

F-15 dogfights shatter the calm in Oregon wilderness

Like a virtual video game

By MARK FREEMAN
The Mail Tribune

MEDFORD — Each year Gabe Howe of Ashland hikes deep into his beloved Kalmiopsis Wilderness Area to really get away from it all.

But on June 21, it was if he had hiked into a virtual video game.

Out of nowhere, F-15 fighter jets streaked across the sky, complete with dogfights and evasive maneuvers as if someone was shooting missiles at them — despite the fact that it's fire season in this remote area.

"It was like a war zone," says Howe, executive director of the Siskiyou Mountain Club. "These fighter jets were chasing each other around, sonic booms and even shooting off flares. That's not the experience I'm looking for."

"It's not conducive to the management of a wilderness," says Howe, who shot a short video of a spent flare in the air. "It doesn't seem they should be doing that in a place of that level of protection."

Turns out the Oregon Air



Oregon Military Department

F-15 Eagles fly over the Oregon Coast.

National Guard enjoys the Kalmiopsis for the same reason Howe does: Getting away from people.

"We don't like to fly over populated areas," says Senior Master Sgt. Jennifer Shirar at Klamath Falls' Kingsley Field, the only F-15 fighter training facility in the United States.

Guard pilots train on weekdays and the occasional Saturday in so-called "Military Operations Areas" mostly in

central Oregon but occasionally in southwest Oregon, smack-dab in one of Oregon's wildest recesses, records show.

The Kalmiopsis is part of the Dolphin MOA, a secondary training area that the Guard can use without the consent, blessing or even knowledge of Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest officials because the military and the Federal Aviation Administration control the airspace.

decoys heat-seeking weapons fired at the aircraft.

A 2017 Guard environmental study states pilots don't fire the flares lower than 5,000 feet above the ground — far higher than the 1,000-foot minimum to ensure no wildfires occur. Also, every safety precaution is taken, including shots to ensure the flares burn out before they hit the 5,000-foot elevation, Shirar says.

"This is our state, too," Shirar says. "We live here. We recreate here. We want to keep our state beautiful as well."

Amanda Lucas, the unit aviation officer for the U.S. Forest Service and federal Bureau of Land Management in southwest Oregon, says there have not been any documented fires cause by National Guard flares in western Oregon, but a few have been found in central Oregon.

Shirar declined to say how often F-15s enter that area, but she did say training involved dogfights and the shooting of flares.

The flares are actually magnesium pellets that, when ignited, burn less than 10 seconds but at 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit, according to the Guard's 2002 environmental assessment for their use.

The burn temperature is hotter than the aircraft exhaust, so it attracts and

The small fire was in the Ashland watershed and was extinguished, Lucas says.

Howe says his Siskiyou Mountain Club crew was in the Kalmiopsis last year on the eve of the Chetco Bar Fire when they saw the F-15s practice dogfighting and fire flares.

The Chetco Bar Fire, which eventually enveloped 191,197 acres including portions of the Kalmiopsis in the upper Chetco River Basin, was caused by lightning, and Howe says "unequivocally" that no spent flares ignited any portion of that fire.

When the crew returned, Howe says he talked to them individually about what they saw and their accounts were consistent. They were also consistent with rumors Howe had heard from botanists and others who venture into the Kalmiopsis.

However, he didn't say anything at the time because he didn't think people would believe him.

"It just sounds like a conspiracy," Howe says. "Living in Ashland, people would associate me with the anti-vaccination crowd or the chemtrails crowd."

"But I saw it with my own two eyes," he says.

BIRTH

June 29, 2018

NESS, Melissa and Luke, of Warrenton, a girl, Zoe Rose Ness, born at Columbia Memorial Hospital in Astoria. Grandparents are Denise Ness, Teresa Brownlie and Terry Johnson, all of Astoria.

FIVE-DAY FORECAST FOR ASTORIA AccuWeather DOWNLOAD THE APP

TONIGHT	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
54	72 55	72 55	67 53	70 55
Partly cloudy	Sunshine and nice; breezy in the afternoon	Mostly sunny and pleasant	Times of clouds and sun	Pleasant with some sun

ALMANAC
Astoria through Monday.

Temperatures
High/low 65°/57°
Normal high/low 67°/53°
Record high 91° in 1926
Record low 41° in 1938

Precipitation
Monday Trace
Month to date 0.02"
Normal month to date 0.40"
Year to date 35.67"
Normal year to date 36.31"

SUN AND MOON

Sunset tonight 9:07 p.m.
Sunrise Wednesday 5:35 a.m.
Moonrise today 3:23 a.m.
Moonset today 6:41 p.m.

New First Full Last
July 12 July 19 July 27 Aug 4

UNDER THE SKY

Tonight's Sky: Corona Borealis, the northern crown, high overhead as darkness falls.

TOMORROW'S TIDES

Astoria / Port Docks

Time	High	Time	Low
1:21 p.m.	7.2 ft.	6:58 a.m.	-1.2 ft.
none		6:39 p.m.	2.4 ft.

NATIONAL CITIES

City	Today	Wed.	W
Allianta	82 44 s	87 46 s	
Boston	81 46 s	86 53 s	
Chicago	74 57 s	76 57 s	
Denver	81 51 s	88 57 s	
Des Moines	67 56 pc	69 58 s	
Detroit	84 49 s	92 53 s	
El Paso	90 57 s	96 62 s	
Fairbanks	77 54 pc	87 60 s	
Honolulu	68 53 pc	67 53 s	
Indianapolis	70 56 s	69 56 s	
Kansas City			
Las Vegas			
Los Angeles			
Los Angeles			
Memphis			
Miami			
Nashville			
New Orleans			
New York			
Oklahoma City			
Philadelphia			
St. Louis			
Salt Lake City			
San Francisco			
Seattle			
Washington, DC			

REGIONAL WEATHER
Shown is tomorrow's weather. Temperatures are tonight's lows and tomorrow's highs.

REGIONAL CITIES

City	Today	Wed.	W	City	Today	Wed.	W
Baker City	82 44 s	87 46 s		Olympia	73 50 pc	82 52 s	
Bend	81 46 s	86 53 s		Pendleton	85 55 s	89 60 s	
Brookings	74 57 s	76 57 s		Portland	78 60 pc	88 64 s	
Eugene	81 51 s	88 57 s		Roseburg	84 58 s	91 62 s	
Ilwaco	67 56 pc	69 58 s		Salem	80 56 pc	90 61 s	
Klamath Falls	84 49 s	92 53 s		Seaside	69 55 pc	72 57 s	
Medford	90 57 s	96 62 s		Spokane	79 56 s	85 61 s	
Newberg	77 54 pc	87 60 s		Springfield	82 54 s	88 57 s	
Newport	68 53 pc	67 53 s		Vancouver	77 57 pc	87 61 s	
North Bend	70 56 s	69 56 s		Yakima	84 51 s	90 58 s	

TOMORROW'S NATIONAL WEATHER
Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day.

Maritime workers talk job opportunities

The Daily Astorian

The Grays Harbor Historical Seaport, the nonprofit that runs the tall ships Hawaiian Chieftain and Lady Washington, is bringing a maritime training program to Astoria later this month.

The nonprofit operates Sea School Northwest, a program designed to train adults for entry-level maritime jobs in eight weeks at sea.

"We are looking for young adults who are ready to jump in, and start something totally new in their life," Cait-

lin Stanton, assistant director of the program, said in a release. "Joining Sea School Northwest means you will leave home, join the crew of a ship, and become a mariner. If you complete the program, you'll get a foot in the door to an amazing, high-wage, growing job market. We have scholarships for people who are ready to make the leap, and for people from the Oregon Coast, this work is part of a long tradition."

The Columbia River Maritime Museum will host a maritime industry panel from

11 a.m. to 1 p.m. July 27 in partnership with the nonprofit and Clatsop Community College, which offers a maritime science program. The event will feature a group of working mariners talking about their jobs. Attendees can learn about job opportunities and requirements.

Sea School Northwest staff will also be on hand to answer questions and talk about scholarship opportunities available to anyone 18 to 35 who makes less than double the federal poverty level.

ON THE RECORD

Assault

• After two incidents last weekend, Adam Taylor, 22, of Warrenton, was arrested by Warrenton police on the 470 block of Main Avenue and charged with two counts of assaulting a public safety officer, resisting arrest, two counts of first-degree criminal trespass and two counts of criminal mischief. At 2:01 p.m. Saturday, Taylor was arrested after he

allegedly trespassed in his mother's home and damaged property. At 11:04 a.m. Sunday, his mother came home from work and allegedly found him sleeping. After he woke up, police arrived and arrested him again. While being led to the police car in handcuffs, Taylor allegedly began resisting, forcing three officers to restrain him. Two officers sustained cuts and were bleeding. Once in the

police car, Taylor allegedly began yelling and kicking the door of the police car, causing roughly \$500 worth of damage.

DUII

• At 2:51 a.m. Sunday, Michael Kakuska, 22, of Seaside, was arrested by Warrenton police on Eighth Street and Main Avenue and charged with driving under the influence of intoxicants and possession of inhalants.

DEATHS

July 7, 2018

MOSIER, Mary R., 67, of Gearhart, died in Gearhart. Ocean View Funeral & Cremation Service of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

July 6, 2018

ARAGON, Bonaventura, 76, of Bremerton, Washington, died in Astoria. Ocean View Funeral

& Cremation Service of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

CABIC, Sharon, 73, of Seaside, died in Seaside. Ocean View Funeral & Cremation Service of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

July 4, 2018

HARRIS, Gregory Alan, 54, of Gresham, formerly of

Warrenton, died in Portland. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

July 2, 2018

FRANKLIN, John A., 72, of Seaside, died in Seaside. Ocean View Funeral & Cremation Service of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

TUESDAY

Astoria Design Review Committee, 5 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

Astoria Historic Landmarks Commission, after Design Review Committee meeting, City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

Cannon Beach City Council, 5:30 p.m., work session, City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.

Clatsop County Fair Board, 5:30 p.m., Clatsop County Fairgrounds, 92937 Walluski Loop.

Miles Crossing Sanitary Sewer District Board, 6 p.m., 34583 U.S. Highway 101 Business.

Clatsop Community College Board, 6:30 p.m., Columbia Hall Room 219, 1651 Lexington Ave.

WEDNESDAY

Astoria City Council, 9 a.m., work session on library, City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

Clatsop County Board of Commissioners, 6 p.m., Judge Guy Boyington Building, 857 Commercial St.

Wickiup Water District Board, 6:30 p.m., 92648 Svensen Market Road, Svensen.

LOTTERIES

OREGON

Monday's Pick 4:
1 p.m.: 5-2-8-4
4 p.m.: 8-5-9-2
7 p.m.: 8-5-5-5
10 p.m.: 0-3-4-1
Monday's Lucky Lines: 04-08-11-16-20-22-27-32

Estimated jackpot: \$37,000
Monday's Megabucks: 1-5-12-18-24-28
Estimated jackpot: \$3 million

WASHINGTON

Monday's Daily Game: 5-7-1
Monday's Hit 5: 08-09-21-23-30

Estimated jackpot: \$150,000
Monday's Keno: 04-13-14-18-20-22-27-29-34-40-42-43-44-50-52-60-66-75-76-78
Monday's Lotto: 02-07-17-22-36-45
Estimated jackpot: \$4.7 million
Monday's Match 4: 01-15-18-23

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