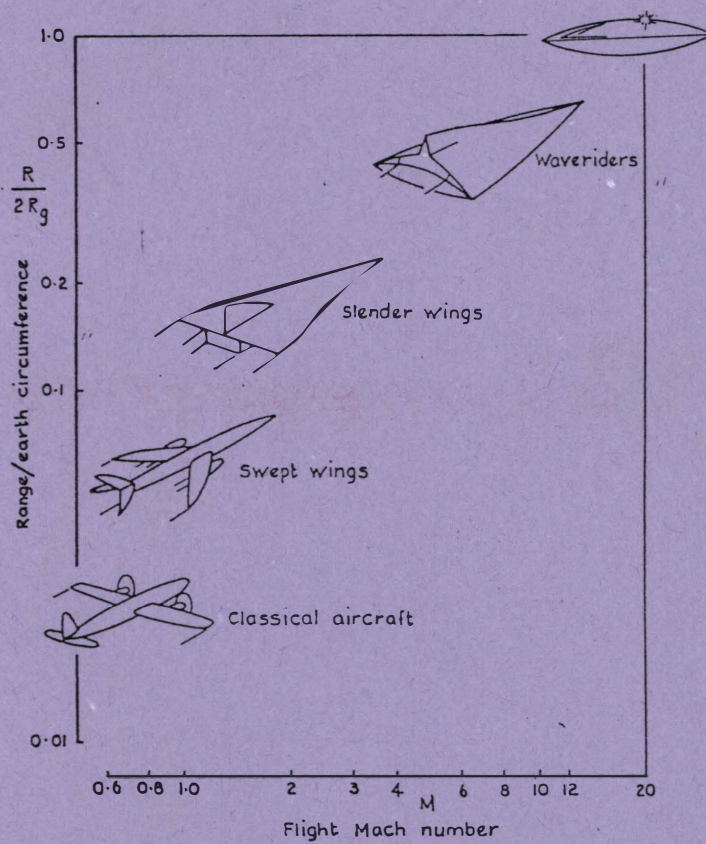


UFO FLIGHT CHARACTERISTICS



Copyright © 1984

John F. Schuessler
P.O. Box 58485
Houston, TX 77258-8485

OPU

GN

Archives for UFO Research
Arkivet för UFO-forskning
Box 11027
SE-600 11 Norrköping
Sweden

UFO FLIGHT CHARACTERISTICS

ABSTRACT:

Investigators continue to collect evidence that tends to support the theory that Unidentified Flying Objects (UFO's) constitute an unexplained phenomenon that urgently requires scientific study. If the total evidence consisted of one incident where an object; silvery, metallic, disk-shaped, obviously artificial, flew within sight of the witnesses and maneuvered in a unique manner, it would be hard to study, but still very interesting. Fortunately, the total evidence seems to be limitless, providing a vast amount of data for analysis. A proper evaluation of the flight characteristics alone could be of untold value to mankind.

INTRODUCTION:

Individuals involved in UFO investigations and research are blessed with a never ending flow of information. The mere fact that the reports continue year after year is reason enough to be involved; however the additional possibility that they might represent evidence of some advanced technology makes such investigations worthwhile, maybe even mandatory.

Regardless of what era one considers as the "genesis" of the phenomena every era has provided some interesting and useful data. Unfortunately, much available information will never be properly or adequately researched. Perhaps this lack of research is due to lack of communication, too much data, too few workers, too few dollars, or a combination of all these things. What ever the reason, the fact remains that all the files and reams of UFO information should be carefully examined, and periodically re-examined in the light of new technological advances.

One must acknowledge that the history of UFO research has been marred by unfortunate incidents, embarrassments, accusations, and all of the other problems encountered by people working together (or apart, as the case may be). Nevertheless, these same people have eliminated many Identified Flying Objects (IFO's) and at the same time uncovered some fantastic "unknowns".

As I have mentioned in past papers I believe the only way to solve any problem is to approach it in a positive manner, to select an hypothesis, and work to it's eventual solution. By collecting a set of facts and analyzing them for some specific relation to the subject matter, one can refine his hypothesis, eventually proving it right or wrong. By the name alone UFO's are flying objects and should be evaluated in flying terms.

Every time we address the subject we either consciously or unconsciously admit that the objects are "flying". If then, we consider other things that fly (i.e. birds, airplanes, space vehicles, etc.) we immediately recognize certain flight characteristics. Such characteristics are recognized because they are based on an accumulation of repeatable acts. With most flying things we can verify our theories by taking these things into the laboratory and measuring their abilities and traits. With the UFO we must be content with reports by others, often repeated in books and magazines, and with some small amount of residue or traces to back these stories.

For me the day of trying to decide whether or not UFO's exist is long since past; they do exist. This fact is continuously demonstrated but often ignored. It is time to continue on into some deep research, using the tons of available data, forcing science and technology to take a few giant leaps. For several years I have been seeking certain key characteristics that would permit us to bridge the technology gap. It is surprising how close we are to being able to duplicate many of the individual flight characteristics displayed in UFO reports; but how far we are from putting them all together. It is a worthwhile challenge.

I have been interested in the UFO phenomena since 1948 when I observed a UFO, while in the company of my parents, near Illiopolis, Illinois. I won't go into the details because it is just another story that never received an official investigation. However, this object overtook our automobile from behind, passed us, and then made a 90° turn and disappeared out of sight over the horizon to the south. It was big and bright, observed in full daylight, operated near the ground, made a sharp turn, and sped away at a high rate of speed. It was beautiful to behold.

Eventhough UFO's were reported before 1948 I cannot recollect being aware or interested in them. My UFO was not especially unique, but it did provide a traumatic experience that I will never forget. That experience left me with two burning and unanswered questions: 1) what was it? and 2) how did it fly like that? I have never gotten close to what I would consider a satisfactory answer to either question; but my UFO experience has been reinforced by similar experiences of thousands of other people. Admittedly, the answers are evasive and the search is frustrating, but it is also interesting and possible.

I have and will continue to speculate on various methods of accomplishing what the UFO's do and how they do it. At the same time I recognize that our technology is lacking in enough areas to preclude our arriving at any really concrete answers. Because of the day to day changes in our level of technology we will continue to seek the pot of gold at the end of the UFO rainbow. Later on in this paper I will outline some specific areas to watch for future developments.

A BASIS FOR ANALYSIS:

Now let us establish a base line for the analysis of UFO flight characteristics. In 1968, only a few miles from my home in C'Fallon, Missouri, two families had gathered for a spring cook-out at their summer cottage. Eight people in all; two men, two women, and four children observed three UFO's for 45 minutes. Their sighting started at sundown and lasted until it was dark. Three UFO's were observed approaching an abandoned clay mine about 250 yards from the observers, just north of their property. The objects arrived one at a time, the first one disappearing out of sight down into the mine behind a slight hill. The second object hovered at treetop level just above the first one. The third remained at an altitude of approximately 2000 feet. Each was self-luminous, glowing and pulsating. As darkness approached the light from one would reflect off the other showing them as separate and distinct objects. Even the object in the mine lighted the trees and the second object although it couldn't be seen

directly. Each object left by ascending vertically, disappearing rapidly into the night sky. A thorough search of the mine area in the daylight revealed no trace of a landed object.

The aforementioned case is almost too good, as it displays many of the common characteristics of typical UFO sightings. The testimony of multiple witnesses, observing the objects in daylight and in darkness, hovering, luminosity, pulsations, and the vertical ascent give rise to much speculation about the nature and characteristics of such flying things.

After finding several more local cases that were equally interesting and much like other cases being reported on a global scale I began to wonder if I could take some of the main flight characteristics of a series of previously investigated cases and see if a pattern of some sort would evolve if compared on face value alone. The evolution of such a pattern would reinforce the theory that UFO reports stem from the existence of some real and measurable objects.

CHARACTERISTIC SELECTION:

The selection of categories for study was quite easy. I did not want to get so complicated that the layman couldn't understand the results, but at the same time I wanted the study to result in some firm message. The categories selected were:

Speed:

- Hovering
- Slow movement
- Fast movement
- Change in speed

Lights:

- White
- Luminous
- Other

Erratic flight

Multiple objects

Vertical ascent

E-M and radar effects

To evaluate my set of categories I decided to select 1000 reports spanning the period from 1947 to 1966 that had been the subject of reliable investigations. By not considering cases investigated by MUFON or personally I hoped to eliminate any personal prejudice that might enter into the results. Therefore, all selected cases had been investigated, on a global basis, by NICAP, APRO, Vallee, et al.

The resulting analysis appears to reveal the truly unique UFO flight characteristics, demonstrated before a cumulative audience of thousands. In addition the results are quite conservative because the reporting methods varied from source to source. For instance, if the source was not clear on number of objects or the speed that information was dropped from consideration.

To present the results of the analysis several charts are included with the text to graphically illustrate and compare the data. Since the charts grew out of pre-1966 cases I utilized a few newer cases to illustrate certain points as it seemed appropriate.

CHARACTERISTIC ANALYSIS AND COMPARISON:

SPEED:

Nearly everyone has some idea what fast or slow means; but often the basis for comparison between individuals varies greatly. For some a 30 mph bicycle ride would be an example of fast, while another might consider a 120 mph airplane as slow. Unless the speed is actually measured we must depend upon the observer for a concise evaluation of what speed means to him. While pondering the aspects of speed as related to the subject 1000 cases I found many cases where the actual speed was defined by comparison with a moving vehicle. In just a few cases speed was determined by one or more radar sets. Other cases were not so easily understood because of lack of data. The easiest to recognize, of course, was zero speed or hovering.

For the purpose of this evaluation we will use some general definitions that bracket any given category or sub-category.

Fast: An obviously rapid movement as reported by the observer. In cases of relative motion any speed in excess of 100 mph will fit in this category.

Change: Any change in speed. Slow to fast. Fast to slow. Hover to fast. Etc.

Slow: Any speed from 100 mph down to almost zero speed. If movement is barely discernable then the object is obviously in the slow category.

Hover: Stopping in mid-air for any given period of time. The duration varies from seconds to several hours, with one to five minutes the nominal condition. In nearly all the cases examined hovering was coupled with one or more other characteristic (i.e. speed change, lights, erratic movement, etc.).

Of the 1000 cases evaluated sixty percent involved fast flight; while slightly less than twenty-five percent moved slowly, hovered or changed speed. A comparison of the results is illustrated by Figure 1.

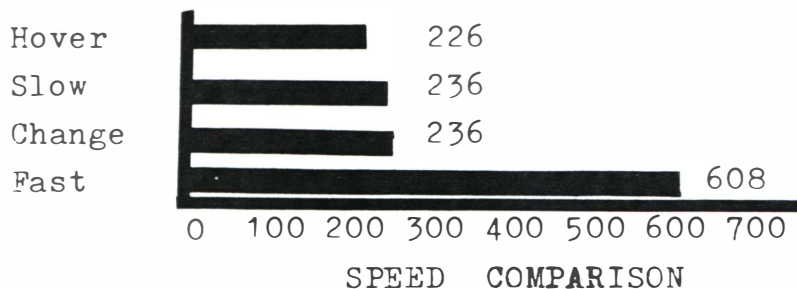


Figure 1

To illustrate the characteristic of speed I have selected a report made by a friend and co-worker - we will call him Mr. Smith. This man is a graduate aeronautical engineer, has worked in many very responsible positions in the space business, and at the time of the report he was part of a moon rocket launch crew. He was at Cape Kennedy on July 30, 1965, involved in the launch of a Saturn 1B and had lots of other witnesses. He reported: "I was observing the

launch of SA-10 from very close to the pad. Just as the missile programed over a loud boom was heard. This was from two F-104 chase planes. One came from the north and the other from the south. They turned up parallel to the missile as long as they could keep up with it. At this time a large object (metallic and round) appeared where the missile had been before programing. We thought that a piece had fallen from the missile. We watched for about 45 seconds and thought the object had fallen from such an altitude that we couldn't detect an altitude change. Suddenly, the object went northward and was out of sight in 5 to 10 seconds."

A unique incident because it was observed in broad daylight by many of our nation's space experts. In addition, the incident illustrates several of our speed characteristics - hovering, changing to rapid movement, and finally a high speed departure.

LIGHTS:

No evaluation of UFO flight characteristics can be concluded without consideration of the various recorded lighting effects. Some researchers have advanced the theory that the color and intensity of the lights is directly proportional to the speed of the object. Others contend that a simple measurement of the characteristics of the lights could identify their source. Still others want to ignore lights altogether and hope they will just fade away. No matter which approach you may choose to follow lights cannot be ignored, they are part of the phenomena.

The categories selected for study were:

Self-luminous:

Usually noted in cases where the observer was close enough to see the shape because it glowed or was illuminated; but not lighted by a specific source, such as lights on an airplane.

White lights:

One or more white light sources noted. Sometimes a single point source.

Other:

Includes red, blue, amber and various combinations. Many of the reports in this category contain evidence of a color change; sometimes abruptly, sometimes slowly through several intermediate colors.

Not given:

Usually not given because the incident took place in daylight.

A case which I have discussed in a previous paper displayed two of the referenced lighting conditions. It took place April 15, 1971, at ten pm, near New Haven, Missouri. The object was observed by three adults as it maneuvered back and forth between two known points for about two hours. It was disk shaped and seemed to glow from all sides. This trait was emphasized by the observers because the full shape was visible in the night sky. Further, they noted the lack of shadows on any surface of the object. It appeared about the size of a bushel basket and was at an estimated altitude of 1000 feet. After considerable time had elapsed the hovering object opened a hatch of some kind and extended something on a boom. The inside, as viewed through the hatch was an intense blue light. Other details of this incident will be covered later on to illustrate other flight characteristics.

A comparison of the various lighting conditions is given by Figure 2.

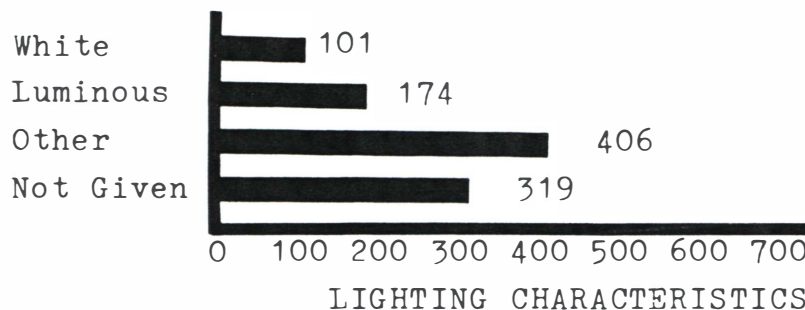


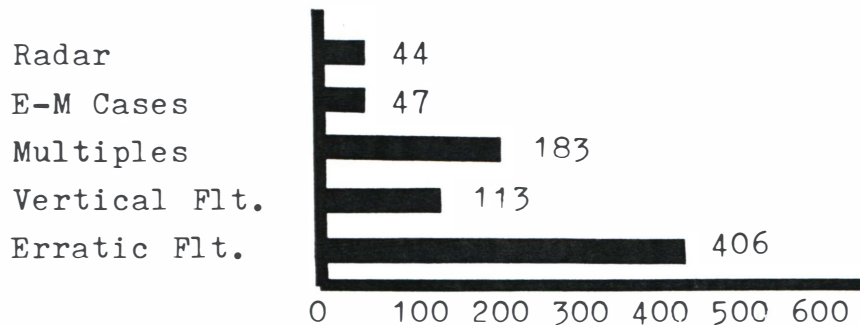
FIGURE 2

MISCELLANEOUS FLIGHT CHARACTERISTICS

Refer to Figure 3 for a comparison.

ERRATIC MOVEMENT:

This characteristic is perhaps the most intriguing of all those considered. It describes more than the flight path of a bullet, the falling of a leaf, or the drift of a balloon; rather, it indicates the existence of some sort of controlled flight. Better than 40% of the 1000 cases examined exhibited a form of controlled or erratic flight. The following is a partial list of maneuvers that I considered as erratic (not straight-line) flight: turns, formation flying, stop-start, zigzags, etc. The back and forth, stop-start performance noted in the New Haven case very nicely fits into this category.



MISCELLANEOUS FLIGHT CHARACTERISTICS

FIGURE 3

VERTICAL ASCENT:

Means leaving the area by rising vertically, usually at an ever increasing speed. Many times the object arcs over at a very high altitude and disappears by growing smaller and smaller as the distance increases. Again the New Haven object illustrated this category, as it rose vertically to a great height, then arced over to the northwest and faded among the stars.

MULTIPLE OBJECTS:

Often described as a formation of objects. At times the formations are very loose allowing variations in the flight paths of the objects within the formation. In more than 18% of the cases more than one object was reported. The mere fact that several objects can fly compatibly through a given area indicates intelligent control.

ELECTRO-MAGNETIC EFFECTS:

The disruption of electrical circuits in automobiles, homes, even cities has been reported in conjunction with UFO incidents. E-M effects, as they are often called, could easily be the subject of a whole specialized study, but in this paper they are considered only because they provide tangible evidence attesting to the presense of a UFO.

RADAR:

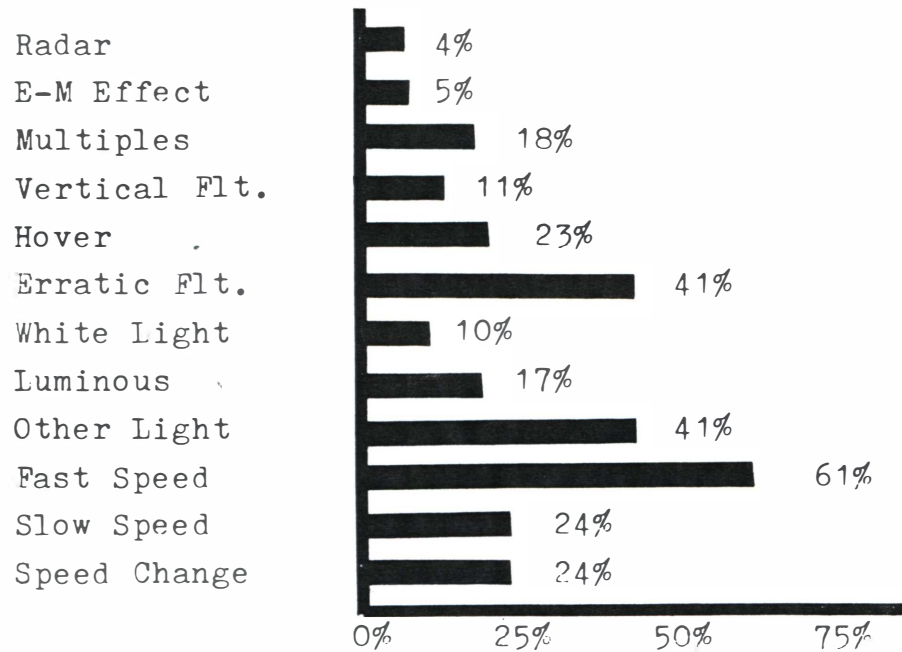
Radar reports are fairly common and very useful. Trained operators can readily interpret speed, direction, and approximate size of radar targets. Such valuable information should be utilized more fully in UFO research. It is not used the way it should be because it is not available to the ordinary investigator. I found mention of radar returns in only 4% of the cases.

SUMMARY:

As I mentioned earlier I am convinced that we are dealing with a phenomena worthy of a detailed and continuous scientific examination. The many well documented cases on record attest to this truth and cry out for further research.

In Figure 4 I have compared all the aforementioned flight characteristics, listing them by percentage of the overall total. I can find no way to explain away the bulk of these reports. Even if each characteristic had occurred singly rather than in conjunction with one or more other characteristics I could draw no other conclusion than:

- a) The vast quantity of data rules out chance or happenstance.
- b) The noted characteristics are not the results of a wild imagination or hallucinations.
- c) The combined effects tend to support the theory of solid, sophisticated, unidentifiable flying objects have previously and continue to operate in our airspace.



OVERALL COMPARISON

(Percentage based on 1000 cases, previously investigated, and selected at random)

Figure 4

My independent analysis of these 1000 cases selected at random is not intended to establish a new set of statistics or facts; but I am hoping to share the results of a study I undertook in order to satisfy my own curiosity. One can argue with the sources, the people, or even the way in which I selected the cases; but one cannot argue with the reality of these cases - they happened.

FUTURE PLANS:

At present I am working on a more detailed look at some selected cases. In this new study I will attempt to characterize the newer incidents, including those investigated by MUFON, not worrying about what people may think about personal prejudice. A comparison of recent as well as older incidents of a similar nature will be made, to see if some technology changes are evident in the UFO's themselves. Those more interesting characteristics will then be compared with our own technological advances, real and projected, to see if we can bootstrap any of the achievements displayed in UFO cases. Specifically these areas will include:

- a) Fusion Power: Magnetic containment
 Reaction initiation
 Direct thermal conversion
- b) Microwaves: Generation
 Effects
 Measurement
- c) Lasers: Fusion initiation
 Power source
 Communication
- d) Ionization: Surface effects
 Sonic boom attenuation
 Vehicle protection
 Penetration
 Artificial inducement
- e) Materials: Applications
 Test and demonstration
 Lab evaluations

CONCLUSION:

The UFO phenomena is highly complex and will remain a mystery until we gather sufficient data to understand what well may be the technology of the future. The unconventional combinations of flight characteristics displayed by UFO's tend to dazzle and confuse; but if accepted unemotionally and without prejudice could be the Fort Knox of technology. With or without the UFO we have an exciting future in space; but if the UFO phenomena can hasten out progress it must not be overlooked.