



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Tampa, Florida	Accident Number:	GAA19CA180
Date & Time:	March 24, 2019, 14:27 Local	Registration:	N976AZ
Aircraft:	Piper PA23	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Birdstrike	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot of the multiengine airplane reported that, on a descending vector for a visual instrument landing system approach on an instrument flight rules flight plan, about 2,500 to 2,800 ft mean sea level, he "felt the aircraft shudder along with a loud bang." He then disengaged the autopilot to determine if the flight controls were affected and looked for damage on the wing and nose area; he saw no damage. The pilot continued to the airport and landed without further incident. During the landing, the pilot of a waiting aircraft reported that he saw damage to the accident airplane's vertical stabilizer that looked like a bird had hit it. During postaccident examination, blood and tissue were found on the airplane.

The airplane sustained substantial damage to the vertical stabilizer.

The pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical failures or malfunctions with the airplane that would have precluded normal operation.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

An in-flight collision with a bird during the approach, which resulted in damage to the vertical stabilizer.

Findings

Environmental issues	Animal(s)/bird(s) - Effect on equipment
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Factual Information

History of Flight

Enroute-descent	Birdstrike (Defining event)
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport; Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	67,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane multi-engine; Airplane single-engine; Instrument airplane	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	March 26, 2018
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	February 18, 2019
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 21218 hours (Total, all aircraft), 866 hours (Total, this make and model), 21018 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 166 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 52 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N976AZ
Model/Series:	PA23 250	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1976	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	27-7654200
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	September 28, 2018 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	5200 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	1514.7 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	IO-540-C4B5
Registered Owner:		Rated Power:	250 Horsepower
Operator:		Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KTPA, 11 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	1 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	18:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	203°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 4000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:		Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	30.19 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	28°C / 12°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	West Palm Beach, FL (F45)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	Tampa, FL (TPA)	Type of Clearance:	IFR
Departure Time:	13:29 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class B

Airport Information

Airport:	Tampa Intl TPA	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt;Concrete
Airport Elevation:	26 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	19L	IFR Approach:	ILS;Visual
Runway Length/Width:	8300 ft / 150 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	None

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	27.975555,-82.533332(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Gutierrez, Eric
Additional Participating Persons:	Greg King; FAA; Tampa, FL
Original Publish Date:	November 6, 2019
Note:	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=99176

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), established in 1967, is an independent federal agency mandated by Congress through the Independent Safety Board Act of 1974 to investigate transportation accidents, determine the probable causes of the accidents, issue safety recommendations, study transportation safety issues, and evaluate the safety effectiveness of government agencies involved in transportation. The NTSB makes public its actions and decisions through accident reports, safety studies, special investigation reports, safety recommendations, and statistical reviews.

The Independent Safety Board Act, as codified at 49 U.S.C. Section 1154(b), precludes the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an incident or accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report. A factual report that may be admissible under 49 U.S.C. § 1154(b) is available [here](#).