

# North American T-2C Buckeye - Intrepid Museum

## The North American T-2C Buckeye on the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum

The T-2C Buckeye on the Intrepid is a testament to the era of jet-powered naval aviation training. It represents a vital step in preparing pilots for the demanding task of carrier operations.

## \*\*1. Historical Background and Significance:\*\*

\* Developed in the late 1950s by North American Aviation (later Rockwell International), the T-2 Buckeye was designed specifically for intermediate and advanced flight training for the US Navy and Marine Corps.

\* It filled a critical gap by providing a platform for student pilots to transition from basic trainers like the T-34 Mentor to the complexities of high-performance jet aircraft like the F-4 Phantom II and A-7 Corsair II.

\* The "Buckeye" nickname arose from the resemblance of the aircraft's wing shape to the buckeye leaf, Ohio's state tree, and a nod to North American's origins in Columbus, Ohio.

\* The T-2C model, introduced in 1962, featured upgraded engines, improved avionics, and an enhanced cockpit layout, making it a more capable training platform.

## \*\*2. Technical Specifications:\*\*

\* \*\*Manufacturer:\*\* North American Aviation (later Rockwell International)

\* \*\*Model:\*\* T-2C Buckeye

\* \*\*Crew:\*\* 2 (student and instructor)

- \* **Length:** 38 ft 10 in (11.84 m)
- \* **Wingspan:** 38 ft 1 in (11.61 m)
- \* **Height:** 15 ft 8 in (4.77 m)
- \* **Empty Weight:** 9,112 lb (4,133 kg)
- \* **Maximum Takeoff Weight:** 14,469 lb (6,563 kg)
- \* **Powerplant:** 2 × General Electric J85-GE-4 turbojet engines, 2,850 lbf (12.7 kN) thrust each
- \* **Maximum Speed:** 540 mph (870 km/h)
- \* **Range:** 900 mi (1,450 km)
- \* **Service Ceiling:** 42,000 ft (12,800 m)

### **3. Interesting Facts and Stories:**

- \* The T-2 Buckeye was known for its docile handling qualities, making it a forgiving platform for student pilots learning the ropes of jet flight.
- \* It could simulate carrier landings through the use of speed brakes and a high approach angle, preparing pilots for the demanding task of landing on a moving ship.
- \* Many naval aviators, including astronauts who flew in the Space Shuttle program, earned their wings in the T-2 Buckeye.
- \* The aircraft's distinctive high-mounted wings provided excellent low-speed handling characteristics, which was crucial for carrier landings.

### **4. Its Role in History:**

- \* The T-2 Buckeye played a vital role in training thousands of US Navy and Marine Corps pilots for

over three decades, from the Vietnam War era through the Cold War and beyond.

- \* It contributed significantly to the high level of proficiency demonstrated by naval aviators in numerous conflicts and operations.
- \* The T-2 also served in limited numbers with foreign air forces, including Greece, Venezuela, and the Philippines.

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

- \* The T-2C Buckeye on display at the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum is Bureau Number 154596.
- \* It is presented in the markings of Training Squadron Eight (VT-8) based at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Florida.
- \* Visitors to the Intrepid can view the aircraft on the flight deck, providing a close-up look at this important training aircraft. You can walk around and examine the exterior, but the interior is not generally accessible to the public.
- \* The museum provides information about the Buckeye's history, specifications, and role in naval aviation through signage and its website.

The T-2C Buckeye on the Intrepid serves as a powerful reminder of the dedication and training required to become a naval aviator and the crucial role this aircraft played in shaping the history of US naval air power.