

3.3.2

Additional Ground Witness Reports and Photographs

Richard F. Haines
NARCAP Chief Scientist

March 2010
Copyright

Introduction

A review and detailed discussion of seven photographs of spherically shaped UAP taken from airplanes is presented in 3.2.1 by Ballester Olmos and Shough, obtained from a database covering the period March 1972 to May 2004. The universe of photos¹ from which they selected these cases contained almost 10,000 images from around the world as of December 31, 2005. Of these they discovered 254 photos taken from an airplane! It is of interest to note that only seven of these 254 photos (2.7%) were of spherically shaped phenomena and also that none of the seven were considered to be a threat to flight safety. It is also interesting to note that there are enough cameras, eye witnesses, and interesting unusual phenomenon outside the airplane to generate 254 photos!

The preceding report by Dan Lee (3.3.1) summarized 127 ground witness reports in which a spherical UAP was seen approaching and otherwise interacting with an airplane or vice versa.² In this paper we will consider several interesting incidents in which photographs taken from the ground (along with written narratives) show spherical UAP apparently in relatively close proximity to an airplane. Most of these reports are written narratives of what was seen and are of little scientific value other than perhaps to sociologists and psychologists. Nevertheless, the often close proximity of these phenomena, whatever they turn out to be, to airplanes makes them a potential flight safety issue and therefore of interest to NARCAP. Some of these cases also raise interesting questions related to whether the U. S. Air Force is trying to intercept them in the name of national security; indeed, there are too many military jet aircraft intercepts with spherical objects to be overlooked. So called “restricted airspace incursions” continue to occur after the 9-11 disaster in 2001 which calls upon both the FAA and NORAD to detect and identify unknown aerial objects/vehicles quickly and accurately.³

¹ This project is called FOTOCAT (for photograph catalogue) and was initiated by Ballester-Olmos who serves as its director.

² A much larger body of evidence involving UAP of all shapes contains hundreds if not thousands of ground witness reports of UAP that approach airplanes and vice versa.

³ NORAD Instruction 10-15 dated 1 December 1999 and titled “Identification of Air Traffic” discusses the current four step identification process, military element responsibilities, and related topics. It is available digitally at: < <http://midway.peterson.af.mil/2letters/sc/css/scr/norad-us/ntable.htm>>

With the advent of cell phones with cameras and regular digital cameras in recent years we have seen an explosion in the number of photographs of strange objects in the sky. Some of these objects appear spherical while others do not. While most of these images are useless from a scientific standpoint a few provide further evidence that at times airplanes and UAP occupy the same airspace near to each other, i.e., they qualify as a near-miss incident from an official point of view.

The following cases all took place within the past nine years and were captured on film or digital media. They are presented chronologically and must not be considered an exhaustive collection.

Case 1. July 25, 2001 Daytime

An analog color (film) image was taken during a Air Force Thunderbird's Air Show at F. E. Warren Air Force Nuclear Base, near Cheyenne, Wyoming by a father and son who submitted it to the Mutual UFO Network's CMS data file. The image (Figure 1) shows five jets in close formation with curved smoke trails behind them as well as three small, white objects; one appeared below and two above the jets.



Figure 1. Three unidentified objects in the sky near Air Force Thunderbird jets on July 25, 2001 near Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Case 2. March 2003 at 1500 hrs.

Three unidentified objects were photographed as they paced a “black helicopter” that was flying toward the north “...flying fast and low...” toward Spokane. The location was near the Tri Cities, Washington area on the Columbia Plateau. The color photograph can be seen at: <http://www.rense.com/general39/trio.htm>

Case 3. January 8, 2005 at 1048 hrs.

A photographer in New Zealand took the photograph in Figure 2 using a Nikon D70 DSLR camera. After taking this and several other photos and downloading them into his computer he noticed this small, white “orb” which, according to the photographer, is not a bird, insect, the Moon, balloon, dust, or camera fault(s). He inserted the three enlargements of the orb as shown here and submitted them to the J. Rense website for public comment about what it could be.

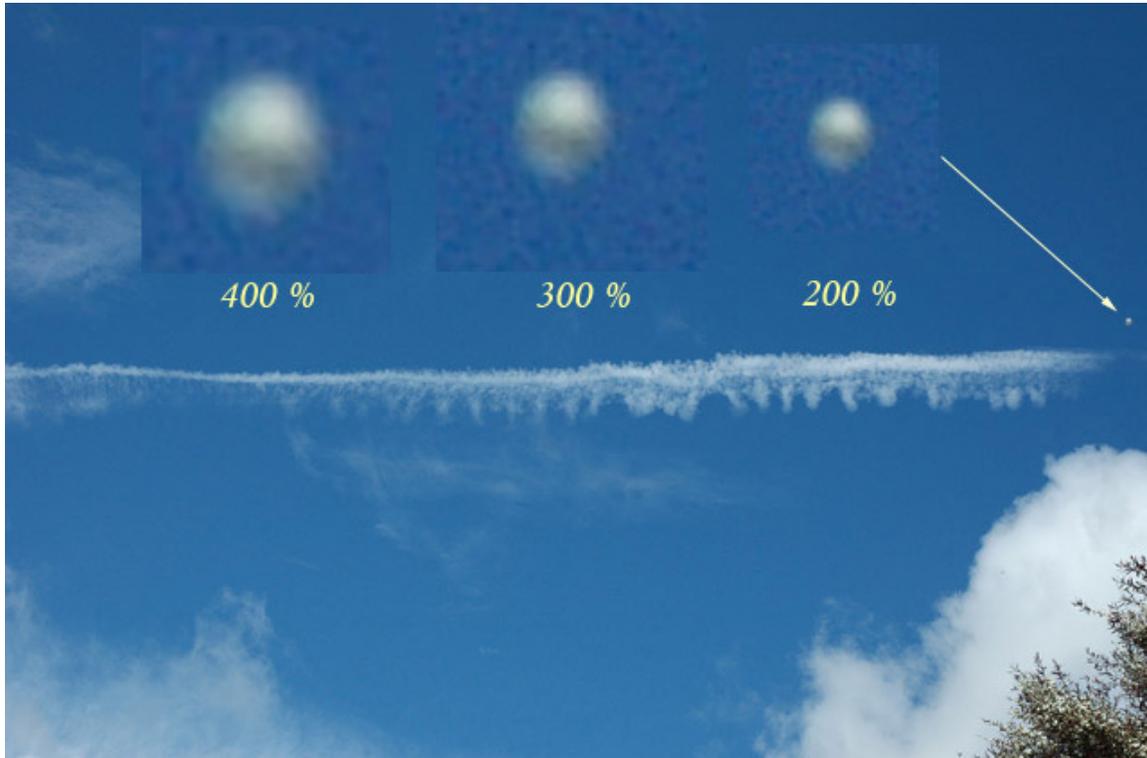


Figure 2. White Orb and Jet Contrail with Three Enlargements of Orb.

Case 4. January 8, 2005 at 1713 hrs.

A color photograph was taken by Oscar Roberto who was near the airport at Toluquilla-Tiajomalco Jalisco, Mexico looking toward the SE. After taking a still photograph he used a video camera to record three more spheres “...flying very fast near the airplane.” The still image is found at <http://www.hbccufo.org/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=2721>

Case 5. September 24, 2009

The following UAP sighting report was sent to the Mutual UFO Network on September 25, 2009 and included in its Case Management System (CMS). The event allegedly took place the day before by a commercial pilot witness and his son, both near their home in Arizona. He submitted a relatively clear and detailed report that contains some valuable information about which a number of challenging questions are raised. His verbatim report is copied below with inserted footnotes. Figure 3 is a copy of the drawing he submitted to MUFON; its five sections clearly portray a puzzling set of events that should be explained through scientific analysis.

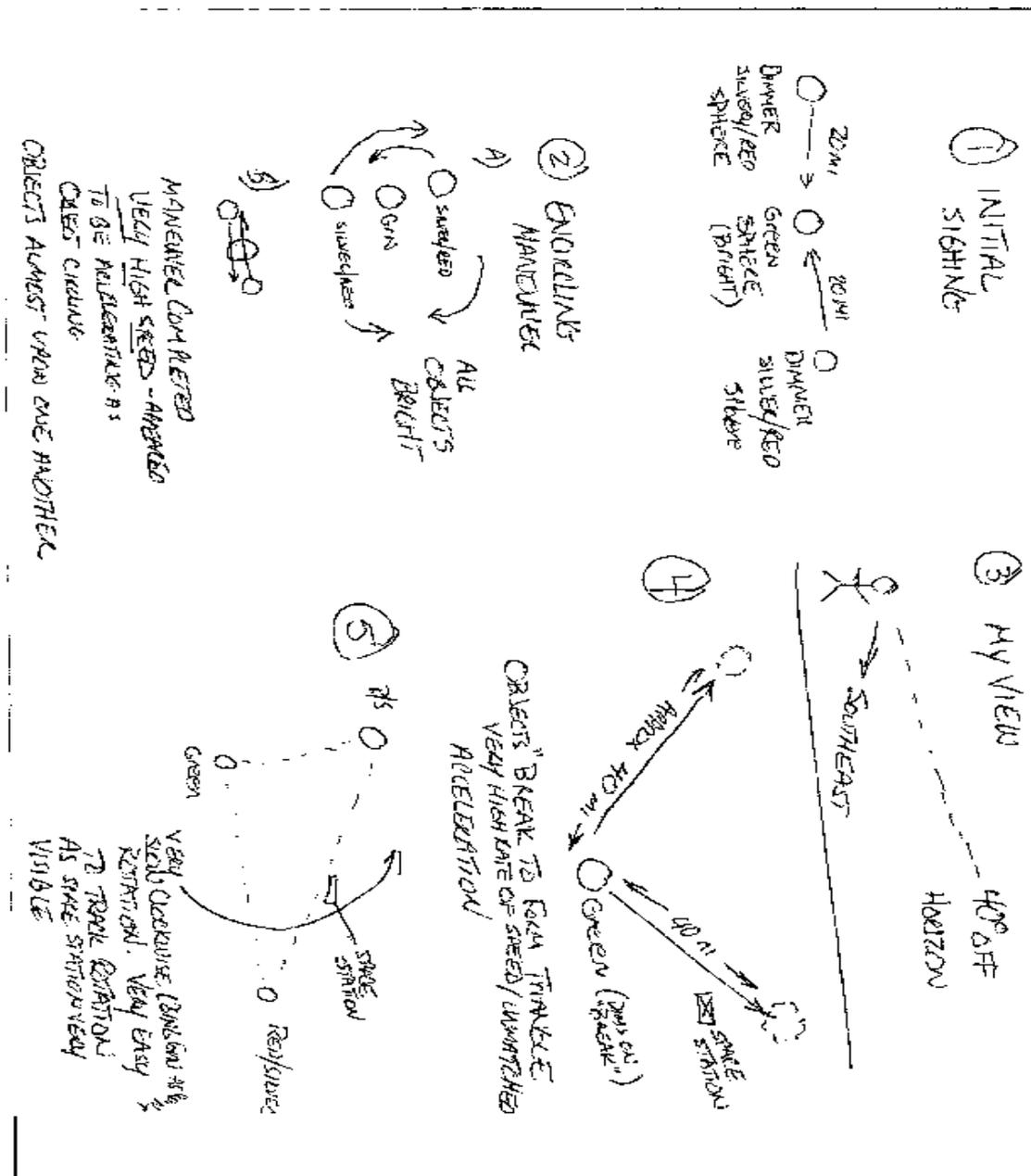


Figure 3. Witness Drawing of UAP and its Sequential Dynamics

Long Description of Sighting Report. "I went outside with dog. When I looked up I saw one bright sphere and light, green in color heading northwest towards me. The (sic) were two other dimmer lights converging on the sphere. Direction of objects 40 mi southeast of Tucson and Davis Monthan, AFB. I initially thought it was an airliner heading for the "Suns Arrival" into Phoenix airport. I had noticed that there were no additional position lights, and the two other objects were dimly lit with a slight reddish silver tint. As a trained airline pilot, I found it odd that there was no starboard green or port side red, and the white marker beacon was non-existent. This got my attention. Once the objects converged upon the brightest, the two dimmer spheres encircled it several times, and then dramatically increased in brightness. After several "spins" at a high rate of speed (and it seemed they were accelerating in the rotations) in extremely close proximity to one another, the brightest (Green) remained stationary, while the two other spheres accelerated to what appeared to be "pre-set points" to form a perfect right triangle in unison. Once the other two spheres broke from the green, the green sphere went dim. The spheres were stopped on "points" estimated at 40 miles apart. Estimated altitude of objects 60,000 feet. Size of all objects at estimated altitude would approximate the visible size of an MD80 at 30000 feet of altitude. The spheres remained stationary, yet the right triangle began to rotate slowly in a clockwise motion while maintaining spacing and triangular shape. Once the sphere encircled the green, and broke for the "points" the neighborhood dogs, coyotes, and even my dog began to howl, bark, and whine. This was also pretty strange. The dogs and coyotes continued to howl for about 8 minutes, my dog was very nervous and "whining" and wanted to go in. I watched for several minutes, and called my son out to look. He immediately spotted the triangle and noticed a slow clockwise rotation of the triangle using the green object as a reference point. The objects maintained what appear to be a perfect formation. I went inside, and came out about 10 minutes later and the "Triangle of objects" was gone. There were 3 very distinct objects, and very discernable as "spheres". There was no sound audible to my ears, and the neighborhood was void of city noises, but "something" clearly agitated every dog and coyote around for 8 minutes or so. After the objects disappeared, the animals quited (sic) down."

"My feelings after watching these objects are of wonderment. I was amazed at the sheer speed and the acceleration of these objects. It took them maybe 4 seconds to travel from the green object to "set points" estimated at 40 miles apart, and then come to a very distinct "on a dime" stop. The precision and timing of the maneuver was nothing short of amazing. The only odd feeling that had was the reactions (sic) of the animals. The noises that they were making were not your "normal" barks and coyote "yips". It was just odd."

Discussion. If the witness's description is to be taken seriously these three small spheres of colored light could not have been aircraft, UAV, or balloons because of their: (a) high velocity, (b) sudden deceleration, (c) precise orbiting about a common point at high speed and (d) other motions. The witness' estimation of the distances traveled by the two reddish points of light may be in error (even by a large amount) but their basic motions are still quite clear. How can both reddish points perform high speed (even accelerating) orbits around the green point, suddenly "break" away in different directions that appear from the ground to be a right triangle, and then begin to rotate around the same green point at their new and much larger radius? Such maneuvers call for highly accurate navigation (location in three-dimensional space) and flight guidance (thrust or energy vector control) relative to one another. Such maneuvers far exceed any terrestrial technology the author knows about. Why would the two reddish points act in such a coordinated manner? Even if they were purely

electrical phenomenon (at a macro scale) what could control their precisely coordinated motions?

If this bizarre aerial display was produced by optical projection of some kind [e.g., using laser beam(s)] what was the surface upon which the beams reflected and from where were they projected? There were no clouds in the sky and the air was dry (average relative humidity was 24 percent). The average wind velocity that day was about 8 mph out of the SE (max. = 22 mph). Sunrise was at 6:13 am and sunset at 6:17 pm MST.

These five basic motion events appear to have been programmed in the sense of being deliberate (almost geometric) motions using the bright green sphere as their point of reference. The reported changes in brightness (i.e., radiated energy) also are of interest.

The witness said that: (a) the two reddish points of light became "dramatically" brighter after they began orbiting the green point at high speed and in close proximity, (b) the green point became "dim" when the two reddish points left it which may suggest an energy transfer from it or perhaps a signal of some kind., and (c) the animal reactions that were said to have begun during Event 2 (high speed orbiting around the green point) may have been due to some sound (or other) vibration-related energy that they sensed.

Case 6. November 8, 2009. Analysis of Digital Photographs of Commercial Airplane and Small, Luminous UAP near Cottonwood, Arizona.⁴

Seven high resolution digital photographs were taken at between 17:16:37 hrs and 17:16:50 hrs. MST. A state-of-the-art, high resolution camera was used with 250 mm zoom lens and image stabilization capability. While all seven showed the contrail and the UAP only the first two included the jet airplane which was used for a size reference. Another nineteen frames were taken of the same luminous object beginning at 17:46:35 hrs. and ending 98 seconds later. A third set of six images was taken between 17:51:42 hrs and 17:53:35 hrs (113 seconds duration) of three military jets that arrived minutes later and flew overhead in the same direction as the commercial jet airplane. Figure 4 shows the first (4,272 x 2,848 pixels) photograph taken with the location of the UAP indicated by the arrow. An enlargement of the UAP also has been inserted in the frame.

⁴ The author thanks the Mutual UFO Network and Mr. Dominic Mancini for his cooperation with this study. The full report is available as Technical Report 13 (2009) on the NARCAP website. (www.narcap.org).



Figure 4. Photograph of Commercial Airplane and UAP In front of Airplane on its Left Side (IMG 0295, Local Time (T) = 17:16:37, 1/500th sec., f8, 250 mm)

Embedded data within the RAW data image file provided additional information for each of the thirty-one photographs.⁵ In an attempt to discover whether the UAP was stable or moving its lateral location was measured relative to the contrail in all of the first series of photographs. Winds were about 9 to 13 mph out of the S to SW and the airplane's heading was toward the NW which would cause the contrail to move generally toward the right side of the photos by some unknown but small distance over the 13 second-long period of these seven photos. If the contrail was not moving laterally at all the UAP was found to be moving at about eleven mph against the wind.

Of more importance here was whether or not the UAP might have been a threat to flight safety. The linearity of the airplane's contrail was measured in all of the photographs and found to be straight. The presence of the UAP did not appear to cause a deviation of the flight path of the airplane. It isn't known whether the cockpit crew saw the UAP. Figure 5 is an enlargement of the photograph taken two seconds after that of Figure 4 with the white UAP now visible in the lower right corner.

⁵ This information is included with each figure legend.



Figure 5. Enlargement of Airplane and UAP in IMG 0296
(T 5:16:39, 1/400th. sec., f8, 250 mm)

Another analysis was performed by enlarging only the UAP area on all of the twenty-one photographs. Several are reproduced here (Figures 6 through 10) at the same enlargement factor to illustrate the wide range of shapes that were recorded of the same luminous source. They illustrate some of the difficulties encountered in analyzing photographs taken with a hand-held camera.

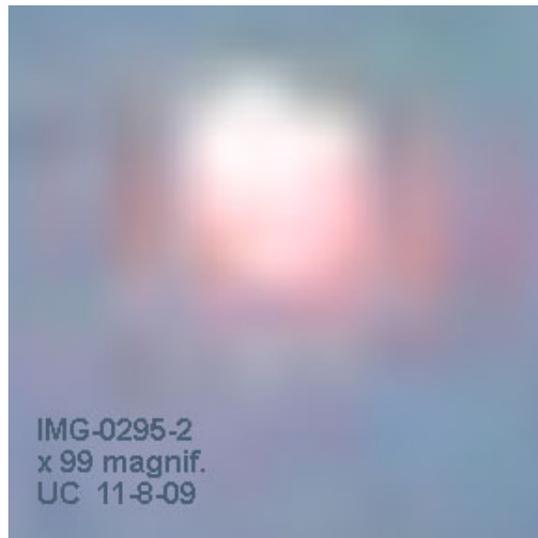


Figure 6. Enlarged UAP of IMG0295
(T = 17:16:37, 1/500th sec., f8, 250 mm)

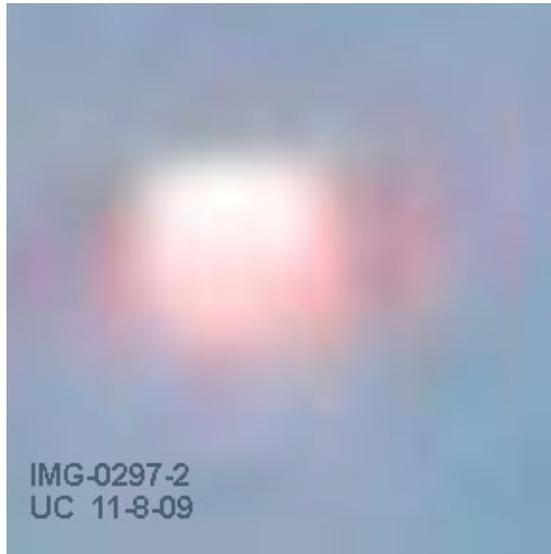


Figure 7. Enlarged UAP of IMG0297
(T = 17:16:41, 1/500th sec., f8, 250 mm)

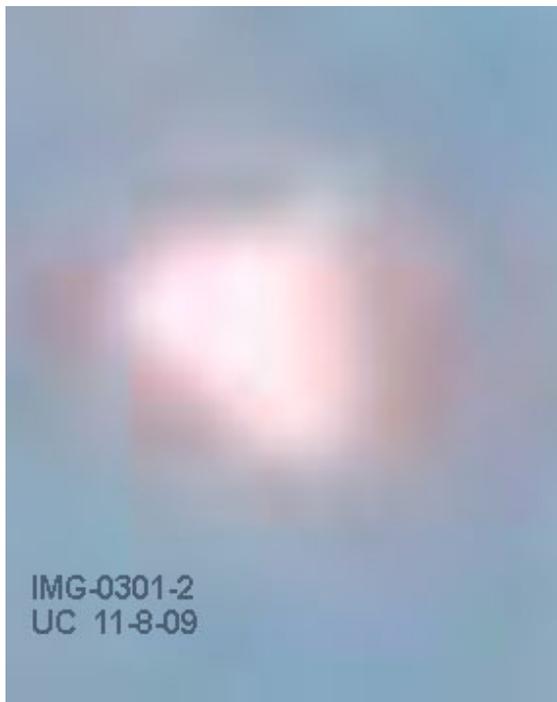


Figure 8. Enlarged UAP of IMG0301
(T = 17:16:50, 1/500th sec., f8, 250 mm)

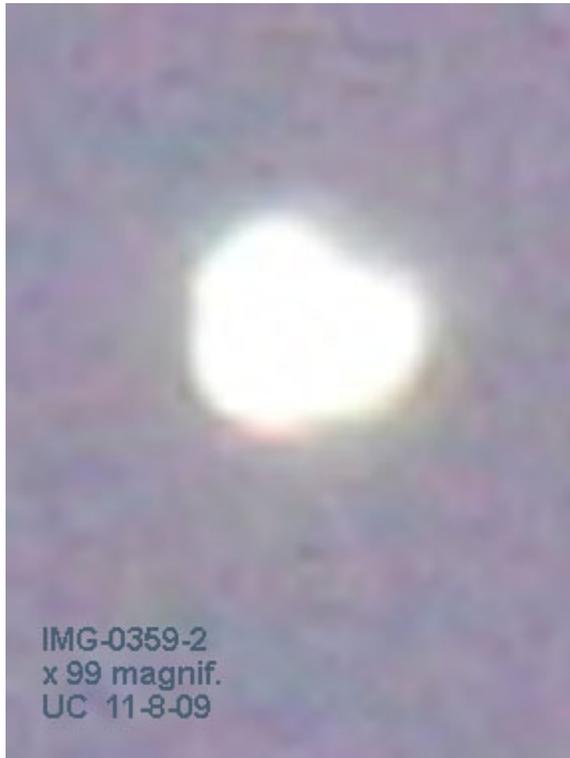


Figure 9. Enlarged UAP of IMG 0359
(T = 17:46:38, 1/8th sec., f5.6, 250 mm)



Figure 10. Enlarged UAP of IMG 0367
(T = 17:47:06, 1/15th sec. f4, 65mm)

Either the UAP is changing shape very rapidly, camera movement (image smear) is causing these different shapes, or some combination of both.⁶ Optical distortion of the light from the UAP due to atmospheric refraction could not be expected to produce the ultra-long streaks discovered in this series (not included here). If the first explanation is correct it might point to some kind of highly dynamic and energetic plasma phenomenon. The UAP remains unidentified at this time.

Case 7. November 24, 2009 Rochelle, Illinois at 1555 hrs.

This abbreviated report (and associated photographs) was made by a witness riding in the back seat of an automobile on a clear, sunny day. It was submitted for inclusion in the Mutual UFO Network's CMS file. It is paraphrased here.

'I saw a white line (in the sky) as if someone drew it with a ruler... a few minutes later (our car now heading south on the highway)... I looked up again and it seemed to be closer... with no shape of an airplane in front of the line. The line was moving forward. I took the first photograph (Figure 11). There were a few more flying objects behind and in front of the sphere that seemed to be chasing it (one from its front and the other from behind).'

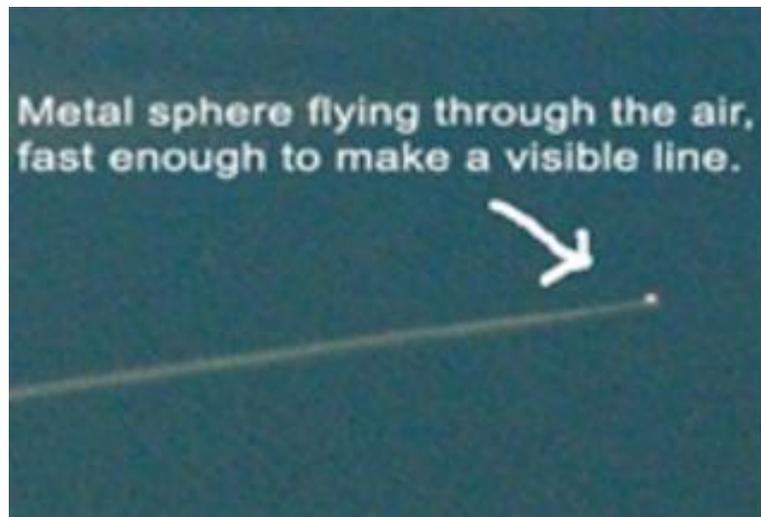


Figure 11. First Photograph Taken of Small UAP with White Trail

'It was moving fast like a jet... but it didn't make engine smoke (like the two jets did). Both jet airplanes were making wide contrails (see Figure 12) but the sphere (only) made a (white) line... Suddenly the sphere disappeared and after a few minutes the two jets crossed quite close to each other. Then the metal sphere reappeared again a little bigger in size and near the spot where it had disappeared. It looked like a shiny metal sphere with no legs, wings, windows, nothing. It (stayed) there for another 2 or 3 seconds (without) moving at all and then slowly disappeared as if it melted into the air.'

⁶ Figures 8 and 9 were taken of the same luminous source about thirty minutes after the previous photos.



Figure 12. Second Photograph Taken by Ground Witness of Jet Airplane and its Wider Contrail

Comments: This is an interesting narrative because, if the basic details are accurate, the small, spherical UAP: 1) is approached by two jets, 2) disappears as they near it, 3) produces an unusually thin and straight trail in the sky, and 4) reappears after the jets leave the area. This is not at all a unique case (see 3.3.1) and raises several interesting questions related to the propulsion system of the object and its capability to disappear and reappear (apparently) in response to the presence of other airplanes. One also might ask why the sky color and brightness are so different between these images if they were taken almost at the same time?

Case 8. December 4, 2009, nighttime, Santa Clara, California

This brief (paraphrased) report was obtained from MUFON's CMS file and demonstrates that some luminous spheres can travel along a zig zag flight path and also eject balls of light from them.

As a man walked in his neighborhood after dark he noticed an orange light in the sky of an unusual color. Its angular size was about that of Venus and was moving toward the SW in a zig zag motion coming toward me.⁷ He estimated its altitude to be about 7,500 feet. When it was about five miles away it had grown in angular size to about 2.5 times the apparent size of Venus and about as bright. Then the single light split into two; then three very small (orange) spheres seemed to fall from the object. They slowed as they fell and then disappeared from sight.

Comments: These reported dynamics are familiar to those who study UAP reports. These UAP could not have been illuminated balloons, airplanes, birds, or astronomical bodies for obvious reasons. If some natural plasma phenomenon caused this UAP what kind of electrical and/or magnetic field characteristics could cause a zig zag flight path that involves a forward velocity coupled with an alternating attracting – repelling, side-to-side motion?

⁷ The witness must have been looking toward the NE at the time.

Summary

These eight cases provide further support for the contention that there are free-flying objects in the sky that appear white, self-luminous (or highly reflecting), and spherical. While it is possible that some of them may be balloons the UAP in cases 5, 7, and 8 certainly are not. The current climate of official ridicule that surrounds the reporting of such objects by flight crews makes it almost impossible to obtain the kind of accurate details needed to more fully understand them.

References

- Haines, R.F., Small White Ball of Light Flies near Airliner: Investigation of High Resolution, Digital, Color Photographs of July 3, 2005 at 2031 Hrs., Palo Alto, California.
NARCAP Technical Report 12, July 27, 2007.
- Lally, V.E., Balloons - Types, Flight Profiles and Visibility, Chpt. 8, In Gillmore, D.S. (Ed.), Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects. Bantam Books, New York, 1968