

AERIAL GUNNING ACCIDENT REPORT
USDA-APHIS-WILDLIFE SERVICES
Wendy Keefover-Ring, WildEarth Guardians (Updated 8-09)

Accident and Injury Summary

No Injuries 32 accidents with no injuries
 Minor Injuries 23
 Serious Injuries 9
 Fatal Injuries 10
Total Injuries/Fatalities 42

Total Accidents 54

DATE	LOCATION	IN-JURY	DESCRIPTION	TYPE OF AIRCRAFT & ENGINE
9/12/07	Ft. Stockton, TX NTSB Report	Serious Serious	Mechanical malfunction of helicopter shortly after take off and while cruising at about 50' from ground level. Team was "collecting coyotes" to test for rabies.	Robinson R22 Beta
6/1/07	Wayne County, UT NTSB Report	Fatal Fatal	Crash occurred at 8,300' in sagebrush landscape. Ground crew reported that several coyotes were in the area. No distress calls from plane before it crashed and erupted into fire.	Husky A-1
1/30/06	Gail, TX NTSB Report	None None	The "airplane settled into a mesquite tree thicket while maneuvering" at low altitude.	Piper PA-18-150
12/20/04	Terreton, ID NTSB Report	Serious Minor	Circling at low altitude, the "control stick went 'limp,' the tail went up."	Christen Industries A-1
12/01/04	Jal, NM NTSB Report	None	Pilot hit powerlines while trying to land to pick up gunner.	Piper PA-18-150
11/16/04	Idaho	None	Lost power, engine ceased running. Emergency landing.	Husky 96186
12/18/03	Craig, CO	None	Bent propeller, went off road on turn	Piper PA-18

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7/15/03	Zurich, MT NTSB Report	Serious Serious	Aircraft stalled while in a turn during a low level flight. Aircraft struck the ground.	Piper PA-18
7/14/03	Ely, NV NTSB Report	None None	In a practice landing while training for Wildlife Services, engine problems ensued. A wheel slid off the road and the craft landed in a ditch and flipped.	Piper PA-18-150
6/25/03	Big Timber, MT NTSB Report	Minor Minor	Engine lost power.	McDonnell Douglas 369E
2/10/03	OK	None	Power line strike, minimum damage to craft. Did not crash.	Bell 206 BIII
1/09/03	Rexburg, ID	None	Aircraft struck flushed 30 to 40 sage grouse at 100' above ground and struck bird(s)—causing a bent nose and wing.	Husky A-1
3/8/02	Winnemucca, NM NTSB Report	None None	Lost engine power on landing following 5.5 hours of flying on a "local area animal control flight."	Piper PA-18-150
10/26/01	Gooding, ID	None None	During coyote hunting shotgun pellet ricocheted off ground back to helicopter and irreparably damaged main rotor blade. Did not crash.	Hughes 500D
5/7/01	Conchas, NM NTSB Report	None None	Aircraft sustained substantial damage while on coyote hunt. Engine failure possibly due to flying at low altitude in high humidity.	Hiller-UH12
1/23/01	NV	None None	Gunner accidentally shot strut off of one wing. Plane landed and re-attached strut.	PA 18 -150
6/1/00	Austin, NV NTSB Report	Minor Minor	Aircraft "collided with the ground" while flying at low altitude.	Piper PA-18-150
5/3/00	Unknown locale	None None	Gunner shot propeller while behaving with "overzealous composure." Plane landed without incident.	Super Cub 91Y
3/27/00	Del Rio, TX NTSB Report	Fatal Fatal	No witnesses saw the accident; investigators suggest an "in-flight loss of control . . . [and] in-flight collision with terrain."	Hughes HU-269C
3/13/00	Rio Vista, CA NTSB Report	Serious Minor	Pilot was flying in an area cluttered with wind turbines and powerlines. He hit a line and plunged 120 feet.	Piper PA-18-150
2/19/99	Battle Mtn, NV	None	While in a turn, the plane encountered turbulence.	Christen, A-1

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	NTSB Report	None		
12/23/98	Tooele County, UT	None None	Gunner shot strut during multiple passes to kill a single coyote, which went unnoticed until later inspection.	Husky A1
4/2/98	OR	None Minor	Shotgun pellet ricocheted back and hit pilot in eye, shattering eyeglass lens and cutting eyelid, plane did not land.	
3/11/98	Lebec, CA NTSB Report	Fatal Serious	During a turn, the plane's wing struck the ground. Pilot's shoulder harness was modified.	Christen A-1, N9615G
1/22/98	Brackettsville, TX NTSB Report	Minor Minor	Engine failure caused helicopter to plunge from 75' to the ground.	Hughes 269C Lycoming HIO360D1A
1/15/98	Magdalena, NM NTSB Report	None None	Pilot lost lift and rotor RPM when coming out of a canyon.	Bell 47G3B1 Lycoming TVO435B1A
1/14/98	Spanish Fork, UT NTSB Report	Minor Fatal	Helicopter struck a tree on passenger side after engine failure.	Bell 47G-3B-2 Lycoming TVO435G1A
5/19/97	Bly, OR	None None	Propeller hit with 14 shotgun pellets.	
4/7/97	Capitan, NM NTSB Report	Minor Minor	Flying at 35' – engine failure. Estimated \$100,000 in damage to vehicle.	Bell TH-13T Lycoming TVO435B1A
2/20/97	Gooding, ID	None None	Gunner shot left strut.	
1/13/97	Gooding, ID	None None	Gunner shot fully through flagger when gun "slipped".	Piper Cub N74911
10/10/96	Holden, UT NTSB Report	Fatal Fatal	Crash attributed to poor maintenance and flying 75 pounds overweight.	Piper PA-18-150 Lycoming 0-320-B2B
9/30/96	Niobara County	None None	Engine failure caused forced landing.	
2/1/96	Lakeview, OR NTSB Report	Minor Minor	Pilot distracted by gunner's jammed rifle – crashed plane.	Christen Lycoming 0-360-C1G
10/20/95	Richfield, UT	None None	Gunner shot strut off of left wing. Plane still flew alright.	
5/25/95	Roundup, MT	None None	Bird struck helicopter and imbedded in windshield. Pieces of plexiglass hit gunner but he was not injured.	
1/12/95	Dumont, TX	Minor	Flying at 40' engine failed "catastrophically".	Hughes 269C

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	NTSB Report	Minor		Lycoming HIO360D1A
8/19/94	Ellendale, ND NTSB Report	None	No records provided by either the NTSB or APHIS.	Bellanca BL28
8/10/94	Tinnie, NM NTSB Report	None None	A "wildlife observation mission." Pilot hit road sign during takeoff following a hunt on the Jim Cooper Ranch.	Christen Husky A-1 Lycoming 0-36-C7G
6/20/94	London, TX NTSB Report	Minor Minor	While flying at low altitude, pilot experienced "partial power loss".	Hughes 269C Lycoming HI0-360D1A
1/7/93	Council, ID NTSB Report	Minor Minor	Crashed on an unplowed runway. Pilot failed to contact airport prior to landing and airport was closed.	Piper PA-18-135 Lycoming 0-320-B2B
1/22/92	San Luis, CO	None None	While making passes at a coyote plane struck and broke a power line.	
10/11/90	Silver Springs, NV *	None None	Gunner shot strut while hunting coyotes.	
9/25/90	Haggerman, NM	None None	Gunner shot strut while hunting coyotes.	
1/10/90	Rock Springs, WY	Minor	Plane collided with ground and crashed during coyote hunting operation. Extensive damage done to plane and 2 hours passed before plane was reported missing.	Piper PA- 18
1/9/90	Casper, WY	None None	Gunner shot propeller while firing at animals on ground. Plane landed okay.	
11/8/89	Alamagordo, NM NTSB Report	Serious Serious	While shooting coyotes, "airplane collided with the ground".	Douglas C-54B
1/24/89	Sweetwater, TX	None None	Gunner shot strut.	Super Cub N744
5/24/88	Spanish Fork, UT	None	Bolt came loose during flight and caused a forced landing.	Super Cub N91017
3/12/88	Manti, UT	None None	Helicopter flying in snowstorm scared a horse through a barbed wire fence causing fatal injury to horse. Owner sought compensation.	

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2/3/87	Richland, WA	None None	Helicopter crashed due to mechanical failure while hunting coyotes 15-20 ft above ground.	Bell 47-G3-B2A
5/12/86	Wilcox, AZ	Minor Minor	Plane stalled and crashed while hunting coyotes. Crash due to pilot error. Pilot fired.	Piper PA-18
8/15/79	Artesia, NM NTSB Report	Fatal Fatal	Probable vortex turbulence and failure to maintain flying speed.	Piper PA-18