USAF  
Deputy Base Commander

The first piece of primary evidence to be made available to the public was a memorandum written by the deputy base commander, Lt. Col. Charles I. Halt, to the Ministry of Defence (MoD). Known as the "Halt memo", this was made available publicly in the United States under the US Freedom of Information Act in 1983. The memorandum, was dated "13 Jan 1981" and headed "Unexplained Lights". The two-week delay between the incident and the report might account for errors in dates and times given. The memo was not classified in any way. Dr David Clarke has investigated the background to this memo and the reaction to it at the Ministry of Defence. His interviews with the personnel involved confirmed the cursory nature of the investigation made by the MoD, and failed to find any evidence for any other reports on the incident made by the USAF or UK apart from the Halt memo.

## Statements from Eyewitnesses on 26 December

The Scottish researcher James Easton succeeded in obtaining the original witness statements made for Col. Halt by Fred A. Buran, 81st Security Police Squadron, Airman First Class John Burroughs, 81st LE, Airman Edward N. Cabansag, 81st Security Police Squadron, Master-Sergeant J. D. Chandler, 81st Security Police Squadron and Staff-Sergeant Jim Penniston, 81st Security Police Squadron. These documents are now in the public domain and scans of them are available on [Ian Ridpath's website](#).

These documents describe the sightings of strange lights. Penniston, for instance, states that

“ directly to the east [of East Gate] about 11/2 miles [2.4km] in a large wooded area...a large yellow glowing light was emitting above the trees. In the centre of the lighted area directly in the centre ground level, there was a red light blinking on and off 5 to 10 sec intervals. And a blue light that was being for the most part steady.”

Burroughs, Penniston and Cabansag drove into the forest in search of the source of the lights. They heard strange noises, too. Burroughs reported a noise "like a woman was screaming" and also that "you could hear the farm animals making a lot of noises". Halt heard the same noises two nights later.

In a CNN interview in January 2008 he said: "The livestock around the barn seemed to be going crazy". Such noise could also have been made by Muntjac deer in the forest, which are known for their loud, shrill bark when alarmed.

Cabansag said:

We figured the lights were coming from past the forest since nothing was visible when we passed through the woody forest. We would see a glowing near the beacon light, but as we got closer we found it to be a lit-up farmhouse. We got to a vantage point where we could determine that what we were chasing was only a beacon light off in the distance.”

Burroughs' statement also states that

“ We could see a beacon going around so we went towards it. We followed it for about two miles [3 km] before we could [see] it was coming from a lighthouse.”

Penniston's statement is the only one that positively identifies a mechanical object as the source of the lights. He states that he was within 160 feet (50 m) of the object and

“ it was definitely mechanical in nature”.

Penniston has subsequently claimed that, contrary to his statement at the time, he actually encountered a landed craft in the forest which he circled, touched and made notes of for 45 minutes, although there is no corroborating evidence of this from other witnesses. Penniston has shown on television a notebook in which he claims to have made real-time notes and sketches of the object. The notebook is headed with the date 27 December and the time 12:20 (00:20 GMT), which does not accord with the date and time given by the other witnesses for the incident, although the date does accord with Halt's memo. Penniston claims that he saw the object at a different landing site from the one investigated by Halt, much closer to RAF Woodbridge. This is inconsistent with his initial assessment that the light lay a mile and a half from East Gate. The witnesses were unnerved by their experience and believed that they had witnessed something, as Buran expresses it, "out of the realm of explanation".

## The Halt Tape

Also, in 1984, a copy of what became known as the "Halt Tape" fell into the hands of researchers. Unfortunately, because the tape had been dubbed on an old machine, much of its background conversations could not be discerned. The US Sci Fi Channel acquired the original recording, which documents Halt and his patrol investigating a UFO sighting in Rendlesham Forest in December

1980. This tape not only reveals much more of the background conversations but features names that could not be heard on the poor-quality 1984 dub. The tape has also been transcribed by researcher Ian Ridpath, who includes a link to an audio download.

The Halt Tape Audio Recording. Source: Ian Ridpath

**[A transcription of the Halt Tape can be found here.](#)**

## The Halt Affidavit

In June 2010, retired Colonel Charles Halt signed a notarized affidavit, in which he again summarized what had happened, then stated he believed the event to be extraterrestrial and it had been covered up by both the UK and US:

“ I believe the objects that I saw at close quarter were extraterrestrial in origin and that the security services of both the United Kingdom and the United States have attempted—both then and now—to subvert the significance of what occurred at Rendlesham Forest and RAF Bentwaters by the use of well-practiced methods of disinformation.”

Halt also dismissed claims that he and his men had confused a UFO with a lighthouse beam:

“ While in Rendlesham Forest, our security team observed a light that looked like a large eye, red in colour, moving through the trees. After a few minutes this object began dripping something that looked like molten metal. A short while later it broke into several smaller, white-coloured objects which flew away in all directions. Claims by skeptics that this was merely a sweeping beam from a distant lighthouse are unfounded; we could see the unknown light and the lighthouse simultaneously. The

latter was 35 to 40-degrees off where all of this was happening."

Contradictions between this affidavit and the facts as recorded at the time in Halt's memo and tape recording have been pointed out.

In 2010, base commander Colonel Ted Conrad provided a statement about the incident to Dr David Clarke of Sheffield Hallam University, UFO adviser to the UK National Archives. Conrad stated that "We saw nothing that resembled Lieutenant Colonel Halt's descriptions either in the sky or on the ground" and that "We had people in position to validate Halt's narrative, but none of them could." In an interview, Conrad, criticised Halt for the claims in his affidavit, saying "he should be ashamed and embarrassed by his allegation that his country and Britain both conspired to deceive their citizens over this issue. He knows better." Conrad also disputed the testimony of Sergeant Jim Penniston, who claimed to have touched an alien spacecraft; he said that he interviewed Penniston at the time and he had not mentioned any such occurrence. Conrad also suggested that the entire incident might have been a hoax.

Halt's partial response to this was: "Ted Conrad is either having memory problems, has his head in the sand or continuing the cover up. Even his son has admitted to family talk substantiating the incident... Through the years Conrad has made conflicting statements about the events. First he stated he never went out to look in the sky. Then stated he never saw anything. Apparently he doesn't remember talking to me on his radio [about seeing a UFO sending down beams of light onto the base]... Remind Conrad of his article in the OMNI Magazine dated March 1983... In the article he describes the first incident in detail and concludes 'those lads saw something, but I don't know what it was'. Now he's smearing those involved. It's pretty clear there was a very intense confrontation with something in the forest. Does Conrad want to talk about how the airmen were then subjected to mind control efforts using drugs and hypnosis by British and American authorities? Yes, Burroughs and Penniston have issues that relate to the events..."

The 1983 OMNI article cited by Halt has the following account attributed to Conrad: "Colonel Ted Conrad the base commander... recalls five Air Force policemen spotted lights from what they thought was a small plane descending into the forest. Two of the men tracked the object on foot and came upon a large tripod-mounted craft. It had no windows but was studded with brilliant red and blue lights. Each time the men came within 50 yards of the ship, Conrad relates, it levitated six feet in the air and backed away. They followed it for almost an hour through the woods and across a field until it took off at 'phenomenal speed.' Acting on the reports made by his men, Colonel Conrad began a brief investigation of the incident in the morning. He went into the forest and located a triangular pattern ostensibly made by the tripod legs. ...he did interview two of the eyewitnesses and concludes,

“Those lads saw something, but I don't know what it was'."

# Suffolk Police log

Suffolk Constabulary have a record, dated 26 December 1980, of a report from the law Enforcement Desk of RAF Woodbridge, stating that

“ We have a sighting of some unusual lights in the sky, we have sent some unarmed troops to investigate, we are terming it as a U.F.O. at present”.

The police investigated this report and the result is recorded as follows:

“ Air Traffic Control West Drayton checked. No knowledge of aircraft. Reports received of aerial phenomena over Southern England during the night. Only lights visible this area was from Orford lighthouse. Search made of area - negative.”

Skeptic Ian Ridpath has speculated the reported "aerial phenomena" refers to the re-entry of the Soviet Cosmos 749 satellite's final stage rocket, which was widely seen over Southern England shortly after 9 p.m. on the evening of 25 December.

A letter in the police file notes that one of the PCs returned to the site in daylight in case he had missed something. "There was nothing to be seen and he remains unconvinced that the occurrence was genuine. The immediate area was swept by powerful light beams from a landing beacon at RAF Bentwaters and the Orfordness lighthouse. I know from personal experience that at night, in certain weather and cloud conditions, these beams were very pronounced and certainly caused strange visual effects." A scan of the report is available at Suffolk Constabulary's website.

Other military installation involvement Some researchers have claimed that personnel from Porton Down visited Rendlesham in 1980 after the Rendlesham Forest incident.

No evidence has been presented and there seems to be confusion with other alleged UFO incidents.

Admiral Lord Hill-Norton, the former Chief of the UK Defence Staff, argued that an incident like this at a nuclear weapons base was necessarily of national security interest. As a member of the House of Lords, Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they are aware of any involvement by Special Branch in the investigation of the 1980 Rendlesham Forest incident [HL303]".

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean gave the reply that

“ Special Branch officers may have been aware of the incident but would not have shown any interest unless there was evidence of a potential threat to national security. No such interest appears to have been shown.”

Hill-Norton commented,

“ Either large numbers of people were hallucinating, and for an American Air Force nuclear base this is extremely dangerous, or what they say happened did happen, and in either of those circumstances there can only be one answer, and that is that it was of extreme defence interest.”

In 2007, the British Government released its file on the incident to researchers following a request from Dr David Clarke under the Code of Practice for Access to Government Documents, a precursor to the Freedom of Information Act.

The Ministry of Defence has since made these documents available online.

The United States continues to remain silent despite the SciFi Channel-sponsored investigation entitled "UFO Invasion at Rendlesham", the History Channel's "UFO Files - Britain's Roswell" and Coalition for Freedom of Information inquiries.

## **Skepticism**

### **Orford Ness Lighthouse**



The Orford Ness lighthouse as seen from the south-west.

Jim Penniston and John Burroughs went to investigate the craft together. In an interview with Larry King on 9 November 2007, Jim Penniston claimed that he did a 45 minutes full investigation of the craft on the ground, touched the craft and took photos of the craft.

John Burroughs apparently contradicts this in a separate interview in Robert Stack's *Unsolved Mysteries*. He states that after suddenly encountering the craft on the ground, "We all hit the ground, and it went up into the trees". The interviews with Jim Penniston and John Burroughs have subsequently been made available on Youtube.

Science writer Ian Ridpath investigated the incident in 1983, initially for BBC TV's *Breakfast Time* news programme, and on 5 January 1985 wrote an article for the *Guardian* which did much to discredit the accounts of the UFO sightings at Rendlesham.

Ridpath asked local forester Vince Thurkettle about the flashing light, and he indicated that it originated from the lighthouse at Orford Ness, which as seen from the forest edge appears to hover slightly above the ground and would appear to move as the witnesses moved between the trees. At that time, the Orford Ness lighthouse was the second-brightest in Britain with an intensity of 5 million candelas.

In the Halt tape (mentioned above), one can hear an unidentified airman call out "There it is again ... there it is" with an interval of 5 seconds, the same frequency at which the Orford Ness lighthouse flashes.

Had a UFO been present, the airmen should have reported a second source of light (the lighthouse) in the same line of sight. Video footage of the lighthouse as seen from Colonel Halt's vantage point at the edge of the forest shows it flashing at this rate.

Thurkettle saw the alleged "landing marks", as did the local police, and believed them simply to be old "rabbit diggings" covered with pine needles.

USAF photographs of the marks discovered by researcher Georgina Bruni were sent to the MoD by Lord Hill-Norton in 2001 and released under the Freedom of Information Act in 2007.

Moreover, the supposed burn marks in the trees were actually axe cuts made by foresters that indicated the trees were ready to be felled. To give further pause to accepting the alleged UFO

sighting, a meteor "almost as bright as the full Moon" was spotted over Southern England at exactly the time of the initial reports of a bright object "landing" in the forest, according to Dr John Mason, who collects reports of meteor sightings for the British Astronomical Association. "Nothing came down in Rendlesham Forest," concludes Ridpath.

Crucial amongst the evidence is the interpretation of the levels of radiation in the area (clearly heard on the "Halt tape"). Experts at the UK's National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) have pointed out that the equipment used for this measurement was not intended to measure background radiation and therefore the readings at the low end of the measurement scale are meaningless.

Steuart Campbell proposes an alternative explanation. He agrees with the standard explanation that the incident began with the sighting of a fireball (bolide) which was interpreted by guards at the base as an aircraft falling in flames in the nearby forest. In fact it would have been hundreds of miles away over the North Sea. Campbell argues that the object subsequently seen by Halt and his men on their nocturnal expedition was the lightvessel Shipwash and that the supposed "spacecraft" were actually bright planets, such as Venus. Campbell is critical of the USAF's abilities with their equipment.

Another theory is that the incident was a hoax. The BBC reported that a former US security policeman, Kevin Conde, claimed responsibility for creating strange lights in the forest by driving around in a police vehicle whose lights he had modified.

Conde has since withdrawn the claim that he was responsible for the incident. "It is my impression that I pulled my stunt during an exercise. We would not have had an exercise during the Christmas holiday [when the UFO sightings occurred]. That is a strong indication that my stunt is not the source of this specific incident".

It remains possible that the colored lights seen in the forest on the first night of the incident were due to a hoax by a perpetrator who has never come forward. Other explanations for the incident have included a downed Soviet spy satellite.

## **Researchers and Commentators**

Some of the first people to examine the event in detail were the British Ufologist Jenny Randles in her book "Sky Crash", co-authored with local researchers, Brenda Butler and Dot Street, who were the first investigators to interview any witnesses and to visit both the site and RAF station and Nick Redfern in his books "Cosmic Crashes" and "A Covert Agenda". Georgina Bruni has researched the subject and in her book "You Can't Tell the People" publishes a photograph of the supposed landing site taken on the morning after the first sighting.

The late Lord Hill-Norton, (Admiral of the Fleet and former Chief of the Defence Staff of the UK) also believed that a UFO landed at Rendlesham and repeatedly questioned the UK Government on the issue.

Larry Warren who was the source of the original News of the World article has written extensively on the subject and is a firm believer in an extraterrestrial explanation. Warren was certainly a USAF

airman at RAF Woodbridge, but his own claims that he was a witness to the incident are disputed by others, notably by Col. Halt. Bruni and Warren do not agree on the details and have clashed publicly over the supposed inaccuracies of their respective accounts.

Prominent amongst the sceptics is Ian Ridpath (mentioned above). Much of his research is available on his website, which also includes much of the raw evidence, including the original eyewitness statements.

Jenny Randles, one of those who originally brought the case to prominence, wrote an extensive article in her book with David Clarke and Andy Roberts, (The UFOs That Never Were) entitled "Rendle Shame Forest" where she came to the conclusion that "While some puzzles remain, we can probably say that no unearthly craft were seen in Rendlesham Forest. We can also argue with confidence that the main focus of the events was a series of misperceptions of everyday things encountered in less than everyday circumstances."

One of the most prominent believers in the extraterrestrial origin of the Rendlesham UFOs is Nick Pope who worked for the MoD, researching and investigating UFO phenomena between 1991 and 1994. He discussed the Rendlesham Forest incident in his various books and in several articles: "Selected Documents", which relates to the MoD documents on the Rendlesham Forest incident, "Rendlesham - The Unresolved Mystery", "The Rendlesham Files Reviewed" (a detailed commentary and analysis of the MoD documents) and "Rendlesham Forest UFO Incident".

He has gone on record as saying that "the Rendlesham Forest incident is bigger than Roswell" (quoted on Sci Fi Channel - see TV documentaries below).

Lieutenant Colonel (later Colonel) Charles I Halt, the former Deputy Base Commander of USAF Bentwaters and Woodbridge, who was a major witness to these events, is also a firm believer and contributor to books and documentaries. As stated in his recent affidavit above, Halt believes he witnessed an extraterrestrial event that was then covered up. Halt was also a speaker at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. on 27 September 2010, one of half a dozen former US Air Force officers testifying on the subject of "U.S. Nuclear Weapons Have Been Compromised by Unidentified Aerial Objects."

## **Rendlesham Forest Today**



Today, the forest looks quite different: the Great Storm of 1987 (winds equivalent to a category 3 hurricane) caused extensive destruction of trees, and the Forestry Commission undertook a massive replanting programme in its aftermath. Some of the locations associated with the supposed incident are still identifiable and the Forestry Commission have marked a trail (the UFO Trail) for walkers, which includes the principal locations such as the small clearing where the object allegedly landed.

At the start of the UFO trail, there is a large triangular shaped metal information board. It features a map of the forest, clearly marking the UFO trail and gives a basic account of what happened in 1980, although with an erroneous date for the initial sighting: "In December 1980 several sightings of UFOs were reported in Rendlesham Forest. Many think these mysterious events are the most significant UFO incident to have occurred in the UK. "During the evening of 26 December a resident of Sudbourne, a village approximately 6 miles (10 km) to the north east of Rendlesham Forest, reported a mysterious shape (like an upturned mushroom) in the sky above his garden. Later that night two USAF patrolmen at the East Gate of RAF Woodbridge spotted unusual lights in the forest, and were given permission to investigate. What they reported was very strange. "This was the time of the 'Cold War' and because of the sensitive military situation at the time, the incident was officially reported to the Military Authorities by the Deputy Base Commander Lt. Colonel Charles Halt, USAF. "There is, of course, no tangible evidence of a UFO on the ground – no debris was found apart from some broken tree top branches. We can, however, piece together, from transcripts and recordings which were taken at the time, an intriguing picture."

## Official Government Sources

MoD Documents covering the UFO incident at Rendlesham Forest in 1980 were first released in May 2001 to Dr David Clarke of Sheffield Hallam University who had requested them under the Code of Practice for Access to Government Information (which preceded the UK's Freedom of Information Act). Dr Clarke discusses them on his website[64] In 2008 the files were transferred

from MoD to The National Archives (TNA) and removed from the MoD website.

As of August 2009, all documents relating to the incident are available on the National Archives UFO section under reference DEFE 24/1948.

These documents include the request above, along with details of the Ombudsman judgment which followed. For a few months, access to this file and other files released on the same date were free to view and download. As of January 2011, these documents are available for a fee of €3.50.

On 2 March 2011 it was revealed that several MoD files relating to the incident had been disposed of as part of a policy to destroy files of no historical interest. However, their contents were mostly duplicates of the Rendlesham files released in August 2010.

## TV Documentaries

Lifetime Television's Unsolved Mysteries: "Bentwaters UFO", 18 September 1991 (US)

London Weekend Television's Strange But True?, 9 December 1994 (UK)

BBC3's Britain's Closest Encounter, 15 March 2003 (UK)

SciFi Channel's UFO Invasion at Rendlesham, 12 December 2003 (US), 1 December 2005 (UK)

British UFO Files, 2004 (Five (TV), UK)

National Geographic Channel's Naked Science: "Close Encounters", 17 December 2005 (US)

History Channel's UFO Files: "Britain's Roswell", 17 December 2005 (US), 22 January 2006 (UK)

History Channel's UFO Hunters, 27 February 2008

History Channel's I know What I Saw (sequel to Out of the Blue), December 2009

History Channel's Ancient Aliens season 2 episode 10, "Alien Contacts", 30 December 2010

Alien Mysteries Rendlesham Forest, season 1, episode 4, numerous channels and dates in 2013

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# The Phoenix Lights - 1997

## Case: The Phoenix Lights

Phoenix Arizona - March 13, 1997

The **Phoenix Lights** (sometimes called the "**Lights Over Phoenix**") were a series of widely sighted unidentified flying objects observed in the skies over the southwestern states of Arizona and Nevada on March 13, 1997.

Lights of varying descriptions were seen by thousands of people between 7:30 pm and 10:30 pm MST, in a space of about 300 miles (480 km), from the Nevada line, through Phoenix, to the edge of Tucson. Some witnesses described seeing what appeared to be a huge carpenter's square-shaped UFO containing five spherical lights.

There were two distinct events involved in the incident: a triangular formation of lights seen to pass over the state, and a series of stationary lights seen in the Phoenix area.

The first incident is widely believed to have been an actual unidentified flying object. The second event is widely believed to have been a "gaslight" maneuver by the government to confuse witnesses and lay the groundwork for plausible deniability of the initial event.

According to the Air Force, both sightings were allegedly due to aircraft participating in Operation Snowbird, a pilot training program of the Air National Guard based in Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson, Arizona. The first group of lights were later allegedly identified as a formation of A-10 Warthog aircraft flying over Phoenix while returning to Davis-Monthan. The second group of lights were identified as flares dropped by another flight of A-10 aircraft that were on training exercises at the Barry Goldwater Range in southwest Arizona. This second group was conveniently sent out from the air force base hours AFTER the initial sighting. It is widely believed this was an effort by the USAF to confuse and convince the public that the whole night was nothing more than military exercises.

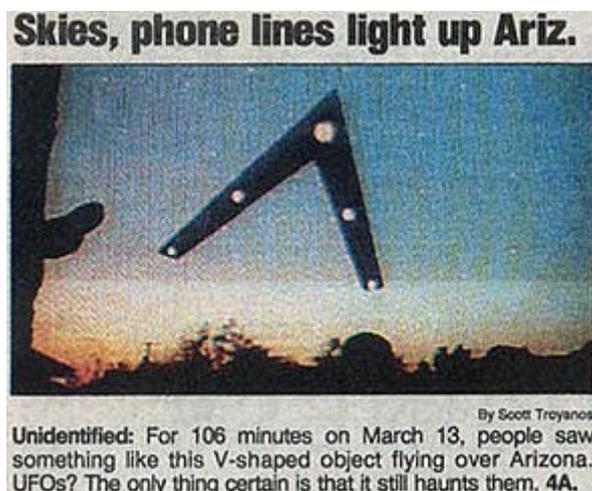
Fife Symington, governor of Arizona at the time, years later recounted witnessing the incident, describing it as "otherworldly."

Reports of similar lights arose in 2007 and 2008, and were attributed to military flares dropped by fighter aircraft at Luke Air Force Base, and flares attached to helium balloons released by a civilian, respectively.

Raw video of the object caught on tape the evening of March 13, 1997

# 1997 reports

On March 13, 1997, at 7:55 pm MST, a witness in Henderson, Nevada, reported seeing a large, V-shaped object traveling southeast. At 8:15 pm, an unidentified former police officer in Paulden, Arizona, reported seeing a cluster of reddish-orange lights disappear over the southern horizon. Shortly afterwards, there were reports of lights seen over the Prescott Valley, Arizona. Tim Ley and his wife Bobbi, his son Hal and his grandson Damien Turnidge first saw the lights when they were about 65 miles (105 km) away from them. At first, the lights appeared to them as five separate and distinct lights in an arc shape, as if they were on top of a balloon, but they soon realized that the lights appeared to be moving towards them. Over the next ten or so minutes, the lights appeared to come closer, the distance between the lights increased, and they took on the shape of an upside-down V. Eventually, when the lights appeared to be a couple of miles away, the family said they could make out a shape that looked like a 60-degree carpenter's square, with the five lights set into it, with one at the front and two on each side.



Soon, the object with the embedded lights appeared to be moving toward them, about 100 to 150 feet (30 to 46 m) above them, traveling so slowly that it gave the appearance of a silent hovering object, which seemed to pass over their heads and went through a V opening in the peaks of the mountain range towards Piestewa Peak Mountain and toward the direction of Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport. Between 8:30 and 8:45 pm, witnesses in Glendale, a suburb northwest of Phoenix, saw the light formation pass overhead at an altitude high enough to become obscured by the thin clouds. Amateur astronomer Mitch Stanley in Scottsdale, Arizona, also observed the high altitude lights "flying in formation" through a telescope. According to Stanley, they were quite clearly individual airplanes.

Approximately 10:00 pm that same evening, a large number of people in the Phoenix area reported seeing "a row of brilliant lights hovering in the sky, or slowly falling". A number of photographs and videos were taken, prompting author Robert Sheaffer to describe it as "perhaps the most widely witnessed UFO event in history".

Frances Barwood, who was the former Phoenix city councilwoman in 1997 and who launched an investigation into the event, said that out of the more than **700 witnesses** she

interviewed, "The government never interviewed even one."

## Governor's response

Shortly after the 1997 incident, Arizona Governor Fife Symington III held a press conference, joking that "they found who was responsible" and revealing an aide dressed in an alien costume.

## Update

**Monday, March 19, 2007**

### Former Arizona Governor says he saw a UFO during the 1997 Phoenix Lights

In a reversal of his original public statement in 1997, former Governor Fife Symington III said that he had witnessed one of the "craft of unknown origin" during the 1997 Phoenix Lights event, but noted that he didn't go public with the information. In an interview with the Daily Courier in Prescott, Fife said:

“ It was enormous and inexplicable. Who knows where it came from? A lot of people saw it, and I saw it too. It was dramatic. And it couldn't have been flares because it was too symmetrical. It had a geometric outline, a constant shape.

Fife also noted that he did request information from the commander of Luke Air Force Base, the general of the National Guard, and the head of the Department of Public Safety. But none of the officials he contacted had an answer for what had happened, and were also "perplexed."

Fife Symington in 2007 on CNN publicly admitting he also saw "the Phoenix Lights"



# The Pentagon UFOs - 2004, 2014, 2015, 2019, 2022

The **Pentagon UFO videos** are selected visual recordings of cockpit instrumentation displays from United States Navy fighter jets based aboard aircraft carriers *USS Nimitz* and *USS Theodore Roosevelt* in 2004, 2014 and 2015, with additional footage taken by other Navy personnel in 2019. The four videos, widely characterized as officially documenting UFOs, have received extensive coverage in the media since 2017. The Pentagon later addressed and officially released the first three videos of unidentified aerial phenomena (UAP) in 2020, and confirmed the provenance of the leaked 2019 videos in two statements made in 2020.

Below, are the original three videos that were leaked and later confirmed by the Pentagon.

## US Navy "Go Fast" Video

## US Navy "Gimbal" Video

## US Navy "FLIR1" Video

## The Events Leading up to the Pentagon UFO Video Disclosure

### National Press Club - 2001

On May 9, 2001, Steven M. Greer took the lectern at the National Press Club, in Washington, D.C., in pursuit of the truth about unidentified flying objects. Greer, an emergency-room physician in Virginia and an outspoken ufologist, believed that the government had long withheld from the American people its familiarity with alien visitations. He had founded the Disclosure Project in 1993

in an attempt to penetrate the sanctums of conspiracy. Greer's reckoning that day featured some twenty speakers. He provided, in support of his claims, a four-hundred-and-ninety-two-page dossier called the "Disclosure Project Briefing Document." For public officials too busy to absorb such a vast tract of suppressed knowledge, Greer had prepared a ninety-five-page "Executive Summary of the Disclosure Project Briefing Document." After some throat-clearing, the "Executive Summary" began with "A Brief Summary," which included a series of bullet points outlining what amounted to the greatest secret in human history.

Over several decades, according to Greer, untold numbers of alien craft had been observed in our planet's airspace; they were able to reach extreme velocities with no visible means of lift or propulsion, and to perform stunning maneuvers at g-forces that would turn a human pilot to soup. Some of these extraterrestrial spaceships had been

“downed, retrieved and studied since at least the 1940s and possibly as early as the 1930s.”

Efforts to reverse engineer such extraordinary machines had led to “significant technological breakthroughs in energy generation.” These operations had mostly been classified as “cosmic top secret,” a tier of clearance “thirty-eight levels” above that typically granted to the Commander-in-Chief. Why, Greer asked, had such transformative technologies been hidden for so long? This was obvious. The “social, economic and geo-political order of the world” was at stake.

Greer's “Executive Summary” was woolly, but discerning readers could find within it answers to many of the most frequently asked questions about U.F.O.s—assuming, as Greer did, that U.F.O.s are helmed by extraterrestrials. Why are they so elusive? Because the aliens are monitoring us. Why? Because they are discomfited by our aspiration to “weaponize space.” Have we shot at them? Yes. Should we shoot at them? No. Really? Yes. Why not? They're friendly. How do we know?

“Obviously, any civilization capable of routine interstellar travel could terminate our civilization in a nanosecond, if that was their intent. That we are still breathing the free air of Earth is abundant testimony to the non-hostile nature of these ET civilizations.”

At the press conference, Greer appeared in thin-framed glasses, a baggy, funereal suit, and a red tie askew in a starched collar. “I know many in the media would like to talk about ‘little green men,’ ” he said. “But, in reality, the subject is laughed at because it is so serious. I have had grown men weep, who are in the Pentagon, who are members of Congress, and who have said to me, ‘What are we going to do?’ Here is what we will do. We will see that this matter is properly disclosed.”

Among the other speakers was Clifford Stone, a retired Army sergeant, who purported to have visited crash sites and seen aliens, both dead and alive. Stone said that he had catalogued fifty-seven species, many of them humanoid. “You have individuals that look very much like you and

myself, that could walk among us and you wouldn't even notice the difference," he said.

Leslie Kean, an independent investigative journalist and a novice U.F.O. researcher who had worked with Greer, watched the proceedings with unease. She had recently published an article in the Boston *Globe* about a new omnibus of compelling evidence concerning U.F.O.s, and she couldn't understand why a speaker would make an unsupported assertion about alien cadavers when he could be talking about hard data. To Kean, the corpus of genuinely baffling reports deserved scientific scrutiny, regardless of how you felt about aliens. "There were some good people at that conference, but some of them were making outrageous, grandiose claims," Kean said. "I knew then that I had to walk away." Greer had hoped that members of the media would cover the event, and they did, with frolicsome derision. He also hoped that Congress would hold hearings. By all accounts, it did not.

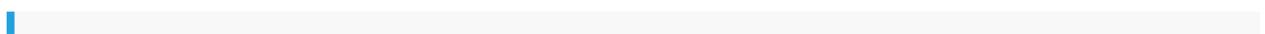
## **After the Press Conference**

In the years after the press conference, the expected announcement was apparently postponed by the events of September 11th, the War on Terror, and the financial crisis. In 2009, Greer issued a "Special Presidential Briefing for President Barack Obama," in which he claimed that the inaction of Obama's predecessors had "led to an unacknowledged crisis that will be the greatest of your Presidency." Obama's response remains unknown, but in 2011 ufologists filed two petitions with the White House, to which the Office of Science and Technology Policy responded that it could find no evidence to suggest that any "extraterrestrial presence has contacted or engaged any member of the human race."

## **A Change in Perception**

The government may not have been in regular touch with exotic civilizations, but it had been keeping something from its citizens. By 2017, Kean was the author of a best-selling U.F.O. book and was known for what she has termed, borrowing from the political scientist Alexander Wendt, a "militantly agnostic" approach to the phenomenon. On December 16th of that year, in a front-page story in the Times, Kean, together with two Times journalists, revealed that the Pentagon had been running a surreptitious U.F.O. program for ten years. The article included two videos, recorded by the Navy, of what were being described in official channels as "unidentified aerial phenomena," or U.A.P. In blogs and on podcasts, ufologists began referring to "December, 2017" as shorthand for the moment the taboo began to lift. Joe Rogan, the popular podcast host, has often mentioned the article, praising Kean's work as having precipitated a cultural shift. "It's a dangerous subject for someone, because you're open to ridicule," he said, in an episode this spring. But now "you could say, 'Listen, this is not something to be mocked anymore—there's something to this.' "

Since then, high-level officials have publicly conceded their bewilderment about U.A.P. without shame or apology. Last July, Senator Marco Rubio, the former acting chairman of the Select Committee on Intelligence, spoke on CBS News about mysterious flying objects in restricted airspace. "We don't know what it is," he said, "and it isn't ours." In December, in a video interview with the economist Tyler Cowen, the former C.I.A. director John Brennan admitted, somewhat tortuously, that he didn't quite know what to think:



Some of the phenomena we're going to be seeing continues to be unexplained and might, in fact, be some type of phenomenon that is the result of something that we don't yet understand and that could involve some type of activity that some might say constitutes a different form of life."

Last summer, David Norquist, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, announced the formal existence of the Unidentified Aerial Phenomena Task Force. The 2021 Intelligence Authorization Act, signed this past December, stipulated that the government had a hundred and eighty days to gather and analyze data from disparate agencies. Its report is expected in June. In a recent interview with Fox News, John Ratcliffe, the former director of National Intelligence, emphasized that the issue was no longer to be taken lightly. "When we talk about sightings," he said, "we are talking about objects that have been seen by Navy or Air Force pilots, or have been picked up by satellite imagery, that frankly engage in actions that are difficult to explain, movements that are hard to replicate, that we don't have the technology for, or are travelling at speeds that exceed the sound barrier without a sonic boom."

## **The Center for American Progress**

In June of 2011, John Podesta invited Leslie Kean to make a confidential presentation at a think tank he founded, the Center for American Progress. Standing alongside a physicist from Johns Hopkins University and foreign military figures, Kean advised the audience—officials from NASA, the Pentagon, and the Department of Transportation, along with congressional staff and retired intelligence officials—that the challenge was "to undo fifty years of reinforcement of U.A.P. as folklore and pseudoscience."

Podesta told Kean, "It wasn't a bunch of people coming in looking like they were going to a 'Star Wars'-memorabilia convention—it was serious people from the national-security arena who wanted answers to these unexplained phenomena." Soon after the event, he said, a Democratic senator invited him for a meeting. "I thought it was going to be on food stamps and tax cuts or whatever, and the door closed and they said, 'I don't want anybody to know this, but I'm really interested in U.F.O.s, and I know you are, too. So what do you know?'"

## **The White House**

In August, 2014, Kean visited the West Wing to meet again with Podesta, who was by then an adviser to President Obama. She had scaled down her request, proposing that a single individual in the Office of Science and Technology Policy be assigned to handle the issue. Nothing came of it. She was, however, a well-known figure on the international U.F.O. circuit and had a cordial relationship with the Chilean government's Comité de Estudios de Fenómenos Aéreos Anómalos (CEFAA). She had begun breaking stories from its case files with an atypical recklessness. Kean's work from this period, mostly published on the Huffington Post, shows signs of agitation and evangelism. In March of 2012, she wrote an article called "UFO Caught on Tape Over Santiago Air Base," which referred to a video provided by CEFAA. Kean described the video as showing "a dome-shaped, flat-bottomed object with no visible means of propulsion . . . flying at velocities too high to be man-made." There were always other cases. Hynek, in "The UFO Experience," had contended that U.F.O. sightings represented a phenomenon that had to be taken in

aggregate—hundreds upon hundreds of incredible stories told by credible people.

## Robert Bigelow

Robert Bigelow was three years old in the spring of 1947, when his grandparents were almost run off the road by a glowing object in the mountains northwest of Las Vegas. The Nevada desert of the early atomic age was one of the few places a child could see nuclear tests or rocket launches from his back yard, and Bigelow's dreams of space exploration commingled with his curiosity about U.F.O.s. In the late nineteen-sixties, when he was in his early twenties, he began to invest in real estate—first in Las Vegas, then across the Southwest—and eventually he made a fortune with Budget Suites of America, a chain of extended-stay motels. Later, he founded a private company, Bigelow Aerospace, to build inflatable astronaut habitats. In 1995, he established the National Institute for Discovery Science, which described itself as “a privately funded science institute engaged in research of aerial phenomena, animal mutilations, and other related anomalous phenomena.” Among the consultants he hired was Hal Puthoff, whose work in paranormal studies dated back decades, to Project Stargate, a C.I.A. program to investigate how “remote viewing,” a form of long-distance E.S.P., might be useful in Cold War espionage. The next year, Bigelow purchased Skinwalker Ranch, a four-hundred-and-eighty-acre parcel a few hours southeast of Salt Lake City, named for a shape-shifting Navajo witch. Its previous owners had described being driven away by coruscating spheres, exsanguinated cattle, and wolflike creatures impervious to gunshots. In 2004, in the wake of a purported decrease in domestic paranormal activity, Bigelow shut down his institute, but he kept the ranch.

In 2007, Bigelow received a letter from a senior official at the Defense Intelligence Agency who was curious about Skinwalker. Bigelow connected him to an old friend from the Nevada desert, Senator Harry Reid, who was then the Senate Majority Leader, and the two men met to discuss their common interest in U.F.O.s. The D.I.A. official later visited Skinwalker, where, from a double-wide observation trailer on site, he is said to have had a spectral encounter; as one Bigelow affiliate described it, he saw a “topological figure” that “appeared in mid-air” and “went from pretzel-shaped to Möbius-strip-shaped.”

Bigelow believes, as one source put it to me, that “there are aliens walking around at the supermarket.” According to an article by MJ Banias, on the Web site the Debrief, Bigelow hired investigators to look into reports at Skinwalker of doglike creatures who smelled of sulfur and goblins with long, pendulous arms, as well as U.F.O. activity near Mt. Shasta. The program appears to have produced little more than a series of thirty-eight papers, all unclassified except one, about the kind of technology a U.F.O. might exploit—including work on the theoretical viability of warp drives and “spacetime metric engineering.” Bigelow's researchers, convinced that crash debris was being hidden in some remote hangar, wanted access to the government's classified data on U.F.O.s. In June, 2009, Senator Reid filed a request that the program be awarded “restricted special access program,” or *SAP*, status. The following month, *BAASS* issued a four-hundred-and-ninety-four-page “Ten Month Report.” The portions of the report that were leaked to Tim McMillan were almost exclusively about U.F.O.s, and the information provided was not limited to mere sightings; it included a photo of a supposed tracking device that supposed aliens had supposedly implanted in a supposed abductee. As one former government official said, “The report arrived here and I read the whole thing and immediately concluded that releasing it would be a disaster.” In November, 2009, the Defense Department peremptorily denied the request for *SAP* status.

## AATIP

Reid reached out to Senator Ted Stevens, of Alaska, who believed he'd seen a U.F.O. as a pilot in the Second World War, and Senator Daniel Inouye, of Hawaii. In the 2008 Supplemental Appropriations Bill, twenty-two million dollars of so-called black money was set aside for a new program. The Pentagon was not enthusiastic. As one former intelligence official put it, "There were some government officials who said, 'We shouldn't be doing this, this is really ridiculous, this is a waste of money.'" He went on, "And then Reid would call them out of a meeting and say, 'I want you to be doing this. This was appropriated.'" It was sort of like a joke that bordered on an annoyance and people worried that if this all came out, that the government was spending money on this, this will be a bad story."

The Advanced Aerospace Weapon System Applications Program was announced in a public solicitation for bids to examine the future of warfare. U.F.O.s were not mentioned, but according to Reid the subtext was clear. Bigelow Aerospace Advanced Space Studies, or *BAASS*, a Bigelow Aerospace subsidiary, was the only bidder. When Bigelow won the government contract, he contacted the same cohort of paranormal investigators he'd worked with at his institute. Other participants were recruited from within the Pentagon's ranks.

## Luis Elizondo

In 2008, Luis Elizondo, a longtime counterintelligence officer working in the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security, was visited by two people who asked him what he thought about U.F.O.s. He replied that he didn't think about them, which was apparently the correct answer, and he was asked to join.

Soon afterward, Elizondo, the counterintelligence officer, was asked to take over the program. Beginning in 2010, he turned an outsourced study of Utah cryptids into the Advanced Aerospace Threat Identification Program, or AATIP, an in-house effort that focused on the national-security implications of military U.A.P. encounters. According to Elizondo, the program studied a number of incidents in depth, including what later became known as the "Nimitz encounter."

The Nimitz Carrier Strike Group was conducting training operations in restricted waters off the coast of San Diego and Baja California in November of 2004, when the advanced SPY-1 radar on one of the ships, the U.S.S. Princeton, began to register some strange presences. They were logged as high as eighty thousand feet, and as low as the ocean's surface. After about a week of radar observations, Commander David Fravor, a graduate of the elite Topgun fighter-pilot school and the commanding officer of the Black Aces squadron, was sent on an intercept mission. As he approached the location, he looked down and saw a roiling shoal in the water and, hovering above it, a white oval object that resembled a large Tic Tac. He estimated it to be about forty feet long, with no wings or other obvious flight surfaces and no visible means of propulsion. It appeared to bounce around like a Ping-Pong ball. Two other pilots, one seated behind him and one in a nearby plane, gave similar accounts. Fravor descended to chase the object, which reacted to his maneuvers before departing abruptly at high speed. Upon Fravor's return to the Nimitz, another pilot, Chad Underwood, was dispatched to follow up with more advanced sensory equipment. His aircraft's targeting pod recorded a video of the object. The clip, known as "FLIR1"—for "forward-looking infrared," the technology used to capture the incident—features one minute and sixteen

seconds of a blurry ashen dot against a gunmetal background; in the final few seconds, the dot appears to outwit the FLIR track and make a rapid getaway.

Elizondo's exposure to cases like the Nimitz encounter convinced him that U.A.P.s were real, but the government's willingness to invest resources in the issue remained uncertain. Elizondo tried repeatedly to brief General James Mattis, the Secretary of Defense, about AATIP's research, and was blocked by underlings. (General Mattis's personal assistant at the time does not recall being approached by Elizondo.)

On October 4, 2017, at the behest of Christopher K. Mellon, a former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, Leslie Kean was called to a confidential meeting in the bar of an upscale hotel near the Pentagon. She was greeted by Hal Puthoff, the longtime paranormal investigator, and Jim Semivan, a retired C.I.A. officer, who introduced her to a sturdy, thick-necked, tattooed man with a clipped goatee named Luis Elizondo. The previous day had been his last day of work at the Pentagon. Over the next three hours, Kean was taken through documents that proved the existence of what was, as far as anyone knew, the first government inquiry into U.F.O.s since the close of Project Blue Book, in 1970. The program that Kean had spent years lobbying for had existed the whole time.

After Elizondo resigned, he and other key AATIP participants—including Mellon, Puthoff, and Semivan—almost immediately joined To the Stars Academy of Arts & Science, an operation dedicated to U.F.O.-related education, entertainment, and research, and organized by Tom DeLonge, a former front man of the pop-punk outfit Blink-182. Later that month, DeLonge invited Elizondo onstage at a launch event. Elizondo announced that they were

“ planning to provide never-before-released footage from real U.S. government systems—not blurry amateur photos but real data and real videos.”

Kean was told that she could have the videos, along with chain-of-custody documentation, if she could place a story in the Times. Kean soon developed doubts about DeLonge, after he appeared on Joe Rogan's podcast to discuss his belief that what crashed at Roswell was a reverse-engineered U.F.O. built in Argentina by fugitive Nazi scientists, but she had full confidence in Elizondo. “He had incredible gravitas,” Kean told me. She called Ralph Blumenthal, an old friend and a former Times staffer at work on a biography of the Harvard psychiatrist and alien-abduction researcher John Mack; Blumenthal e-mailed Dean Baquet, the paper's executive editor, to say that they wanted to pitch “a sensational and highly confidential time-sensitive story” in which a “senior U.S. intelligence official who abruptly quit last month” had decided to expose “a deeply secret program, long mythologized but now confirmed.” After a meeting with representatives from the Washington, D.C., bureau, the Times agreed. The paper assigned a veteran Pentagon correspondent, Helene Cooper, to work with Kean and Blumenthal.

## **The New York Times Reveal**

# The New York Times

## *Glowing Auras and 'Black Money': The Pentagon's Mysterious U.F.O. Program*

By HELENE COOPER, RALPH BLUMENTHAL and LESLIE KEAN DEC. 16, 2017



On Saturday, December 16, 2017, the story—“Glowing Auras and ‘Black Money’: The Pentagon’s Mysterious U.F.O. Program”—appeared online; it was printed on the front page the next day. Accompanying the piece were two videos, including “FLIR1.” Senator Reid was quoted as saying, “I’m not embarrassed or ashamed or sorry I got this going.” The Pentagon confirmed that the program had existed, but said that it had been closed down in 2012, in favor of other funding priorities. Elizondo claimed that the program had continued in the absence of dedicated funding. The article dwelled not on the reality of the U.F.O. phenomenon—the only actual case discussed at any length was the Nimitz encounter—but on the existence of the covert initiative. The Times article drew millions of readers. Kean noticed a change almost immediately. When people asked her at dinner parties what she did for a living, they no longer giggled at her response but fell rapt. Kean gave all the credit to Elizondo and Mellon for coming forward, but she told me, “I never would have ever imagined I could have ended up writing for the Times. It’s the pinnacle of everything I’ve ever wanted to do—just this miracle that it happened on this great road, great journey.”

It was hard to tell, however, what exactly AATIP had accomplished. Elizondo went on to host the History Channel docuseries “Unidentified,” in which he solemnly invokes his security oath like a catchphrase. He insisted to me that AATIP had made important strides in understanding the “five observables” of U.A.P. behavior—including “gravity-defying capabilities,” “low observability,” and “transmedium travel.”

Widespread fascination with the idea that the government cared about U.F.O.s had inspired the government at last to care about U.F.O.s.

# The Aftermath

Within a month of the Times article's publication, the Pentagon's U.A.P. portfolio was reassigned to a civilian intelligence official with a rank equivalent to that of a two-star general. He channelled the cascade of media interest to argue that, without a process to handle uncategorizable observations, rigid bureaucracies would overlook anything that didn't follow a standard pattern. At the height of the Cold War, the government had worried that the noise of lurid phantasmagoria might drown out signals relevant to national security, or even provide cover for adversarial incursions; now, it seemed, the concern was that valuable intelligence wasn't being reported. (The Nimitz encounter didn't become subject to official investigation until years after the incident, when an errant file landed on the desk of someone who decided that it merited pursuit.) "What we needed," the former Pentagon official said, "was something like the post-9/11 fusion centers, where a D.O.D. guy can talk to an F.B.I. guy and an N.R.O. guy—everything we learned from the 9/11 Commission."

In the summer of 2018, Elizondo's successor made this case to members of Congress. According to the former Pentagon official, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee inserted language into the classified annex of the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act, passed in August of 2018, that obligated the Pentagon to continue the investigations. "The U.A.P. issue is being taken very seriously now even compared to where it was two or three years ago," the former Pentagon official said.

The activity intensified. In April of 2019, the Navy revised its official guidelines for pilots, encouraging them to report U.A.P.s without fear of scorn or censure. In June, Senator Mark Warner, of Virginia, admitted that he had been briefed on the U.A.P. matter. In September, a spokesperson for the Navy announced that the "FLIR1" video, along with two videos associated with sightings off the East Coast in 2015, showed "incursions into our military training ranges by unidentified aerial phenomena."

The point of using the term "unidentified," he said, was "to help remove the stigma." He said, "At some point, we needed to just admit that there are things in the sky we can't identify." Despite the fact that most adults carry around exceptionally good camera technology in their pockets, most U.F.O. photos and videos remain maddeningly indistinct, but the former Pentagon official implied that the government possesses stark visual documentation; Elizondo and Mellon have said the same thing.

According to Tim McMillan, in the past two years, the Pentagon's U.A.P. investigators have distributed two classified intelligence papers, on secure networks, that allegedly contain images and videos of bizarre spectacles, including a cube-shaped object and a large equilateral triangle emerging from the ocean. One report brooked the subject of "alien" or "non-human" technology, but also provided a litany of prosaic possibilities. The former Pentagon official cautioned, " 'Unidentified' doesn't mean little green men—it just means there's something there." He continued, "If it turns out that everything we've seen is weather balloons, or a quadcopter designed to look like something else, nobody is going to lose sleep over it."

Elizondo never got to Mattis, but his successor managed to get briefings in front of Mark Esper, the Secretary of Defense, as well as the director of National Intelligence, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, the Senate Armed Services Committee, and several members of the Joint Chiefs of

Staff. Government officials in Japan later divulged to the media that they had discussed the topic in a meeting with Esper in Guam. When the former Pentagon official was asked about other foreign governments, he hesitated, then said, “We would not have moved forward without briefing close allies. This was bigger than the U.S. government.”

In June of 2020, Senator Marco Rubio added text into the 2021 Intelligence Authorization Act requesting—though not requiring—that the director of National Intelligence, along with the Secretary of Defense, produce “a detailed analysis of unidentified aerial phenomena data and intelligence reporting.” This language, which allowed them a hundred and eighty days to produce the report, drew heavily from proposals by Mellon, and it was clear that this concerted effort, at least in theory, was a more productive and more cost-effective iteration of the original vision for AATIP.

## UAPTF

In August of 2020, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, David Norquist, publicly announced the existence of the Unidentified Aerial Phenomena Task Force, who produced a report to Congress on UAPs in June 2021 (refer to report at the end of this article).

The Intelligence Authorization Act finally passed in December. The former Pentagon official worries that an appetite for disclosure has been heedlessly stoked. “The public, I would hope, doesn’t expect to see the crown jewels,” he said.

In early April 2021, the eminent U.F.O. journalist George Knapp, along with the documentary filmmaker Jeremy Kenyon Lockyer Corbell, best known for his participation in an ill-begotten crusade to “storm” Nevada’s Area 51, released a video and a series of photos that had apparently been leaked from the U.A.P. Task Force’s classified intelligence reports. The video, taken with night-vision goggles, shows three airborne triangles, intermittently flashing with eerie incandescence as they rotate against a starry sky. The Department of Defense confirmed that the video was real and said

“I can confirm that the referenced photos and videos were taken by Navy personnel,” Department of Defense spokesperson Susan Gough told Fox News. “The UAPTF [Unidentified Aerial Phenomena Task Force] has included these incidents in their ongoing examinations.”

***Video taken from the UAPTF and leaked to the public in 2021. The video was taken from the US Navy ship USS Russell using night vision optics in July 2019 off the San Diego coast.***

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## UAP Report to Congress

On June 25, 2021 the office of the Director for National Intelligence produced a report for the U.S. Congress entitled "[Preliminary Assessment: Unidentified Aerial Phenomena](#)". In it, the newly formed Unidentified Aerial Phenomena Task Force (UAPTF) that conducted the study for the report, said

“ The limited amount of high-quality reporting on unidentified aerial phenomena (UAP) hampers our ability to draw firm conclusions about the nature or intent of UAP. ”

and went further to say

“ Most of the UAP reported probably do represent physical objects given that a majority of UAP were registered across multiple sensors, to include radar, infrared, electro-optical, weapon seekers, and visual observation.

However, the report fell short of stating the objects were of extraterrestrial origin. Instead, grouping any unexplained objects simply as "other".

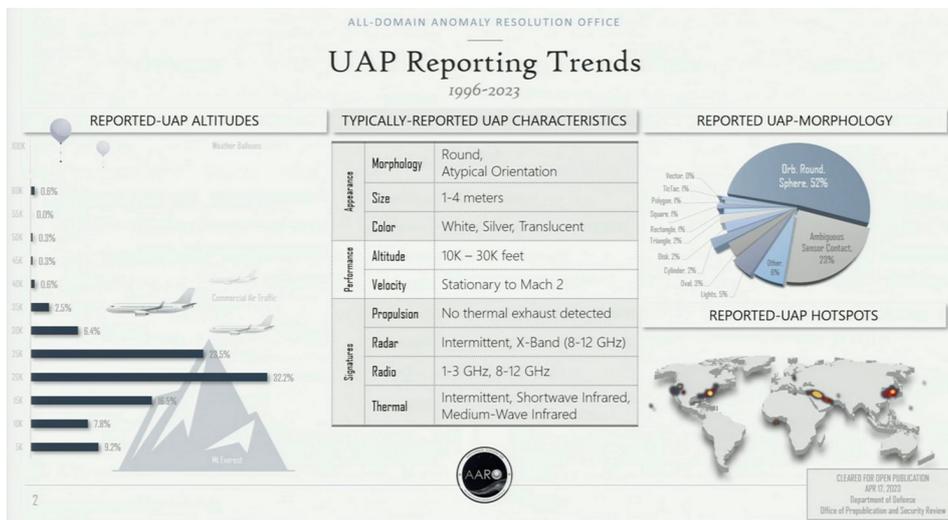
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## Update

### ***April 19, 2023***

A top official of a US government body created last year to focus on sightings of unidentified flying objects (UFO) has claimed that Washington is tracking more than 650 such potential cases.

Addressing a Senate Armed Services subcommittee on Wednesday, Director of the Pentagon's All-domain Anomaly Resolution Office (AARO) Sean Kirkpatrick said the number of cases was up from the 350 reports referenced in an unclassified intelligence report on unidentified aerial phenomena released earlier this year, reports CNN.



***Slide of UAP sightings from the April 19, 2023 Armed Services Senate Sub-Committee UFO hearing***

The **All-domain Anomaly Resolution Office (AARO)** is an office within the United States Office of the Secretary of Defense that investigates unidentified flying objects (UFOs) and other phenomena in the air, sea, and/or space and/or on land: sometimes referred to as "unidentified aerial phenomena," "unidentified anomalous phenomena," or "U.A.P."

AARO was preceded by The Unidentified Aerial Phenomena Task Force (UAPTF), a program within the Office of Naval Intelligence used to "standardize collection and reporting" of sightings of UFOs. UAPTF was detailed in a June 2020 hearing of the United States Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. The UAPTF issued a preliminary report in June 2021. In July 2022 it was announced that the UAPTF would be succeeded as an organization by AARO. UAPTF itself was preceded by AATIP known as the Advanced Aerospace Threat Identification Program.

The Pentagon released footage taken by a US MQ-9 Reaper drone on Wednesday after it came upon an unknown flying object swooping over the Middle East. The event, which was reported in 2022, marked an unmanned aircraft's first contact with what the military now refers to as Unexplained Anomalous Phenomena (UAP).

Sean Kirkpatrick, head of the Pentagon's All-domain Anomaly Resolution Office (AARO), described the details of the footage before a Senate hearing by describing the characteristics of the brilliant and shimmering "metallic orb" the military drone witnessed after a "spherical UAP."

***Reaper drone footage released to a Senate Armed Services Sub-Committee April 19, 2023 (video originally captured July 12, 2022 somewhere over the middle east)***

Silver. Translucent. Metallic. 10,000 to 30,000 feet [in the air] with apparent velocities from the standstill to mach with no thermal exhausts typically seen,” he stated, saying the item had behaved “consistently with other metallic orb sightings in the vicinity.”

Kirkpatrick would not rule out the possibility that the orb was “adversary breakthrough technology,” but he did agree that its design and speed were amazing and that it may be related to “known objects or phenomena” or even “extraterrestrials.”

Kirkpatrick informed the Senate that the AARO typically succeeds in identifying its aerial prey and hinted that he had even informed the Defense Department and intelligence officers that the US’s foreign enemies had technologies Washington was completely ignorant of.

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## Kirkpatrick's opening oral remarks to the Armed Services Committee

Dr. Sean Kirkpatrick  
Director, All-domain Anomaly Resolution Office  
Statement for the Record  
Senate Armed Services Committee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities  
April 19, 2023

Thank you, Chairwoman Gillibrand, Ranking Member Ernst, and distinguished members of the Subcommittee and Congress. It is a privilege to be here today to testify on the Department of Defense’s efforts to address Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena.

First, I want to thank Congress for its extensive and continued partnership as the Department works to better understand and respond to UAP in an effort to minimize technical and intelligence surprise. Unidentified objects in any domain

pose potential risks to safety and security, particularly for military personnel and capabilities.

Congress and DoD agree that UAP cannot remain unexamined or unaddressed.

We are grateful for sustained congressional engagement on this issue, which paved the way for DoD’s establishment of the All-domain Anomaly Resolution Office in July of last year. Though AARO is still a young office, the spotlight on UAP in

recent months underscores the importance of its work and the need for UAP to be taken seriously as a matter of national security. All leadership that I’ve had the pleasure of working with, whether DoD, IC, DOE, Civil, Scientific or Industrial,

view Congress as a critical partner in this endeavor.

AARO has accomplished much in the 9 months since it was established. The AARO team of more than three dozen experts is organized around four functional areas: operations, scientific research, integrated analysis, and strategic

communications. In the nine months since AARO’s establishment, we have taken important steps to improve UAP data collection, standardize the Department’s UAP internal reporting requirements,

and implement a framework for rigorous scientific and intelligence analysis, resolving cases in a systematic and prioritized manner. Meanwhile, consistent with legislative direction, AARO is also carefully reviewing and researching the U.S. Government's UAP-related historical record.

AARO is leading a focused effort to better characterize, understand, and attribute UAP, with priority given to UAP reports by DoD and IC personnel in or near areas of national security importance. DoD fully appreciates the eagerness from many quarters, including here in Congress and in the American public, to quickly resolve every UAP encountered across the globe, from the distant past through today.

It is important to note, however, that AARO is the culmination of decades of DoD, Intelligence Community, and congressionally-directed efforts to successfully resolve UAP encountered first and foremost by U.S. military personnel, specifically Navy and Air Force pilots.

The law establishing AARO is ambitious, and it will take time to realize the full mission. We cannot answer decades of questions about UAP all at once, but we must begin somewhere. While I assure you that AARO will follow scientific evidence wherever it leads, I ask for your patience as DoD first prioritizes the safety and security of our military personnel and installations, in all domains.

After all, UAP encountered first by highly capable DoD and IC platforms, featuring the nation's most advanced sensors, are those UAP most likely to be successfully resolved by my office assuming data can be collected. If AARO succeeds in first improving the ability of military personnel to quickly and confidently resolve UAP that they encounter, I believe that in time we will have greatly advanced the capability of the entire United States Government, including its civilian agencies, to resolve UAP. However, it would be naive to believe that the resolution of all UAP can be solely accomplished by the DoD and IC alone.

We will need to prioritize collection and leverage authorities for monitoring all domains within the continental United States. AARO's ultimate success will require partnerships with the interagency, industry, academia, the scientific community, and the public.

AARO is partnering with the Services, Intelligence Community, DOE and across the U.S. government to tap into the resources of the interagency. The UAP challenge is more an operational and scientific issue than an intelligence issue. As such, we are also working with industry, academia, and the scientific community, which bring their own resources, ideas, and expertise to this challenging problem set. Robust collaboration and peer-review across a broad range of partners will promote greater objectivity and transparency in the study of UAP.

I want to underscore today that only a very small percentage of UAP reports display signatures that could reasonably be described as 'anomalous.' The majority of unidentified objects reported to AARO demonstrate mundane characteristics of balloons, unmanned aerial systems, clutter, natural phenomena, or other readily explainable sources. While a large number of cases in our holdings remain technically unresolved, this is primarily due to a lack of data associated with these cases. Without sufficient data, we are unable to reach defensible conclusions that meet the high scientific standards we set for resolution, and I will not close a case that we cannot defend the conclusions of.

I recognize that this answer is unsatisfying to those who in good faith assume that what they see with their eyes, with their cameras, or with their radars is incontrovertible evidence of extraordinary characteristics and performance. Yet, time and again, with sufficient scientific-quality data, it is fact that UAP often, but not always, resolve into readily-explainable sources. Humans are subject to deception and illusions, sensors to unexpected responses and malfunctions, and in some cases intentional interference. Getting to the handful of cases that pass this level of scrutiny is the mission of AARO.

That is not to say that UAP once resolved are no longer of national security interest, however. On the contrary, learning that a UAP isn't of exotic origin but is instead "just a quadcopter" leads to the question of who is operating that quadcopter, and to what purpose. The answers to those questions will inform potential national security or law enforcement responses.

AARO is a member of the Department's support to the Administration's "Tiger Team" effort to deal with stratospheric objects such as the PRC High Altitude Balloon. When previously unknown objects are successfully identified, it is AARO's role to quickly and efficiently hand off such readily-explainable objects to the Intelligence or Law Enforcement Communities for further analysis and appropriate action. The U.S. Government—and DoD and the IC in particular—has tremendous capabilities to deal with those encountered objects. In the wake of the PRC HAB event, the interagency is working to better integrate and share information to address identifiable stratospheric objects, but that is not AARO's lane.

Meanwhile, for the few cases in all domains that do demonstrate potentially anomalous characteristics, AARO exists to help the DoD, IC, and interagency resolve those anomalous cases. In doing so, AARO is approaching these cases with the highest level of objectivity and analytic rigor. This includes physically testing and employing modeling and simulation to validate our analyses and

underlying theories, then peer reviewing the results within the U.S. Government, industry partners, and with appropriately-cleared academic institutions before reaching any conclusions. I should also state clearly for the record that in our research AARO has found no credible evidence thus far of extraterrestrial activity, off-world technology, or objects that defy the known laws of physics. In the event sufficient scientific data were ever obtained that a UAP encountered can only be explained by extraterrestrial origin, we are committed to working with our interagency partners at NASA to appropriately inform the U.S. Government's leadership of its findings.

For those few cases that have been leaked to the public previously, and subsequently commented on by the U.S. Government, I encourage those who hold alternative theories or views to submit your research to credible peer-reviewed scientific journals. AARO is working to do the same. That is how science works, not by blog or social media.

We know that there is tremendous public interest in UAP and a desire for answers from AARO. By its very nature, the UAP challenge has for decades lent itself to mystery, sensationalism, and even conspiracy. For that reason, AARO remains committed to transparency, accountability, and to sharing as much with the American public as we can, consistent with our obligation to protect intelligence sources and methods and U.S. and Allied capabilities. However, AARO's work will take time if we are committed to doing it right. It means adhering to the scientific method and the highest standards of research integrity. It means being methodical and scrupulous. It means withholding judgment in favor of evidence. It means following the data where it leads, wherever it leads. It means establishing scientific, peer reviewed theoretical underpinnings of observed data. AARO is committed to those standards.

I am proud of AARO's progress over the last nine months. Much remains to be done, but the hard work is under way.

Thank you for your continued support, and I look forward to your questions.

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# Beaver Utah - 2016

## Case: The Beaver, Utah UFO

### Beaver, Utah - October 18, 2016

An unidentified flying object was captured by a documentary film crew via a camera mounted on a drone near Beaver, Utah, in October 2016 and released to the public in January 2019.

Sam Chortek and Jimmie Chappie captured the following interesting footage over Beaver, Utah which lies just outside of Fishlake National Forest - about 2 hours from Area 51.

Coincidentally, the location of this event is 226 miles (a mere 3 hours drive) from Uintah Utah where the infamous Skinwalker Ranch, and all its UFO phenomena, is located.

Source: [Brian Joseph Hanley](#) All Rights Reserved. 2019. Original video posted **Jan 9, 2019**

The film is a few years old. Back in 2016, a film crew was shooting some landscape footage for a documentary film that was in production. It's a common practice in the movie industry to shoot various footage for filler scenes, cutaways, and intros. Once back in their hotel rooms and reviewing the footage they noticed the fast moving object.

The footage was shot at 60 frames per second with a DJI Inspire drone. Top end equipment. The men estimate they were 400 or 500 feet away from the drone but never saw or heard anything. The footage is just now being released - which have made some wonder why it was held to now?

The videographers who shot the video said they hesitated for years to release the footage for fear that they "maybe caught something on camera that we really shouldn't have." Despite the skepticism, the men are very open about the footage and have even made the original RAW video available for download.

Some have estimated that the craft in the video was traveling at 12,600 miles per hour - MACH 19 - since it covered approximately 3.5 miles in 1 second. If that estimate is correct, it would explain why the two drone operators never saw it. Given the speed though, it should have created a sonic boom.

“As of 2023, multiple efforts by a large number of video and special effects professionals have yet to provide any evidence that the video was manipulated, or CGI enhanced.

## Raw video incrementally slowed and zoomed

Speculative Note: To me, this object suspiciously looks much like the described "Tic Tac" object witnessed by the US Navy in 2004.

# Skinwalker Ranch



Skinwalker Ranch, also known as Sherman Ranch, is a property located on approximately 488 acres (2.072 km<sup>2</sup>) southeast of Ballard, Utah that is reputed to be the site of paranormal and UFO-related activities. Its name is taken from the skin-walker of Navajo legend concerning vengeful Shaman.

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Colm Kelleher and co-author George Knapp subsequently authored a book in which they describe the ranch being acquired by the National Institute for Discovery Science (NIDSci) to study sightings of UFOs, bigfoot-like creatures, crop circles, glowing orbs and poltergeist activity reported by its former owners.

The ranch, located in west Uintah County bordering the Ute Indian Reservation, was popularly dubbed the UFO ranch due to its ostensible 50-year history of odd events said to have taken place there. Knapp and Kelleher cite the 1974 book *The Utah UFO Display: A Scientist's Report* by Frank Salisbury and Joseph "Junior" Hicks, which details an earlier investigation into alleged UFO sightings in the Uintah County region, as partial confirmation of their account. According to Kelleher and Knapp, they saw or investigated evidence of close to 100 incidents that include vanishing and mutilated cattle, sightings of unidentified flying objects or orbs, large animals with piercing red eyes that they say were unscathed when struck by bullets, and invisible objects emitting destructive magnetic fields. Among those involved were retired US Army Colonel John B. Alexander who characterized the NIDSci effort as an attempt to get hard data using a "standard scientific approach". However, the investigators admitted to "difficulty obtaining evidence consistent with scientific publication."

Cattle mutilations have been part of the folklore of the surrounding area for decades. When NIDSci founder billionaire Robert Bigelow purchased the ranch for \$200,000, this was reportedly the result of his being convinced by the stories of mutilations that included tales of strange lights and

unusual impressions made in grass and soil told by the family of former ranch owner Terry Sherman.



***Bigelow Aerospace Building (Image Source: NBC News)***

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In 2008, the United States Defense Intelligence Agency gave \$22 million to the exotic science division of Las Vegas billionaire Robert Bigelow's space startup — Bigelow Aerospace Advanced Space Studies, or BAASS — to study “breakthrough technologies” and UFOs.

After winning the contract, BAASS was tasked with studying and generating reports on exotic science that could lead to “potential breakthrough technology.” BAASS, alongside a team of scientists, generated 38 such reports. Redacted copies of internal BAASS security reports that have been posted online indicate that, before the AAWSAP program was defunded in 2010, the company had assembled an in-house team of investigators not only to write those 38 reports, but also to travel around and look into sightings of monsters, the paranormal, and other bizarre UFO-related phenomena in Utah.

A leaked collection of unredacted internal BAASS documents confirms that the DIA-sponsored organization was not only investigating “foreign advanced aerospace weapon threats from the present out to the next forty years,” but also UFOs — and a lot of other anomalous things even more unaccustomed to attention from the government.

Among other tasks, BAASS sent its investigators to Utah to investigate sightings of strange phenomena at the infamous Skinwalker Ranch and in the greater Uinta Basin that surrounds it. Skinwalker Ranch is currently owned by real estate mogul Brandon Fugal; prior to his purchase of the property in 2016, the 512-acre ranch was owned by Robert Bigelow himself.

According to the BAASS documents, investigators were told to pose as researchers from the plentiful oil fields nearby and never to reveal the names of “BAASS, Robert Bigelow, Bigelow Aerospace...and most certainly [the] sponsors’ identity should NEVER be released or discussed in public.” The ultimate sponsor, in this case, was the DIA, the intelligence arm of the Department of Defense. Ryan Skinner, who runs a popular website dedicated to Skinwalker Ranch, was specifically

mentioned in the document as a possible nuisance to their investigation. The researchers were told to “maintain a low profile.”

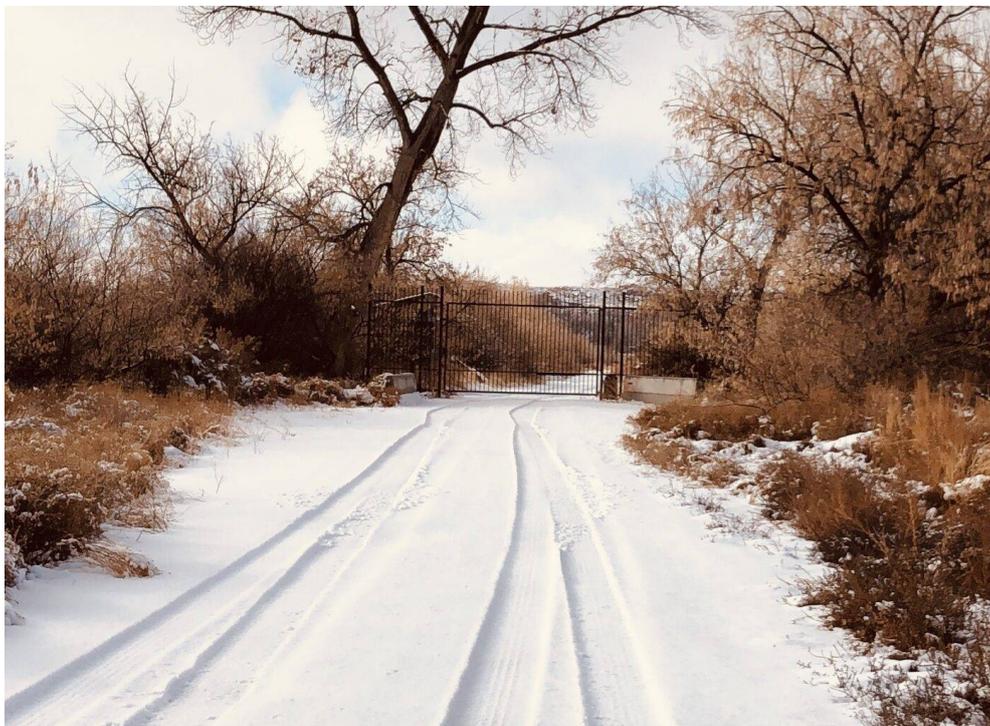
Mr. Skinner admitted that he would indeed often visit the ranch and attempt to sneak onto the property. While he personally thinks the ranch is home to strange phenomena, he believes that Bigelow and his personnel were attempting to unlock secrets to novel propulsion systems.

“It is clear to me Mr. Bigelow was not looking for little green men. He was looking for ways to significantly advance his aerospace company’s aspirations by discovering a novel means of propulsion,” Skinner told *The Debrief* in an interview. “My impression is that he believed the key to unlocking that corporate advantage was by investing in a team of scientists to study the exotic propulsion demonstrated by the UAPs commonly witnessed at Skinwalker Ranch.”

It is unclear if Bigelow was in fact attempting to glean information from UFOs on “breakthrough technology applications employed in future aerospace weapon systems,” as per the DIA mandate for the AAWSAP program. What *is* clear is that his team was also chasing werewolves and goblins at the same time.

In 2016, Bigelow sold Skinwalker Ranch for \$4.5 million to “Adamantium Holdings”, a shell corporation of unknown origin. After this purchase, all roads leading to the ranch have been blocked, the perimeter secured and guarded by cameras and barbed wire, and surrounded by signs that aim to prevent people from approaching the ranch. In 2017, the name “Skinwalker Ranch” was filed for trademark through Justia Trademarks. The trademark was issued in 2018.

In March 2020, Brandon Fugal, 46, a Utah real estate tycoon, publicly came out as the owner of the ranch.



***The Front Gate of Skinwalker Ranch prior to purchase by Adamantium Holdings***

# NRO Whistleblower - June 06, 2023

Intelligence Officials Say U.S. Has Retrieved Craft of Non-Human Origin - The Debrief

Jun 6, 2023 | 11:33 AM



WASHINGTON DC (WSAU) - On Monday, a former intelligence official claimed to have turned over material demonstrating the existence of very covert programs using undamaged and damaged alien craft.

Air Force veteran and whistleblower David Grusch, 36, said that the intelligence community is improperly withholding secret information about aircraft of non-human origin from Congress and the general public during an interview with News Nation.

According to the Debrief, Grusch held several posts after serving in the Air Force, some of which were with the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) and the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO).

Between 2019 and 2021, he also represented a reconnaissance office at the Unidentified Aerial Phenomena (UAP) Task Force.

The Debrief described several other prominent U.S. military and intelligence officials who described Grusch as “beyond reproach,” while others largely corroborated his account.

Grusch said that when he was a member of the UAP task group, he and his colleagues were denied access to a “broad crash retrieval program.” He also stated that he was denied access to “quite a number” of alien aircraft that had crashed or landed on Earth.

In addition to filing a whistleblower complaint, Grusch asserted that he had given Congress and the Intelligence Community Inspector General access to all of his data.

“A number of well-placed current and former officials have shared with me detailed information regarding this alleged program, including insights into the history, governing documents, and the location where a craft was allegedly abandoned and recovered,” Christopher Mellon, who held the position of Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Intelligence told The Debrief.

According to BBC, Sean Kirkpatrick, the director of the All-Domain Anomaly Resolution (AARO) of the Defense Department, claimed his organization receives “50 to 100-ish new reports each month” of odd aerial phenomena. However, he says two to five percent of those encounters may be “possibly really anomalous.”

A NASA panel released early studies on unidentified flying objects and aerial occurrences last week. They determined that more evidence is needed to understand the nature of many of these flying objects, but no one ruled out the possibility that they are extraterrestrial.

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## June 10, 2023 - Update

Attorneys from the Compass Rose Legal Group, who represented whistleblower David Grusch in his complaint to the Intelligence Community Inspector General (ICIG) regarding harassment he says he received during his investigation of a supposed UAP crash retrieval program within the Department of Defense, have issued a statement saying they have ended their formal association with the former intelligence officer.

This move comes just four days after Grusch revealed to the public the supposed existence of what he described as a crash retrieval program designed to collect and reverse engineer craft of “non-human origin” dating back at least ninety years.

The ICIG complaint filed by Compass Rose on behalf of Grusch alleged that people within the government retaliated against the former UAP Task Force analyst for his efforts to investigate and ultimately disclose the alleged program to members of Congress.

The formal statement from Grusch’s former attorneys, which was released on Friday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, states:

“Compass Rose Legal Group has successfully concluded its representation of former client David Grusch on matters limited to his reasonable belief that elements of the Intelligence Community improperly withheld or concealed alleged classified information from the U.S. Congress. The firm filed a narrowly-scoped whistleblower disclosure with the Intelligence Community Inspector General (“ICIG”) and associated personnel matters – and had represented Mr. Grusch since February 2022.

Recent media articles misstate the scope of the firm’s representation and include material misstatements of fact pertaining to our representation, which we have requested be corrected.

*The whistleblower disclosure did not speak to the specifics of the alleged classified information that Mr. Grusch has now publicly characterized, and the substance of that information has always been outside of the scope of Compass*

Rose's representation. Compass Rose took no position and takes no position on the contents of the withheld information.

"The ICIG found Mr. Grusch's assertion that information was inappropriately concealed from Congress to be urgent and credible in response to the filed disclosure. Compass Rose brought this matter to the ICIG's attention through lawful channels and successfully defended Mr. Grusch against retaliation.

"We wish our former client the very best in the next steps of his journey.

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## July 14, 2023 - THE 'UAP DISCLOSURE ACT OF 2023':

*While it may or may not be a direct result of David Grusch's whistleblower testimony to Congress, new legislation whose purpose ostensibly is to bring transparency to the public with regard to what information the government may be holding on the subject. The Debrief's Micah Hanks article on the subject is below:*

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer is leading a new effort that seeks to establish a commission to declassify United States government documents and other materials related to unidentified anomalous phenomena (UAP).

The new legislation, currently referenced as the Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena (UAP) Disclosure Act of 2023, will provide "the expeditious disclosure of unidentified anomalous phenomena records," according to a version that appeared online on Friday. The legislation is expected to be introduced as an amendment to the annual National Defense Authorization Act.

"I am honored to carry on the legacy of my mentor and dear friend Harry Reid and fight for the transparency that the public has long demanded surrounding these unexplained phenomena," Schumer said in a Tweet on Friday.

Schumer's amendment will seek to "increase transparency around Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena (UAP) and further open scientific research," according to a release that appeared on the Senate Democratic Majority website.

Schumer, who was also quoted in the release, said that Americans have "a right to learn about technologies of unknown origins, non-human intelligence, and unexplainable phenomena."

"We are not only working to declassify what the government has previously learned about these phenomena but to create a pipeline for future research to be made public," Schumer added.

The language of the amendment directs that “All Federal Government records related to unidentified anomalous phenomena should be preserved and centralized for historical and Federal Government purposes.”

It adds that all U.S. Federal Government records related to UAP should “carry a presumption of immediate disclosure” with the intent that they “should be eventually disclosed to enable the public to become fully informed about the history of the Federal Government’s knowledge and involvement surrounding unidentified anomalous phenomena.”

The amendment argues the necessity for new legislation related to UAP disclosure based partly on shortcomings of the current Freedom of Information Act, which “has proven inadequate in achieving the timely public disclosure of Government unidentified anomalous phenomena records that are subject to mandatory declassification review.”

“Legislation is necessary to restore proper oversight over unidentified anomalous phenomena records by elected officials in both the executive and legislative branches of the Federal Government that has otherwise been lacking as of the enactment of this Act,” the draft language states.

The Act also provides guidance for the “creation of the unidentified anomalous phenomena Records Collection at the National Archives and Records Administration,” along with the timely provision of any related UAP documents to the Archivist of the United States and the “public disclosure of such records.”

“The UAP Records Collection would carry the presumption of immediate disclosure,” read a portion of the statement issued on Friday, “which means that a review board would have to provide a reasoning for the documents to stay classified.”

Following the creation of the UAP Records Collection, the legislation further directs the creation of a UAP Records Review Board, an independent agency that would provide oversight regarding whether any records related to UAP may be candidates for postponement of disclosure.

Among the more outstanding components of the new legislation is the inclusion that the U.S. federal government will have “eminent domain over any and all recovered technologies of unknown origin (TUO) and biological evidence of non-human intelligence (NHI) that may be controlled by private persons or entities in the interests of the public good,” according to Friday’s statement.

Leading the amendment with Schumer is Senator Mike Rounds of South Dakota, Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Cybersecurity for the Armed Services Committee, with support from Senator Marco Rubio of Florida, Senator Kirsten Gillibrand of New York, Senator Todd Young of Indiana, and Senator Martin Heinrich of New Mexico.

Schumer’s amendment, first reported by the *New York Times* on Thursday, has received bipartisan support and seeks to disclose materials related to UAP without compromising collection methods and other sensitive information.

Based on the new legislation, UAP records that are deemed releasable are to be publicly disclosed in their entirety no later than 25 years after their release following enactment of the new Act, with the stipulation that continued postponement may be determined if the President judges that their release may harm national security.

The amendment is reportedly being modeled after the President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection Act of 1992, which similarly mandated the release of documents pertaining to Kennedy's Assassination in 1963 no later than 25 years following its enactment.

The new legislation introduced by Schumer was preceded by language approved by the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence late last month, which similarly focuses on revealing the existence of any technologies related to UAP currently in government holdings. First reported by Douglas Dean Johnson, the UAP provisions revealed in June are part of the Fiscal Year 2024 Intelligence Authorization Act and were unanimously approved by the Senate Intelligence Committee on June 14.

All the recent instances of UAP-related legislation follow the public revelation of claims involving the existence of craft of non-human origin allegedly in the U.S. government's possession, first reported by *The Debrief* on June 5, 2023. At the center of those claims had been David Charles Grusch, a former employee of the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) and the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) who served as the representative for the NGA to the Unidentified Aerial Phenomena Task Force (UAPTF) from 2019 until 2021.

In 2017, it was revealed for the first time by the *New York Times* that former Majority Leader Harry Reid had sponsored a government program that investigated UAP and related phenomena.

"After that project became public, Senators, Congressmen, committees, and staff began to pursue this issue and uncovered a vast web of individuals and groups with ideas and stories to share," Friday's release on the website of the Senate Democratic Majority stated, adding that any relevant records on UAP have likely been withheld in "good faith" and with the intent of ensuring national security.

"However, hiding that information from both Congress and the public at large is simply unacceptable," the release added.

In Friday's release, Senator Rounds said the new bill aims to "assure credibility with regard to any investigation or record keeping of materials associated with Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena."

"Relevant documents related to this issue should be preserved," Rounds added. "Providing a central collection location and reputable review board to maintain the records adds to the credibility of any future investigations."