Probability of a Modern Pterosaur

Statistical analysis has shown that the more credible reports of modern pterosaurs, as a whole, have not been tainted by hoaxes. But probability, in a simple form, can be used to evaluate the likelihood that at least one species of modern pterosaur lives, at least somewhere on this planet.

Ninety-eight sighting reports were analyzed by Jonathan Whitcomb, in 2011, with a limited number of results. The main weakness in this project was in the descriptions, for at least some of the interviews did not have precisely similar questions. For example, the degree of certainty in the absence of feathers did not come from the same question in each interview. Those reports that had sufficient information on feather-lack were grouped in absolutely-no-feathers and probably-no-feathers. This means that only a portion of those 98 reports could be used on that particular point. But Whitcomb still had 36 reports that were adequate for feathers-lack, and the result was a sound slap in the face to those who have believed that hoaxes were the cause of sighting reports.

But those 98 reports in themselves make an impression. Whitcomb chose them because they were unlikely to have come from hoaxes and misidentifications. If each of those 98 has only one chance in a hundred to have come from observing a modern pterosaur, then it is much more likely that at least one of them was just that: a modern pterosaur. Figure it for yourself if you like, but a 99% chance of a mistake in each of those 98 reports means that at least one of them was probably a modern pterosaur. But those of us who have examined those reports believe the probability of error is far less than 99%, even less than 50%. That means that it is practically certain that at least one of them was a genuine sighting of a modern extant pterosaur.

Smithsonian Incapable of Calculating a Probability

> *Take the four critical sightings in the southwest Pacific: Finschhafen-1944, Bougainville-1971, Pung-1994, Perth-1997. In context with the history of the pterosaur-extinction axiom (the weakness in the pre-Darwin assumption of universal pterosaur extinction), each of the above four encounters independently appear to have been unlikely to have been from any non-pterosaur. I judge each one at less than 10% of being from any non-pterosaur. In 0ther words, there is less than one chance in 10,000 that no living pterosaur was involved in any of those four sighting reports.*

Teradactyl or Pterodactyl?

> *On the Papua New Guinea mainland, in 2006, Paul Nation and his associate, native minister Jacob Kepas, explored deep in the highland interior. One night, Paul video- taped two glowing objects near the top of a ridge. The natives attribute this kind of light to large flying creatures that used to carry away pigs and children from their village.*