

The West Linn Cruising Triangle Close Encounter

An Oregon MUFON Case Study

by

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Abstract

Keywords: Triangle—Low-level—Close encounter—Metallic

Description	Witness Joan Tellerman (pseudonym) left her house to walk her dog. She heard unusual barking and howling of neighborhood dogs, looked up, and saw a triangular UFO moving swiftly along in a straight, very low-level trajectory for about 15 seconds.
Witness(es)	One only: Joan Tellerman (pseudonym).
Time and Date	March 19, 2010, at about 8:15 PM.
Place	In West Linn, Oregon, near the I-205 freeway.
Weather	Clear sky, visibility 10 miles, wind: NNE, 8.1 mph, temperature 57° F.
Duration	About 15 seconds.

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INTRODUCTION

This case is a close encounter of the first kind—a (structured) UFO within 500 feet. Although the sighting is brief, only 15 seconds, the witness got a very good look at the underside of the UFO as it cruised along seemingly only around 150 feet or so above the ground. This UFO was “announced” by somewhat unusual barking and howling among the neighborhood dogs and continued as the UFO receded into the distance and out of sight behind the distant tree line.

The witness, Joan Tellerman (pseudonym), is a professional woman in her 50s who works from her home. She was entirely cooperative in all aspects of the investigation, which included a face-to-face interview in her home. She answered all my questions during the interview in a forthright and intelligent manner. During the interview and questioning, I found that she pays close attention to detail and can articulate her observations very well. I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of her answers up to the level of her general knowledge and understanding of the world, which is high, but not technical.

Angular Size Discussion

I usually explain the concept of angular size and absolute (or real) size in my face-to-face interviews because many people are not familiar with these ideas and the distinction between them. After my discussion, Tellerman (and her husband) demonstrated ably that they understood the concepts, and they applied them immediately and answered my questions accurately. (For example, “Do you think you can cover the full moon with your thumb when it is held at arm’s length? They answered “yes,” though many people do not. “Yes” is the correct answer.) Angular size turns out to be important in this sighting as we will see.

I would like to thank Joan Tellerman and her husband for so graciously allowing me into their home to conduct an interview and re-enact her sighting, which occurred literally right outside her front door.

SIGHTING DESCRIPTION

On the night of March 19, 2010, around 8:15 PM, Joan Tellerman and her husband were enjoying a movie on DVD when their dog, Cooper (pseudonym), indicated to them it was time for him to do his duty outside. Cooper is a large, calm, and friendly dog and is not perturbed easily. She arose and the thought “I should take a camera” passed through her mind as she leashed up Cooper to take him out the front door. She doesn’t take photos much and her current cell phone does not have a camera, so this was a bit unusual.



Source: Keith Rowell

Figure 1. Tellerman Showing Size of UFO

Tellerman is outside her front door where she saw the UFO. (It was at night and clear so that the moon and stars could be seen—not cloudy as this photo shows.) She is holding her hand open to show the size in the sky that the object was. This is a very large angular size for a freely moving object in the sky. An airplane, for example, would have to be extremely close to the ground to be this size in the sky.

She and Cooper exited through the front door and immediately she heard the somewhat unusual barking and howling of a lot of neighborhood dogs. Within a few seconds of walking a little farther outside her front door, she looked up at the evening sky. The sky “was [almost] completely dark except for the stars and the crescent moon; there were no clouds in the sky.”

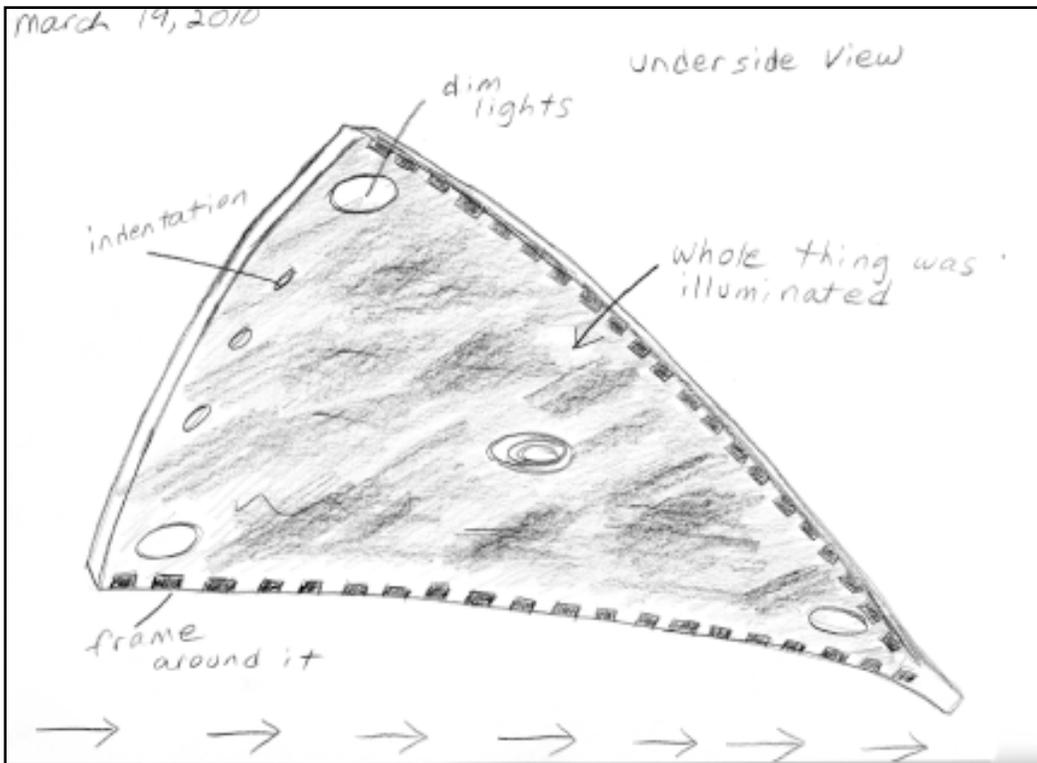
Low-Level, Triangle-Shaped UFO

Then she was taken aback by the sight of a fast-moving, darkish gray, but somehow still dimly illuminated, structured triangular UFO. “It was close enough that [I] saw the bottom of the metal, triangular-shaped vehicle. [I] was thinking it would hit some trees or crash because it was so low, but apparently it didn’t. [I] could see the bottom of this jet-sized vehicle, but it . . . didn’t look like a plane or jet. [I thought it] was at least 75 feet long. There were . . . orange lights on the bottom.”

The object had apparently just passed over her house and was at an approximately 70° angle up from the horizon when she first saw it. She “estimated it [was] between 50 to 75 yards up in the sky.”

Fast, Like a Speeding Car

The UFO was moving away from her rather fast, like a speeding car. It was so close that she got a very detailed look at it, though it was only for perhaps 15 seconds total. See *Figure 1, Tellerman Showing Size of UFO* and Tellerman’s drawing in *Figure 2, Tellerman’s Drawing of the Triangular Object*.



Source: Joan Tellerman

Figure 2. Tellerman's Drawing of the Triangular Object

The general direction of travel is indicated by the arrows at the bottom; that is, the leading edge was at the triangle point on the right side of the drawing. The entire object was lit with a very dim illumination and also had some dimly glowing lights as indicated in the corners and in the center. Tellerman said the object had a "metallic, industrial" look underneath, like a military tank, for example. The little dark rectangles around the outside are an attempt to convey the notion of a "frame" around the edges. She said she got the impression that the object was not flat to the ground, but angled up in such a way as to give her a better view of the underneath.

With neighborhood dogs barking and howling as the object cruised along in a more or less straight trajectory from the southeast to the northwest, she ran forward following it with Cooper, crossing out into the narrow road in front of her home and onto the far shoulder between some parked cars. At this point, the object was flying so low to the ground that it was beginning to be obscured by the many trees in her neighborhood. So she ran quickly about 20 feet to her left at the front of the parked cars to get a better look through an opening in the trees. The object had disappeared now over the distant tree line. See *Figure 3, View Outside Tellerman's Front Door.*



Source: Keith Rowell

Figure 3. View Outside Tellerman's Front Door

Tellerman saw this view outside her front door as the UFO traveled in a path from the upper left into the center of the photo. She ran with her dog straight across and then down to the left to find a better opening in the trees. She last saw the UFO as it disappeared beyond the distant tree line.

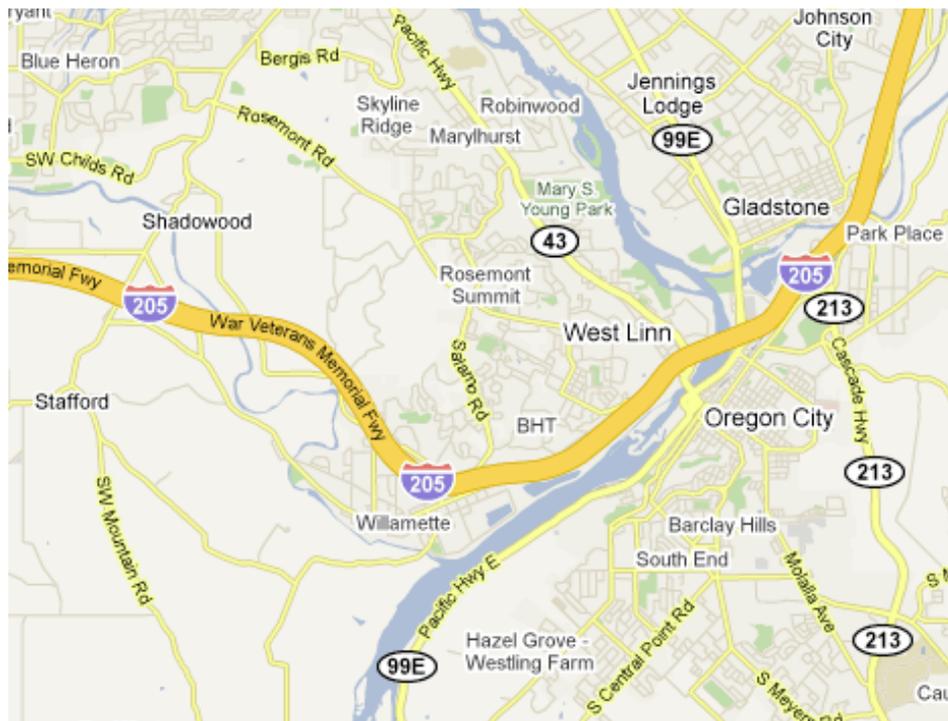
Cooper had apparently not noticed this strange object at all, though she was quite aware of the many neighborhood dogs barking and howling. At the end of the sighting, she could still hear dogs barking and howling, which was the case throughout the 15 seconds or so that she saw the object.

Immediately Afterward

She and Cooper went back inside their home through the front door, and she immediately told her husband about her sighting. Within an hour or so, she also called some local TV news stations, and she got through to one. A man answered who indicated that no other people had reported anything similar. She and her husband spent the rest of the evening trying to assimilate the experience.

ENVIRONMENT

The environment for this sighting is a residential neighborhood of the Willamette area of West Linn, Oregon, just north of the I-205 Freeway. The only significant industrial installations are a large paper mill at the Oregon City locks on the Willamette River, and the Clackamas County Wastewater Treatment facility in the Willamette area near the Willamette River. No significant features of the land or environment figure into this case. See *Figure 4, West Linn, Oregon, Sighting Environs*.



Source: Google Maps

Figure 4. West Linn, Oregon, Sighting Environs

Tellerman's sighting occurred just outside her home in the Willamette area of West Linn, Oregon.

Weather

See the details in *Table 1, Weather on Sighting Day*, for the weather on the day of the UFO sighting: March 19, 2010 at about 8:15 PM. Note that the wind speed near the surface was around 8 mph on the time in question, which rules out the possibility that Tellerman's UFO was an unpowered airborne object like a balloon. Tellerman's object was traveling too fast by an estimated ten times.

Table 1. Weather on Sighting Day

Event Date	Event Time	Temp (F)	Visibility (miles)	Wind Direction	Wind Speed (mph)	Conditions
3/19/10	8:15 PM	57°	10	NNE	8.1	Clear sky

EVIDENCE

The evidence in this case consists solely of the testimony of the only witness (Joan Tellerman). However, I have no reason to doubt her trustworthiness in relating her experience. As mentioned earlier, she has cooperated fully and answered all my questions in a forthright and articulate manner. A brief check on the Internet revealed nothing causing any doubt about her general trustworthiness or her standing in the community.

Tellerman was so impressed (as anyone would be) by the UFO that she witnessed that she called a couple of TV stations the evening of her sighting. Because of the size and low altitude of her sighting, she was convinced that other people must have certainly witnessed the UFO, too, and reported it. She did get through to one person, a man, at a local TV news station who said in response to her description of the UFO, "That's kind of funny that you'd report that today because it's the spring equinox and you could have seen a reflection from the Northern Lights." This, of course, is ridiculous, but is the kind of speculation that uninformed "authorities" will sometimes dream up on the spot. As noted earlier, he also indicated that no other reports of a sighting like hers had been reported to the station.

Within a day or so of the sighting, Tellerman casually asked the owner's of a local outdoor pool/hot tub in the neighborhood if anyone might have seen anything unusual on the night in question. Apparently, no one was at the pool/hot tub on the night of her sighting. So, the response was "no."

ANALYSIS

There are no photos or video in this case or physical evidence or even a second witness. So, there is not much to analyze of a technical nature, but we can do some "guesstimating" to get a better idea of the size of the UFO if it were indeed a conventional object like an airplane or ultralight or remote-controlled model aircraft that Tellerman somehow managed to misinterpret.

Tellerman held out her hand flat against the sky when I asked how big the UFO was in the sky. See *Figure 1, Tellerman Showing Size of UFO*. She did not hold up a couple of fingers or her thumb or compare the object to a full moon. She held up her hand, open and flat with fingers together. (She could have held up her hand flat but with fingers outstretched, but did not.) Also, a crescent moon was up and visible almost directly in the west about 35° above the horizon in the general direction that the UFO disappeared. She was aware of this at the time and said so in her testimony. She said the UFO was far bigger in the sky than the crescent moon that she saw.

UFO Altitude Like Height of Freeway Light Pole

In the long description for her MUFON UFO report, Tellerman used a specific object as an example of the altitude that she thought the UFO was above the ground as it flew over her. This object was a freeway lighting source called a high mast lighting pole intended for area lighting, usually in freeway interchanges. See *Figure 5, High Mast Freeway Lighting Pole*. According to Union Metal, a manufacturing concern that makes these products, these high mast lighting poles are anywhere from 60 to 150 feet high.

Tellerman said in her MUFON report, "As I was driving on the freeway the following day, I noticed [that] the tallest street lights [were] always next to certain areas of the freeway [the exchanges, mostly]. [I mean] the ones that have three lights on them. The tallest lights were how low the craft was flying."



Source: Union Metal

Figure 5. High Mast Freeway Lighting Pole

Tellerman's example of the height that the UFO passed over her. These lighting poles vary from 60 to 150 feet high.

Now let's suppose that Tellerman's UFO was actually a known object as mentioned above, then with her hand's angular size (about 10°), we can get an idea whether any of these guesses seem at all plausible. See *Table 1, Altitudes of Conventional Aerial Objects Given 10° Angular Size.*

Table 1. Altitudes of Conventional Aerial Objects Given 10° Angular Size

Object	Real Size (feet)	Altitude (feet)
Commercial Airliner	160	907
Military Jet	50	238
Light Plane	25	141
Ultralight	12	68
RC Model Plane	5	28

Table 1, Altitudes of Conventional Aerial Objects Given 10° Angular Size says, for example, that for a light plane of angular size 10° and real size of 25 feet, the light plane must be about 140 feet away. So, Tellerman’s feeling that the actual size of the UFO was like a jet or plane accords well with the light plane or possibly small military jet size, and her estimate (150 to 225 feet) of how far away the object actually was is consistent with this.

Conventional Aerial Objects Not Plausible

From *Table 1*, we can see that the distances of conventional aerial objects from Tellerman given their noisy propulsion systems would make all of these objects immediately recognizable and identifiable by the average person whether that person was especially knowledgeable or not about any particular conventional aerial object listed.

It strains credulity to believe that any of these conventional objects could have been the stimulus of her sighting. This consideration, of course, ignores her detailed description of what the object looked like. See *Figure 3, Tellerman’s Drawing of the Triangular Object*. The only “conventional” object she might have seen could possibly have been a “secret military aerial object” of some sort. This is always a possibility except that objects of similar description to Tellerman’s UFO have been seen as far back as the 1970s, at least in the U.S. This diminishes the plausibility of a “secret military aircraft.”

CONCLUSION

The UFO observation in this case was made by only one person. But this is offset by the fact that the witness saw the UFO at a very close distance. Tellerman saw the UFO only briefly, but it was so close that it was of very large angular size for objects seen freely maneuvering in the sky. This provides for lots of opportunity to see detail in the object, which is exactly what she did as laid out earlier in this report. Because of the richness of detail, the identification candidates are ruled out definitively except for the “secret military aircraft.”

Identification Candidates

The candidates for identification for this fast-moving, low-level, triangular UFO with very rich surface detail are the following:

- **Secret U.S. military or foreign power aircraft.** This explanation, of course, can never be completely ruled out by anyone except for the very few within the bowels of our deep black military and corporate contractor world who would also have access to all the on-going projects. This list of people is exceedingly small (perhaps only 100?!) because of the “need to know” and compartmentation of military secrets. However, verified reports of this kind of object over populated

areas in the U.S. are far fewer than “standard” UFOs. (We assume that secret military aircraft buffs could adequately “verify” this kind of report, but the documented record of reports of secret military aircraft appearing over populated areas is very scant, indeed.) The witness mentioned no sound whatsoever coming from this craft and also that she felt no wind, exhaust, hair standing up (electrical propulsion?), or other unusual effects that might be attributed to the movement of the craft. *Thus, this identification candidate is rejected.*

- **Police surveillance UAV.** No city police or county sheriff’s departments in the Portland metro area have any operational police surveillance UAVs, much less any that fit the description of this object. *Thus, this identification candidate is rejected.*
- **Aircraft.** No conventional aircraft, military or civilian, would make no sound or create no other environmental disturbances at 1000 feet, or very likely much closer, as this craft seems to have been according to witness testimony. *Thus, this identification candidate is rejected.*
- **Helicopter.** This candidate is no different from aircraft. *Thus, this identification candidate is rejected.*
- **Ultralight.** Ultralights have a top speed of around 100 mph and do not look like or behave like this UFO did. Also, there was no sound. *Thus, this identification candidate is rejected.*
- **Remote-controlled model aircraft.** RC models are usually built as replicas of conventional aircraft and do not look at all like what the witness described. Also, they are propelled by conventional, noisy piston or sometimes jet engines. Additionally, RC model hobbyists do their flying from and around specific sites with flat terrain, and there is no flat terrain within a mile or so of this sighting that RC model hobbyists are known to fly from. *Thus, this identification candidate is rejected.*

Since the identification candidates fail for the reasons stated, this UFO observation is classified as a true UFO, a MUFON UAV.