

The Milwaukie “Sprouting Potato” UFO

An Oregon MUFON Case Study

by

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Abstract

Keywords: Protuberances—Video—Colorful—Compact Shape—Transforming

Description	Witness Don Andersberg (pseudonym) video-recorded a small, transforming, odd, colorful, compact UFO from his backyard in blue sky daylight. The constantly transforming compact UFO showed oddly growing and transforming protuberances with occasional “flaring up” bright spots. He first saw the UFO and then began video-recording it as it moved along slowly in the sky.
Witness(es)	One witness: Don Andersberg (pseudonym).
Date and Time	On September 6, 2012, at 4:59 PM.
Place	Milwaukie, Oregon.
Weather	Temperature 90° F; calm (winds mostly out of east and NE in the hours before and after the calm); clear; visibility 10 miles.
Duration	Two minutes and 34 seconds total of video and probably about 10 seconds before video started.

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INTRODUCTION

This case consists of yet another video of many UFO videos made by witness Don Andersberg (pseudonym). Don has a history of seeing UFOs off and on throughout his life. In the 2000s, he decided to try his hand at capturing on video some of the UFOs he has seen. He's been quite successful.

We are featuring this case because it is rich in details especially concerning the variety of configurations that the UFO went through during Don's recording. This oddball UFO consists of a constantly transforming compact sometimes ovoid, sometimes more flattened shape. The transformations are especially active on the UFO's exterior with many small to larger protuberances growing and moving and diminishing as the seconds go by. The UFO also shows at times some bright spots that grow and enlarge and fade. This UFO is truly odd looking and behaving in the video.

Balloon Mimic UFOs

This case reveals yet another kind of balloon mimic UFO floating around in the skies over a major metropolitan area—the suburb of Milwaukie in the Portland, Oregon, metro area. See some of Don's earlier documented cases up on *oregonmufon.com*: *The Milwaukie Pink, White, and Blue Orbs Cluster UFO*, and *The Milwaukie Green Snake UFO* for more examples of balloon mimic UFOs.

Much of the time, the case for the reality of balloon mimic UFOs does not rise to the level of “beyond a reasonable doubt,” but here I think that it is close. This UFO sighting offers some truly strange shape and behavior characteristics, which we document here.

Don and I know from his many hours of video that he is video-recording the genuine UFO phenomenon, but we will try to make that idea plausible here from the evidence in yet another one of his better videos to date. We believe that this “sprouting potato” Unidentified Flying Object is simply *not* the closest natural or human-made object/phenomenon that it vaguely resembles: some sort of bizarre-looking balloon. In other words, this UFO is a genuine UFO, that is, an intelligently behaving, guided, and created aerial object and not at all some natural or human-made IFO. In this report, you are looking at images of a genuine UFO, we believe.

Thank You, Don Andersberg

I thank UFO witness and video-recorder, Don Andersberg, for his full cooperation in this investigation of this and his many other UFO videos. He has continually made all of his videos (and photos) freely available to me for analysis. I have been to his house (and he has been to mine) many times and I consider him a good friend.

Don says his motive for spending hours looking for and occasionally video-recording truly anomalous UFO occurrences is to create concrete evidence about the phenomenon. I believe him. He has done nothing to dissuade me in what he has said or done. He is simply curious about “what the heck they are” as so many people around the world are. Unlike the vast majority, however, he puts in the time (hours and hours a month) scanning the skies and zeroing in on the occasional UFO.

Thanks, Don, for your patience and diligence so that the rest of us can get a little closer to understanding this elusive phenomenon.

SIGHTING DESCRIPTION

On September 6, 2012, in the backyard of Don Andersberg's Milwaukie, Oregon, home at 4:59 to 5:02 PM, Don video-recorded yet another UFO high up in the sky. This one appeared to him first to the right of a cedar tree looking off to the northeast in his backyard. His house and backyard are oriented to the compass directions with the fences in his backyard running parallel to the cardinal directions. He has trees and shrubs in the backyard, which obscure the horizon but allow him to have an approximately 120° angle look at the sky if he is in the middle of his yard. His house is to the west of the backyard.

Diligent UFO Skywatcher

Don spends a couple of hours at a time skywatching, weather permitting. He is rewarded with something truly interesting on average about once a week and something very, very good once a month or so. (Don is not systematic enough to keep accurate records. These are just our guesses based on the videos Don has turned over to me.)



Source: Don Andersberg and Keith Rowell

Figure 1. Don's Backyard Tree with UFO Illustration

*Please note: This illustration is a **photo composite of two different frames** of Don's video. The size of the UFO in this illustration is the final size only after Don has zoomed all the way in on the tiny UFO. When Don's camera is zoomed in to its fullest extent when he video-records his UFOs (with his latest camera), he is video-recording at the equivalent of a 20 power telescope. So, it takes a good pair of binoculars to see, or a good, long telephoto to photograph or video-record, most of the UFOs Don sees. They truly are tiny in the sky! This illustration is meant only to give you an idea of where in the sky the UFO appeared. The direction is off to the NE from Don's backyard.*

Don usually skywatches looking toward the northwest, north, northeast, or east in his reclining outdoor chair. See *Figure 1, Don's Backyard Tree with UFO Illustration*. He has his sunglasses on half the time probably. He sits and waits, scanning the sky periodically, till some action happens. Usually, this is normal balloon, animal, or aircraft activity. He has seen and photographed many crows, hawks, airplanes, balloons, white cottony fiber bunches (drifting cottonwood seeds), etc. When I started working with Don to separate the UFOs from other small things in the sky, I encouraged him to photograph and video-record just about anything, whether he could immediately identify it or not. He has helped out a lot in this regard and I thank him for it.

Spotting Something Suspicious

Don sees UFOs first as something small and usually bright and contrasting with the blue sky. Sometimes his sunglasses help with this. Don has fairly keen eyes and he will see things sooner than me (whatever it is) when we are skywatching together. As soon as he sees something he identifies as unusual, he starts video-recording it as soon as possible and continues the recording as long as he can keep it in sight.

While he records the UFOs, he talks about what he can observe of them in his handheld camera's viewfinder or screen. The UFOs are so tiny that seeing details to describe is a real challenge. I also ask him to narrate his recordings with anything else that might help me get my bearings for later analysis.

The UFOs can appear anywhere but they are usually not more than 20° or 30° down from the zenith (or 70° or 60° off the horizon) off to the northwest, north, northeast, or east. They are traveling in just about any direction once they are spotted.

Sometimes They Go Fast, But Usually Not

Don usually loses sight of his UFOs as they move away in the sky and are obscured behind trees, fences, etc. Very rarely, however, he has seen UFOs zip away fast. As a similar personal example, I have witnessed an example of fast movement (or disappearance?) at least once at his house. In September 2012, Don had invited me over to his place after he had that day video-recorded some new UFOs. After I looked at his new UFO videos, we decided to do some skywatching.

At one point, Don needed to go back into his house for a few minutes, but I kept skywatching. I then saw a reddish, single orb in my binoculars. I was determined to keep watching the tiny UFO till Don came back out, so I did not take my eyes off the UFO for the next few minutes. I wanted to make sure that I could point out the UFO to him if it was still visible when he arrived. He soon came out and I said, "I've got another one!" While I was trying to show him where it was in the sky while all the time intently watching the UFO in the binoculars, I suddenly realized I wasn't seeing it any longer. What happened? It was there one moment and then just gone. I did not see it "zip off," however. It had just disappeared while I was trying to point it out to Don, or, perhaps, it moved so fast I could not track it. UFOs are elusive sometimes!

ENVIRONMENT

The environment for this sighting is Milwaukie, Oregon. See *Figure 2, Milwaukie, Oregon, and Environs*.



Source: Google Maps

Figure 2. Milwaukie, Oregon, and Environs

Don lives in about the middle of this aerial view of Milwaukie, Oregon, near the oval track in the center. A bend of the Willamette River is to the left, a light industry area is to the north, and a shopping center and more light industry is to the southeast. None of these factors have anything to do with the UFOs that Don sees and video-records on an almost routine basis. However, the Portland, Oregon, metropolitan area as a whole that Milwaukie is part of does tend to produce a small number of balloons that Don also video-records and that we must distinguish from his genuine UFOs. Additionally, car sales lots—with balloon displays at times—are to the south of Don starting at a mile away to five or more miles away. UFO virtually never come from the south for Don, however. But he has taken one video of some large, strung-together balloons that we suspect are escaped car sales lot display balloons.

Weather

See the details in *Table 1, Weather on Sighting Day*, for the weather on the day of the UFO sighting and video-recording. The winds were calm ten minutes before Don video-recorded the UFO in this case, but winds were light out of the east and NE one hour before and after his sighting.

Table 1. Weather on Sighting Day

Event Date	Event Time	Temp (F)	Visibility (miles)	Wind Direction	Wind Speed (mph)	Conditions
9/6/12	1:41 PM	90°	10	Calm	Calm	Clear

EVIDENCE

The evidence in this case consists of the following:

- Don Andersberg's testimony.
- His two minutes and 34 second video (DSCN4473.MOV).

The Witness

Don Andersberg is a quiet and unassuming man in his early fifties who currently works for a custodial services company. A few years ago (2009), Don found his way to one of our public Oregon MUFON meetings. After the meeting, he approached me and said that he had been photographing and video-recording what he thought were UFOs from his backyard in a suburb of Portland, Oregon. He explained that in the past year he decided to try to capture UFOs with his (consumer grade) camera and video equipment. He added that he had seen a few things he thought were probably UFOs earlier in his life. He gave me some short video clips and some photos shot over a couple of months.

When I looked at them later at home, I saw pretty quickly that Don was yet another person who was capturing UFOs on a regular basis. By that time, I knew definitely that some people were seeing UFOs on a more or less continuing, but non-periodic, basis. You never knew when the darned things were going to show up. But show up they did—off and on—seemingly on their own, mysterious schedule. I myself by that time had also seen, photographed, and videotaped a few of the same kinds of oddball, usually glowing, orb-type UFOs that were most closely similar to party balloons, or clusters of party balloons. (See the *Appaloosa Way UFO* and the *Lake Grove Spherical UFOs* case studies on oregonmufon.com.)

Don Not Hoaxing

Since that time a couple of years ago now, I have come to know Don better and better since he's been to my house a number of times and I've been to his a number of times. We even drove out together to visit James Gilliland's ECETI ranch for some UFO viewing in September 2011. (The five of us in our little Oregon MUFON group didn't end up seeing anything anomalous.) I feel I know Don very well now and far better than I do the average UFO witnesses that we MUFON investigators deal with on a regular basis. So, I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that Don is not faking or hoaxing anything.

The photos and videos that he has taken and shares with me for my analysis are offered freely and without restrictions of any kind. He simply wants the fact of UFO reality to be shared with as many people as possible.

Don knows the basics about cameras at a level above the average user, I would say. His knowledge of computers is more at a basic level, however. He likes learning about computers but freely admits that he has a lot to learn. He learns just enough to examine his videos and photos up close and magnified, but,

even though he purchased Final Cut Express (a sophisticated program for producing high quality videos) at my suggestion, he finds it too difficult to learn. (I know what he means—the learning curve is steep and I still have a long way to go myself.)

All these facts are something you need to know to be able to properly evaluate the evidence in this case study. Don has not hoaxed or altered in any way any of the evidence he has given me to evaluate. And for that matter, I am not hoaxing anything in this case, and, in general, I do the very minimum with the photographic and video evidence that UFO witnesses lend me to illustrate the points I am trying to make in my case studies.

The UFO Video

The video file (DSCN4473.MOV) for this case study was copied to my computer as an MOV file with the following properties:

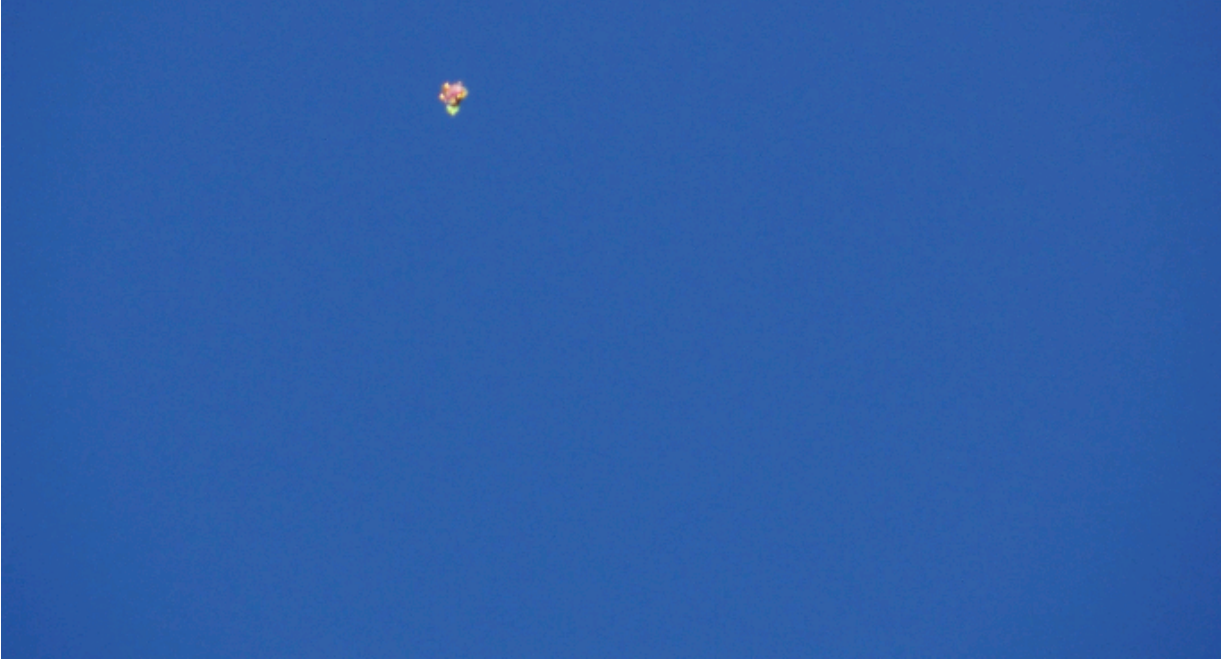
- Frame size: 1920 x 1080 pixels.
- Video rate: 29.97 fps.
- Duration: 00:02:46.
- Format: AVC Coding, 1,920 x 1,080 HD; AAC, 48000 Hz, Stereo (L R)

Camera Description

Don's camera for this video is a Nikon Coolpix P510. This compact digital camera has a 42X zoom lens and takes full HD (1080p) resolution video, which it stores as files in removable memory cards. The lens when fully zoomed in giving the maximum image magnification is equivalent to a 20 power telescope or pair of binoculars. The camera has a high quality Nikon made lens. The camera lens can be focused manually with a switch on the outside of the body. This is quite handy when trying to focus well on the very small UFOs that Don video-records.

Video Description

Figure 3, Full Frame of UFO, shows what the UFO looked like to Don through the electronic viewfinder as he was video-recording the UFO as it "drifted" along in the sky. The UFO in pixels measures around 40 more or less vertical and horizontal at its largest. This varies some, of course, as the UFO changes size as it moves along in the sky. This 40 pixels is about the biggest that Don's UFOs have gotten so far—though balloons identified as real balloons come in bigger sizes frequently and sometimes smaller, down to around 20 pixels in size. (Below about 15 pixels across it is getting difficult to tell UFOs from real balloons; there just isn't enough detail in the image if all you have is the image itself as evidence.) We are hoping that Don's UFO images will continue to get bigger and bigger and more detailed as he continues to video-record them. This has been the basic trend over the latest few years especially.



Source: Don Andersberg

Figure 3. Full Frame of UFO

This is a full frame still from a frame near frame 00:43:00 of video DSCN4473. The UFO is the small odd image at the top in the clear blue sky field. The focal length equivalent is a 1000 mm lens on a 35 mm film camera. The telescopic power magnification is around 20 power. Most binoculars are usually 6 to 10 power.

ANALYSIS

This case offers mainly color, configuration, and behavior for analysis, which is true of most of Don's videos mainly because we do not know the altitude that the UFO was at in most cases. To know that, we need the UFO to appear in front of or very nearby some known object so that we can determine the distance and/or altitude. (We were able to do this in one of Don's other recent UFO sightings, however. See the *Milwaukie Pink, White, and Blue Orbs Cluster UFO* on oregonmufon.com.) But despite this lack of basic size or distance data, we will still have some comments about size, distance, and speed.

UFO Color and Configuration

The figures under this heading are chosen to show a few of the configurations that the UFO went through as it moved along in the sky. See *Figure 4, Magnified UFO Image #1* through *Figure 8, Magnified UFO Image #5*. Note the following:

- The UFO exhibits many colors: pink, red, green, brown, and darker versions of these. The basic body of the object seems to be mostly reddish/pinkish with green and tan colored protuberances growing and diminishing and moving around as the whole object itself moves through the sky.
- The UFO seems to have no particular axis of rotation. It seems to be tumbling in a random fashion.
- The protuberances constantly grow and diminish and appear at different places. Sometimes the protuberances themselves transform briefly into different shapes, such as the basic green shape at the bottom in *Figures 4* and *7*. In *Figure 4*, the green shape is smooth, but in *Figure 7*, it is definitely divided into a larger fan-type shape with divisions.

- The overall UFO seems to as much as double in size at times as it goes through its strange transformations.
- The number of protuberances varies from as many as 12, or so, to one or even none—this is a judgment call, of course.
- The overall brightness of colors varies from bright to dark.

Examine the following figures for a good idea of the wide variation in the colors and configurations in this UFO.



Source: Don Andersberg and Keith Rowell

Figure 4. Magnified UFO Image #1

This figure shows the UFO when it was near its largest size. Note the largest orb/ovoid shape is pinkish/reddish. This seems to be the most dominant basic orb/ovoid as the UFO evolves in basic configuration as it moves along in the sky. But sometimes even this shape is obscured at times. Note the number of secondary protuberances of various colors, but having basic orb/ovoid shapes.



Source: Don Andersberg and Keith Rowell

Figure 5. Magnified UFO Image #2

The basic shape has turned more angular and much darker in tone now. The protuberances are reduced in number.



Source: Don Andersberg and Keith Rowell

Figure 6. Magnified UFO Image #3

Here the UFO shows protuberances that are definitely orb shaped with the basic underneath portion of the UFO being quite dark. Note the prominent white highlighting. This could be from the sun, but it is clearer from the video that the protuberances sometimes flare up with an inner illumination of some kind.



Source: Don Andersberg and Keith Rowell

Figure 7. Magnified UFO Image #4

This example shows the variation in the shapes of the protuberances at times. Here they are not orbs or ovoids but are flattened, seemingly fanned out, and even have uneven, "serrated" edges in the case of the bottom green protuberance.



Source: Don Andersberg and Keith Rowell

Figure 8. Magnified UFO Image #5

This example shows the quite dark appearance of the colors over the whole object at times. This doesn't seem to fit the idea of an unvaryingly colored object like a balloon in constant bright sunlight as this UFO was video-recorded in. However, you can tell that there is sunlight highlighting on the upper and left sides of the object.

UFO Behavior

The behavior of the UFO is best seen in examination of the UFO video itself. So, only a brief description is given here. See *Figure 9, Chronological Magnified Images #1* through *Figure 15, Chronological Magnified Images #7*, to get a sense of the great variety of movement in this UFO.

Characteristics to note among others in the following images are the following:

- The UFO much of the time has a basic, irregular, reddish/pinkish, ovoid shape, but in addition to this basic irregular ovoid shape are various sizes and shapes of surface protuberances.
- The protuberances vary in color, shape, and size from second to second in the entire sequence.
- The basic object, which seems three dimensional and solid, seems to rotate and gyrate in a non-periodic and irregular way, as if it is tumbling randomly.
- The object seems to be illuminated from the sun and have a generally lighter top portion and a generally darker bottom portion.
- The object sometimes, however, seems to generate small lights of its own associated with the protuberances that brighten and seem to flare up at times.
- During the whole sequence, there are seconds long episodes when the activity seems more subdued. (12300 to 12800).
- During the whole sequence, there are seconds long episodes when the activity seems more definitely active. (11600 to 12200).

- Some one second transitions are difficult to figure out if the object is a rigid, solid body with odd protuberances. (4500 to 4700).
- At times, some of the protuberances seem to get brighter and flare up in brightness and size and then fade away. (5100 to 5200; 10400 to 10500).
- A few one (or two) second transitions move from virtually no obvious protuberances to seven, plus they get bright and flare up. (5000 to 5200).

One Second Snap Shots

To show the second by second changing of the UFO, single frame images one second apart were captured from a section of the video where Don was fully zoomed in at maximum magnification. This sequence of frames gives plenty of evidence to examine.

The sizes of the UFO in the images can be compared with each other to see inherent size and shape changes because Don remained zoomed in at the maximum 20 power magnification extent. The full optical zoom extent on Don's Nikon Coolpix P510 is the equivalent of a 1000 mm lens on an old 35 mm film camera. This is the equivalent of a 20 power telescope.

The images of the UFO in *Figure 9* through *Figure 15* were captured as screen images using Apple's Final Cut Pro to play the video clip. The video was played at the clip magnification of 200%. A Mac screen capture utility (Precise Screenshot) was used to capture the 200 pixel square images.

The entire sequence from *Figure 9* to *Figure 15* lasts 2:03 (two minutes and 3 seconds) duration. This sequence starts from frame 00:43;00 and goes to the end. The sequence from the beginning to 00:43;00 consists of Don doing his usual announcement of seeing another UFO and then starting from a wide shot and zooming in and focusing till he stabilizes the shot at maximum zoomed in extent (20 power equivalent).

The images are arranged so that they increase in time from left to right, row by row, and they give a sense of how the UFO changed as the video proceeded. Don lost the UFO when it went behind some bushes in his yard.

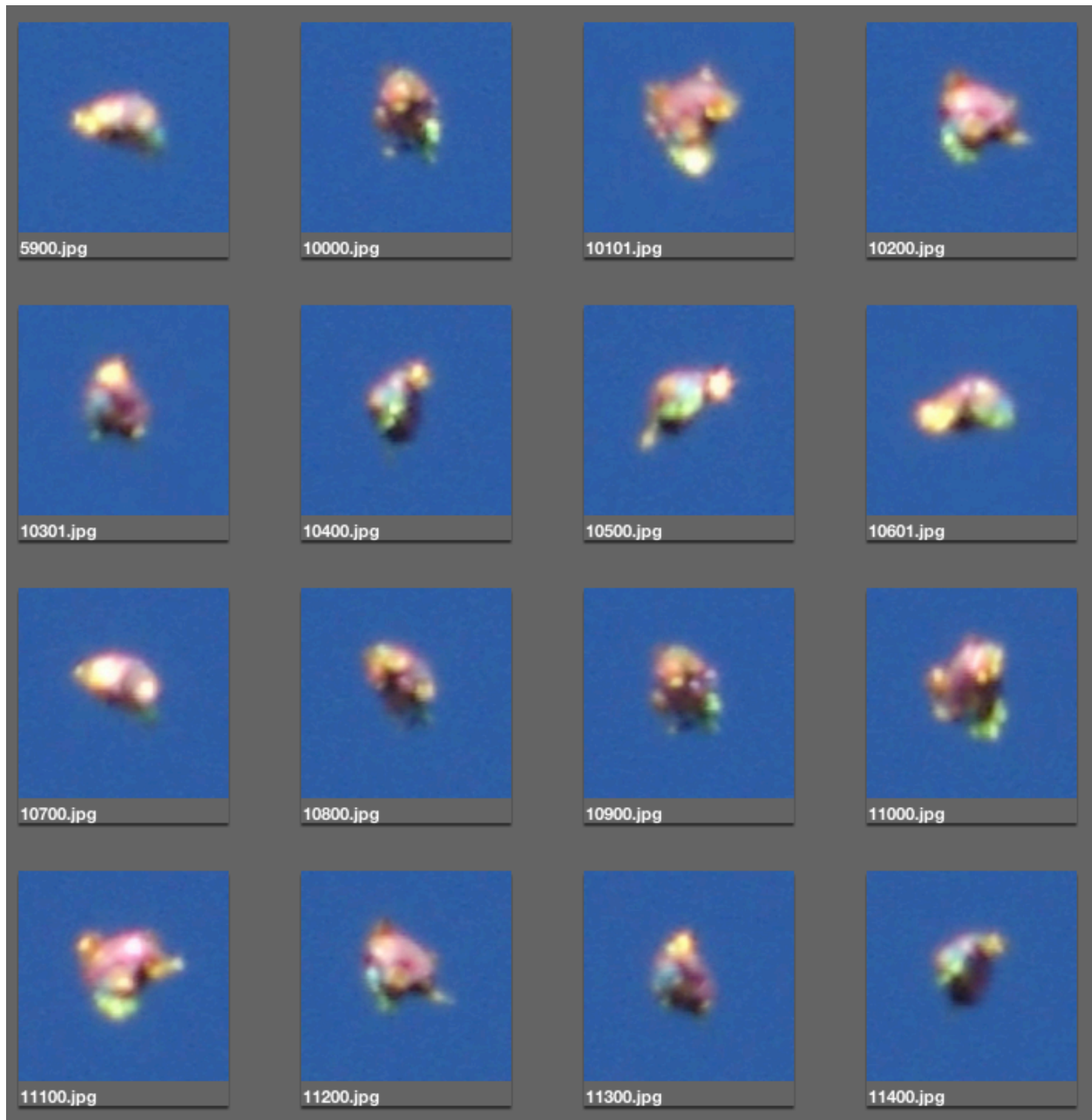
Note that some of the images have file names that don't end in zero, which denotes the first frame in that second of the video. The images not ending in zero were chosen to be the closest, reasonably clear image of the UFO to the 00 frame on each second.



Source: Don Andersberg and Keith Rowell

Figure 9. Chronological Magnified UFO Images #1

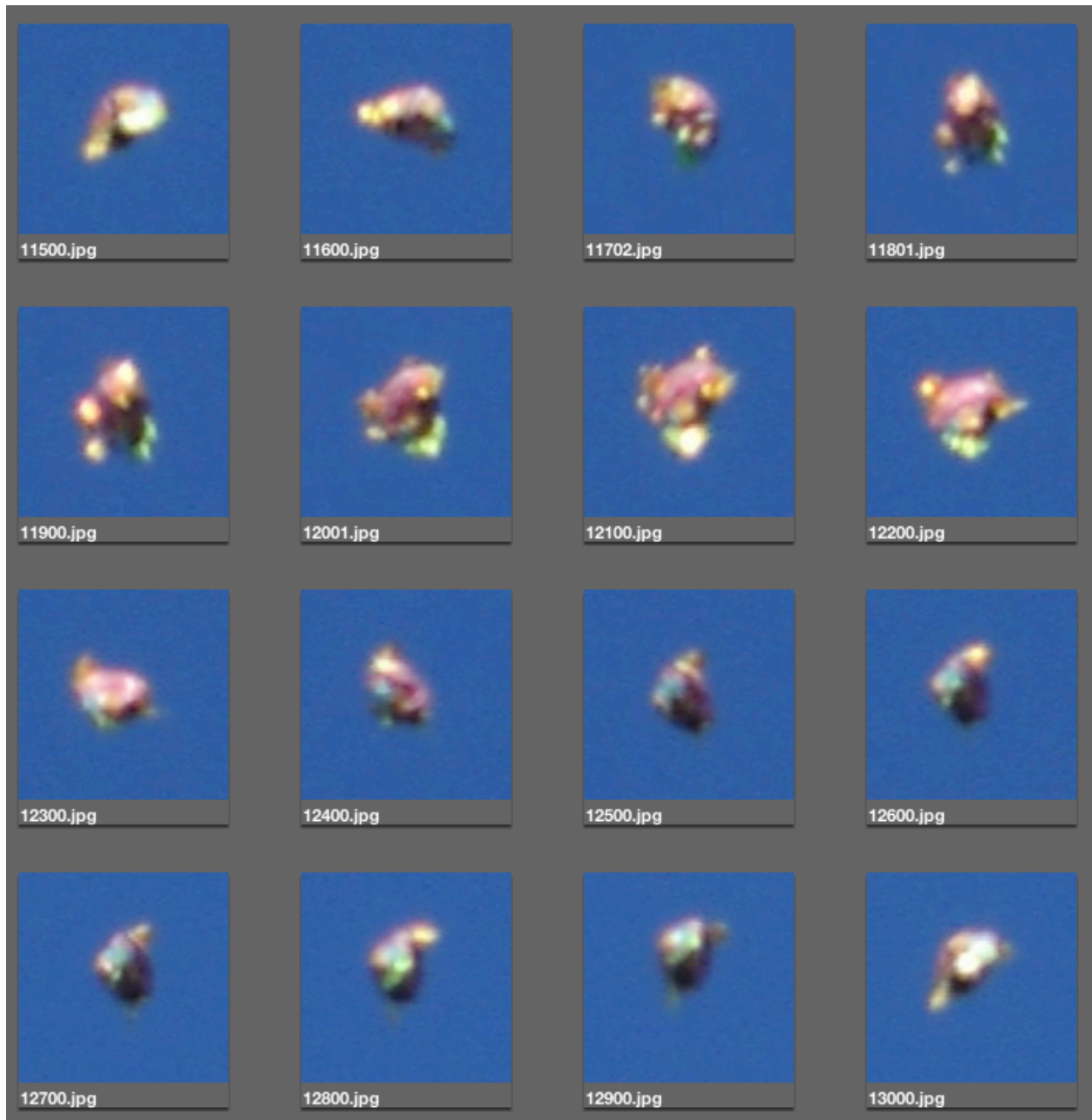
Figures 9 through 17 are chosen to show the second by second changes in shape of the UFO in chronological order. This gives you a sense of how the UFO changes. The numbers below the images are the frames on the second except for a few that weren't clear enough and nearby frames have been chosen.



Source: Don Andersberg and Keith Rowell

Figure 10. Chronological Magnified UFO Images #2

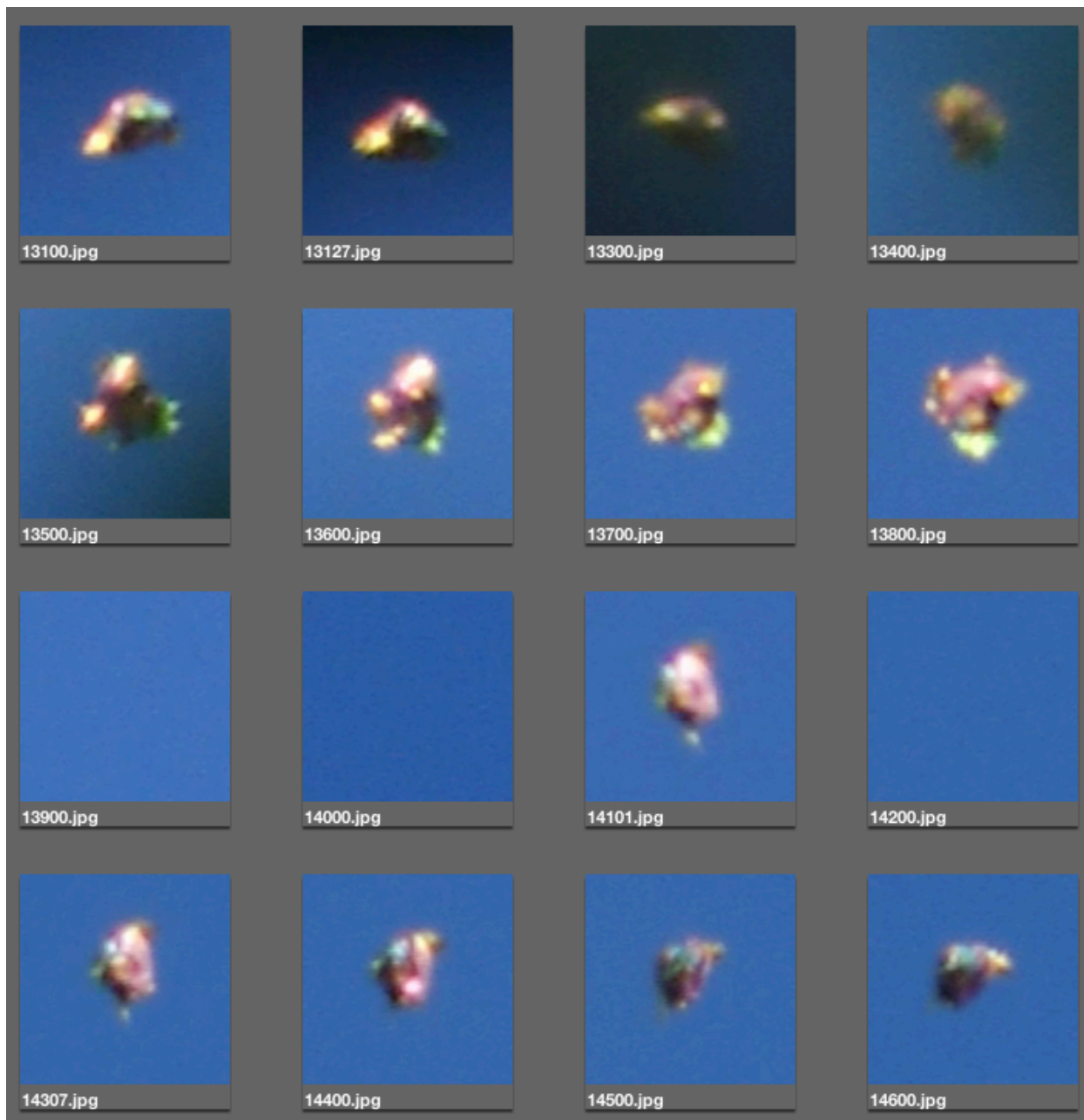
Figures 9 through 17 are chosen to show the second by second changes in shape of the UFO in chronological order. This gives you a sense of how the UFO changes. The numbers below the images are the frames on the second except for a few that weren't clear enough and nearby frames have been chosen.



Source: Don Andersberg and Keith Rowell

Figure 11. Chronological Magnified UFO Images #3

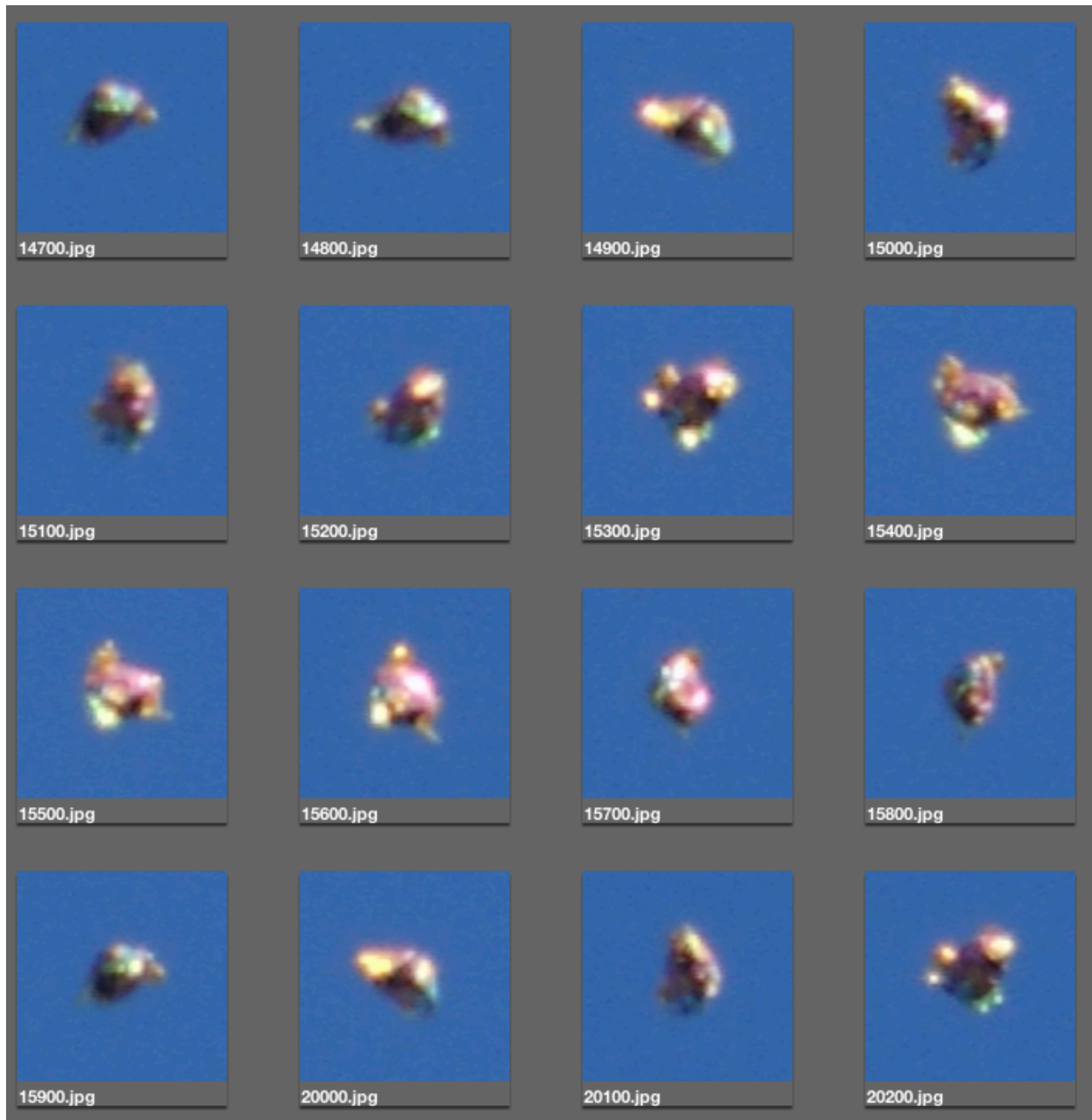
Figures 9 through 17 are chosen to show the second by second changes in shape of the UFO in chronological order. This gives you a sense of how the UFO changes. The numbers below the images are the frames on the second except for a few that weren't clear enough and nearby frames have been chosen.



Source: Don Andersberg and Keith Rowell

Figure 12. Chronological Magnified UFO Images #4

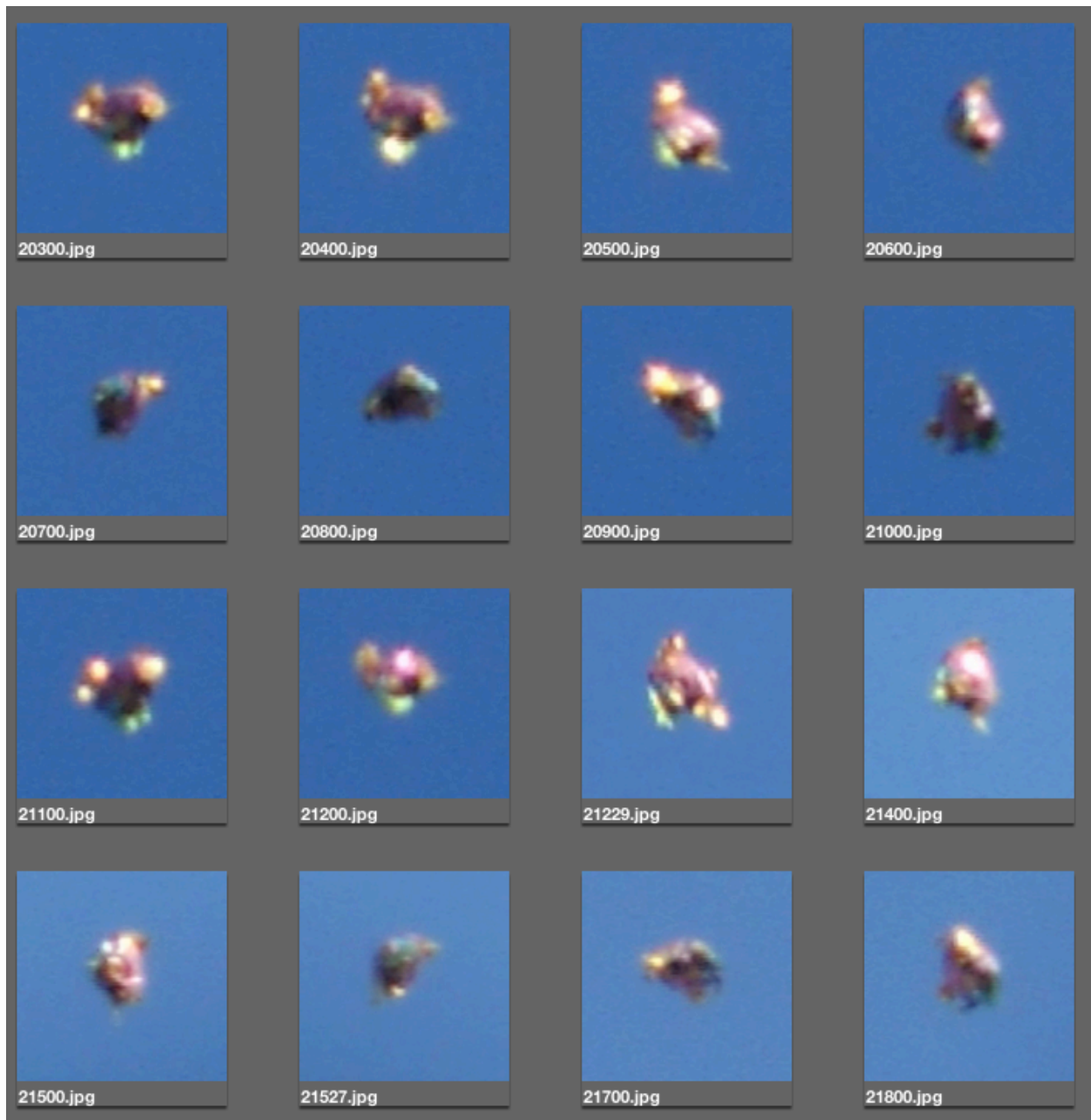
Figures 9 through 17 are chosen to show the second by second changes in shape of the UFO in chronological order. This gives you a sense of how the UFO changes. The numbers below the images are the frames on the second except for a few that weren't clear enough and nearby frames have been chosen. The blank frames here are when Don lost the UFO when it became obscured by foreground bushes in his backyard.



Source: Don Andersberg and Keith Rowell

Figure 13. Chronological Magnified UFO Images #5

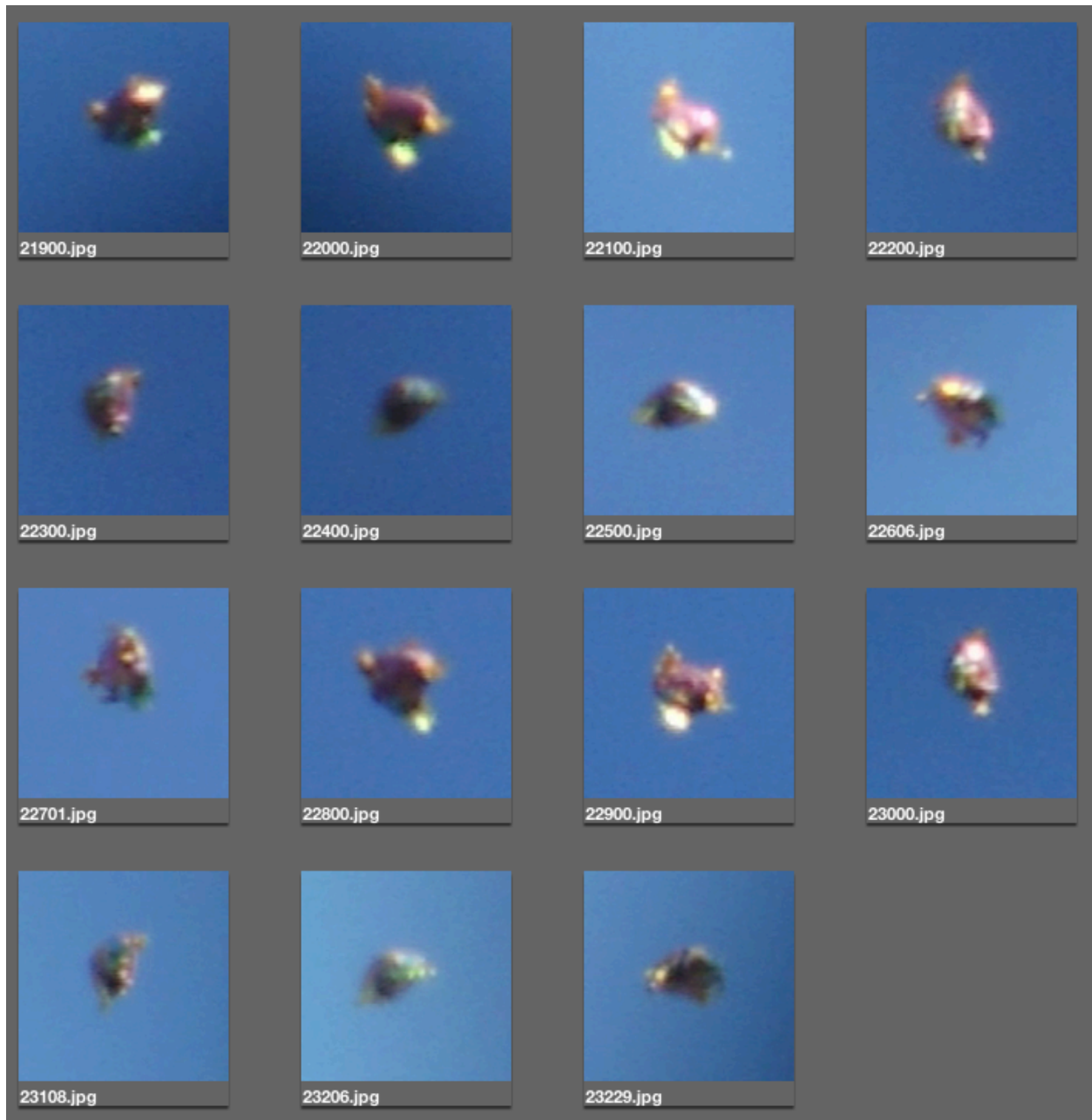
Figures 9 through 17 are chosen to show the second by second changes in shape of the UFO in chronological order. This gives you a sense of how the UFO changes. The numbers below the images are the frames on the second except for a few that weren't clear enough and nearby frames have been chosen.



Source: Don Andersberg and Keith Rowell

Figure 14. Chronological Magnified UFO Images #6

Figures 9 through 17 are chosen to show the second by second changes in shape of the UFO in chronological order. This gives you a sense of how the UFO changes. The numbers below the images are the frames on the second except for a few that weren't clear enough and nearby frames have been chosen.



Source: Don Andersberg and Keith Rowell

Figure 15. Chronological Magnified UFO Images #7

Figures 9 through 17 are chosen to show the second by second changes in shape of the UFO in chronological order. This gives you a sense of how the UFO changes. The numbers below the images are the frames on the second except for a few that weren't clear enough and nearby frames have been chosen.

Size, Distance, and Speed

In this case, we don't have any directly known sizes, distances, or speeds, but we still know a reasonable number of things that combined with some reasonable assumptions give us some not too improbable sizes, distances, and speeds. Let's work through this.

Here's what we know in this UFO case:

- The duration of the sighting is at least 2 minutes and 34 seconds, which is the length of Don's video.
- The winds at the ground level that day were calm.
- The angle of travel of the UFO from when Don first spotted it till he couldn't see it any more was about 50° .
- The angle of view of Don's camera when he is zoomed all the way in is 2° .
- The angular size of the full Moon is approximately 0.5° .
- We can directly compare the size of the UFO with the moon because Don has video-recorded the moon fully zoomed in just like he has for the UFO. See *Figure 16, Moon and UFO Comparison*.

Let's see what kinds of *probable* sizes, distances, and speeds we can derive from this data.

A Probable UFO Size and Distance?

As noted earlier in this case study, we cannot know for certain what the real (or absolute) size this sprouting potato UFO actually was. But we can know the angular (or apparent) size of the UFO with some certainty.

One way we can do this is by comparing the size of the UFO to the diameter of the full moon. *Figure 16, Moon and UFO Comparison*, shows this comparison. Since the moon and UFO were taken at separate times but with the same camera and zoom extent (fully zoomed in), we can do this comparison. We know from astronomical references that the angular size of the diameter of the full moon is close to 0.5° . So, we just put an example sprouting potato UFO end to end across the diameter of the moon to obtain the angular size of the UFO.

- The angular size of the sprouting potato UFO is 0.5° divided by about 11 UFOs. This equals about 0.045° for the UFO.



Source: Don Andersberg and Keith Rowell

Figure 16. Moon and UFO Comparison

This photo shows the UFO lined up against the full moon. The point is to get an idea of the angular size of the UFO. We know that the moon's angular size is close to one half a degree in size. So the angular size of the UFO is about 11 divided into one half a degree. This is 0.045° . This comparison can be made because the UFO and moon are at the same magnification (zoomed in extent) and video-recorded with the same camera.

We have done a similar comparison with a known object, a commercial jet flying at around 30 to 35 thousand feet in another Oregon MUFON case study (*The Medford "Monkey" Balloon UFO on oregonmufon.com*), and have noted that the length of the commercial jet compared to the moon diameter is around five times smaller. That is, the angular size of the commercial jet is about $0.5/5$, which is 0.1° .

We know that the average commercial jet is around 150 feet long (absolute or real size). So, if the sprouting potato UFO was around 30 to 35 thousand feet in altitude, we would know that the real size would be about half the size of a commercial airliner or about 75 feet in basic diameter. *But we don't know this altitude, so can we make an educated guess?*

If the Sprouting Potato UFO Is Another "Balloon Mimic" UFO . . .

We don't know how far away the sprouting potato UFO is, but even so, we don't believe that it is that far away if the sprouting potato UFO is about the same general size of the "balloon mimic" UFOs that Don is video-recording.

Here's why we believe this UFO is smaller and closer. We believe that the true altitude is more like close to a mile away instead of around five or more miles away like the commercial airliners are when at cruising altitude. We believe this because we were fortunate enough to know the real size of another of Don Andersberg's balloon mimic UFOs documented in the *The Milwaukie Pink, White, and Blue Orbs*

Cluster UFO case study (up on oregonmufon.com). That UFO was clearly seen just below the 3700 feet altitude of the cloud base that it passed nearby and under.

We can now take this knowledge and reason that since both UFOs were video-recorded at the same zoomed in extent by the same camera, we can directly compare the number of pixels in the images of each UFO.

- For the sprouting potato UFO, we have a basic UFO size of around 35 pixels.
- For the pink, white, and blue orbs cluster UFO, we have a measurement of around 15 pixels across.
- We calculated the orbs cluster UFO size to be about 1.3 feet across. Using this size and the 35 and 15 pixel UFO sizes, we can calculate a real size of the UFO of around 3 feet *if the sprouting potato UFO were at the altitude of 3700 or so away.*

As implied above, it is our *feeling* that most of Don's UFOs are around a mile or so away from him. So, *we'll just have to go with that feeling and believe the sprouting potato UFO is around 3 feet or so in size to an order of magnitude (up to 10 times more or 10 times less).* Unfortunately, this is about all we can do for this UFO.

UFO Speed

To get a handle on a ballpark speed, we know that Don first saw the UFO at about 70° up from the horizon to the NE of his house. See *Figure 1, Don's Backyard Tree with UFO Illustration*. In the video, we can see that the UFO becomes obscured by the bushes to the right of where he first saw the UFO. Measuring this angular distance in his backyard yields a number of about 50°.

We know that the video lasts 2 minutes and 34 seconds (that is, 154 seconds) and if we assume that this UFO is at around the same altitude as the UFO in the *Pink, White, and Blue Orbs Cluster UFO* case, which was 3700 feet, then we have by a little trigonometry a distance traveled of about 4400 feet.

To obtain an approximate speed for the sprouting potato UFO we have distance divided by time (4400 feet / 154 seconds), which is about 28.5 feet/sec, which is 19.5 mph.

In fact, this speed does *not* agree with the weather data at the time from PDX, which is about 10 miles north of Milwaukie where Don lives. The wind speed measured within ten minutes of when Don took the video was measured at PDX as calm (0 mph, more or less). However, we can see at the beginning of Don's video when he is zoomed out wide enough to see the bushes that the bushes are, in fact, moving around from the wind. So, we will take the winds an hour earlier (9.2 mph from the east) and an hour later (3.5 mph from the NE) and average them to get 6.4 mph.

Now, we know that winds aloft do generally increase with height, but still it seems that the difference between 19.5 mph and 6.4 mph might be a bit much. However, the basic direction of flight of the UFO was to the south and this is close enough to say that this UFO was more or less traveling in the right direction at more or less the right speed to possibly be solely windborne. (Actually, we feel that most of Don's "balloon mimic" UFOs do travel at close to the wind speed and direction of the prevailing winds much of the time. The trouble with identifying these UFOs as balloon-type UFOs generally comes from their look and behavior, not from wind speed and direction.) So, was this UFO actually a balloon?

A Possible ID: An Oddly Shaped Balloon?

A search of the photos on the Internet with terms such as, "novelty balloons," "potato balloons," "oddball balloons," "transforming balloons," "morphing balloons," etc., yielded no matches whatsoever that looked like Don's sprouting potato UFO. It appears that Don's UFO might only be similar to a concocted, DIY balloon as an outside possibility. However, it is exceedingly difficult to imagine that the constantly transforming protuberances combined with the light coloring and dark coloring at times with occasional "flaring up" of protuberances with possible internal lighting that this UFO displayed could be duplicated by any cleverly constructed, floating object.

And when Don's many, many videos of similar—sometimes truly oddball looking—UFOs are considered, it becomes well nigh impossible to think that any terrestrial human-made or natural object or effect could account for what he video-records almost routinely.

CONCLUSION

The UFO observation in this case was made by one person, Don Andersberg, in his backyard. He used his Nikon Coolpix P510 to capture about 2 minutes and 34 seconds of video of a UFO that he first spotted with his unaided eyes (except for polarized sunglasses that he wears sometimes). The UFO “drifted” along in the sky with Don continuously video-recording the UFO till it disappeared behind the bushes around his yard.

Identification Candidates

The candidates for identification for this UFO 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. It strains credulity that human-designed, “conventional” secret aircraft would be tested at only a few thousand feet or so altitude inside a small metropolitan area. (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—which are always only at very high altitudes!—is very scant, indeed.) The object video-recorded in this case is probably around three feet in diameter and looks like no military object of terrestrial operation that we know of. Also, Don reported no sound coming from the object. *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 UFO. *Thus, this identification candidate is rejected.*
- **Aircraft.** No conventional aircraft, military or civilian, looks like this UFO. *Thus, this identification candidate is rejected.*
- **Helicopter.** No helicopter, military or civilian, looks like this UFO. *Thus, this identification candidate is rejected.*
- **Blimp.** No blimp, military or civilian, looks like this UFO. Also, we think the UFO is around three feet in size. *Thus, this identification candidate is rejected.*
- **Ultralight.** No ultralight looks like this UFO. *Thus, this identification candidate is rejected.*
- **Remote-controlled model aircraft.** No RC model aircraft looks like this UFO. *Thus, this identification candidate is rejected.*
- **Kite.** This UFO does not resemble a kite nor was it tethered by any kind of string, rope, cord, etc. Additionally, if this were an unmoored kite, its behavior of being aloft and in view for almost three minutes without apparently drifting downward makes a kite identification unlikely. Also, the configuration transformations and possible internally generated, dynamically changing light effects of the UFO put this beyond reason for a kite. It is entirely implausible that this UFO is a kite no matter how exotic. *Thus, this identification candidate is rejected.*
- **Ball Lightning.** This UFO does not much resemble or behave like ball lightning. This well-known phenomenon based on anecdotal accounts is generally spherical and fuzzy in shape and originates usually in association with lightning storms. There were no lightning storms in the Portland metro area at the time. Ball lightning also moves around erratically and lasts from one second to perhaps at most a minute or so. *Thus, this identification candidate is rejected.*

- **Balloon.** This is the most viable ID candidate of them all. Here are the pros and cons.

On the evidential side for this candidate are the following:

- The UFO could possibly be some kind of exotic balloon, perhaps. This is almost certainly a one-of-a-kind concocted, DIY balloon type contraption if it is to be identified at all as a human-made or natural object or effect.
- The UFO generally moved along in the sky like a balloon.
- The UFO traveled more or less in the correct direction and speed for the prevailing winds at the time.

On the evidential side for genuine, “balloon mimic” UFO are the following:

- There is no evidence or even hint of typical balloon strings or cords in this UFO.
- The movement of this UFO is entirely too variable for any kind of balloon. The configuration transformation kind of movement is reminiscent of organic, living things and not ordinary mechanical or physical things.
- The appearance and behavior of the apparently internally generated lighting effects on the constantly changing protuberances practically defies explanation as a known terrestrial, human-made technology.
- Some protuberances are seen to brighten and “flare up” to become brighter than the body of the UFO. The brightness seems entirely too great for ordinary sources of light. Indeed, many times Don’s awareness of yet another UFO comes from a bright flash or flare up of his UFOs.
- The illuminated protuberances are seen to appear and disappear at random points on the body of the UFO.
- A number of other balloon mimic UFOs somewhat similar to this case have been documented in Oregon in the 2000s. (See *oregonmufon.com*.)

So, since all of the relevant evidence favors something truly anomalous, we suggest that this UFO is yet another instance of a balloon mimic UFO.

Since the identification candidates fail for the reasons stated, this UFO observation is classified as a true UFO, a MUFON Unknown Other. We believe that the overall evidence in this case rises to the level of clear and convincing evidence, which makes this case quite strong.