

Grumman F-11 Tiger - Intrepid Museum

Grumman F-11 Tiger at the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum

The Grumman F-11 Tiger, displayed on the flight deck of the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum, represents a crucial stage in the evolution of naval aviation, marking the transition to supersonic flight and the era of sophisticated all-weather interceptors.

1. Historical Background and Significance:

* **Supersonic Pioneer:** The F-11 Tiger holds a significant place in aviation history as the US Navy's first supersonic carrier-based fighter jet. Its development in the early 1950s demonstrated the feasibility and advantages of supersonic performance for naval aircraft.

* **Grumman Legacy:** Designed and built by Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation, the F-11 continued the company's legacy of producing robust and reliable carrier aircraft, following in the footsteps of the F4F Wildcat, F6F Hellcat, and F9F Panther.

* **From F11F-1 to F-11:** Initially designated the F11F-1, the aircraft was later renamed the F-11 Tiger in 1962 under the unified designation system.

2. Technical Specifications:

* **Crew:** 1

* **Length:** 51 ft 8 in (15.75 m)

* **Wingspan:** 31 ft 8 in (9.65 m)

* **Height:** 14 ft 2 in (4.32 m)

* **Empty weight:** 13,850 lb (6,280 kg)

* **Max takeoff weight:** 23,300 lb (10,570 kg)

* **Powerplant:** 1 × General Electric J79-GE-2A afterburning turbojet engine, 10,000 lbf (44 kN) dry, 14,500 lbf (64 kN) with afterburner

* **Maximum speed:** Mach 1.1 (725 mph, 1,167 km/h) at sea level

* **Combat radius:** 400 mi (640 km)

* **Service ceiling:** 50,000 ft (15,000 m)

* **Armament:**

* 4 × 20 mm (.79 in) Colt Mk 12 cannons

* AIM-9 Sidewinder air-to-air missiles

3. Interesting Facts and Stories:

* **Blue Angels:** The F-11 Tiger served with the Blue Angels, the US Navy's flight demonstration squadron, from 1957 to 1962. Its sleek design and supersonic capabilities made it a crowd favorite.

* **Sound Barrier Breaks:** F-11 pilots frequently broke the sound barrier during training flights, leading to sonic booms that surprised and sometimes startled civilians on the ground.

* **"Demonstrator" Aircraft:** The specific F-11 on the Intrepid, Bureau Number 141825, was a manufacturer's demonstrator and participated in various test programs.

4. Its Role in History:

* **Cold War Interceptor:** The F-11 served as a primary fleet air defense interceptor during the Cold War, protecting carrier battle groups from potential Soviet bomber attacks.

* **Training Platform:** As newer aircraft entered service, the F-11 transitioned to a training role, preparing pilots for the demands of supersonic flight.

* **Technological Advancement:** The F-11's development and deployment significantly advanced

naval aviation technology, paving the way for even more capable supersonic aircraft like the F-4 Phantom II.

****5. Current Condition and Display Information:****

* ****Location:**** The F-11 Tiger is displayed on the flight deck of the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum in New York City. It is exposed to the elements.

* ****Condition:**** While visually impressive, the aircraft is a static display and is not in flying condition. Its condition reflects its age and exposure to the elements.

* ****Accessibility:**** Visitors to the Intrepid can view the F-11 up close as part of their general admission. There is no direct access inside the cockpit.

The F-11 Tiger at the Intrepid Museum serves as a tangible reminder of a pivotal era in naval aviation, offering visitors a glimpse into the challenges and triumphs of early supersonic flight. Its presence on the deck of a historic aircraft carrier further enhances its historical context and significance.