

# Recent Ropen Sightings

For the past eleven years, I (Jonathan Whitcomb) have interviewed eyewitnesses of apparent pterosaurs from various areas of the world. Many of those whom I have questioned report a flying creature resembling what my associates and I call *ropens*.

Let's consider some of the recent reports that have come in.

## **West Virginia, 2015** (apparent bioluminescence)

An eyewitness sent me an email about a sighting he had early on May 18, 2015, near Blue Lick Road, in Harrison County, West Virginia.

*. . . this past Monday morning around 4ish we seen what appeared to [be] a ufo but then we realized it was alive. It had wings [and] was glowing green, extremely bright. It flew maybe 150 to 200 ft above us . . .*

*It had a tail . . . the wings are in a pyramid shape, I'm talking about both wings as it glided over us, from the head to where they went in the body, from the top of the wings, meaning the head, down to the body was like a pyramid. The whole body was glowing . . .*

## **Nicaragua, about 2009**

*I found your web page and would like to share with you a sighting of a bird that happened more than 5 years ago. It was a rainy day and for some reason from the patio deck I looked up and saw the only bird flying. I can recall its shape as a big M with long neck and tail. I called my wife and she also was amazed for the looks of the animal. Even though it was high in the sky, it seemed to be big and featherless.*

## **Louisiana, 2014**

*I seen one for myself. Last year, living in Metairie (suburbs of New Orleans, LA), while at a friends BBQ. . . . I am CERTAIN of what I saw. The beasts size was as big as a small plane. It circled around my area a couple of times . . . I also noticed the slick skin . . . This was no silent drone glider plane. I know what I saw and one friend saw it too.*

## **Virginia, 2015**

*I'm not positive about what [I] and my 16 year old son saw flying across a major road in Richmond, VA, a couple of days ago at dusk. What I do know is, it was something we have never saw before. Its wing span was massive! It looked to be about 10 feet across and its tail was long with a triangle point! We were so flabbergasted looking at it that I nearly crashed!*

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Ropen sketched by the eyewitness Patty Carson (sighting in Cuba, circa 1965)

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### **Ropen of Papua New Guinea**

*. . . an alleged relict pterosaur that has been reported from the jungles . . . a large, featherless flying creature with a long tail. It is reported to glow at night, in a way suggesting the animal controls the light . . .*

## **Ropen Attacks**

*Suddenly, we heard screams . . . We looked up the field at the girls and the ones farthest away from us were pointing into the overhead fog bank and screaming. Then the girls below them started screaming and pointing into the fog. . . .*

## **What is a Ropen? A Pterosaur?**

*Before you dismiss the concept of a modern pterosaur (in particular, of a long-tailed featherless Rhamphorhynchoid), consider the many eyewitness testimonies of those flying creatures. . . . We have reports of modern pterosaurs in other parts of the world including the United States: California, Washington State, Oregon, Arizona, Utah, Maine, Ohio, Kentucky, Wisconsin, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Pennsylvania, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and other states.*

## **The ropen is not a bat**

*Up until the late 20th Century, the flying fox explanation was used to dismiss reports of large flying creatures in Papua New Guinea, nocturnal creatures that some people called pterodactyls.*

## **Ropen Expeditions**

*In addition, the two ropen expeditions of 2004 brought to light the long tail of this huge flying creature. The native Gideon Koro told the American cryptozoologist Jonathan Whitcomb that the creature that he and his six friends saw had a tail that was seven meters long (twenty-three feet).*

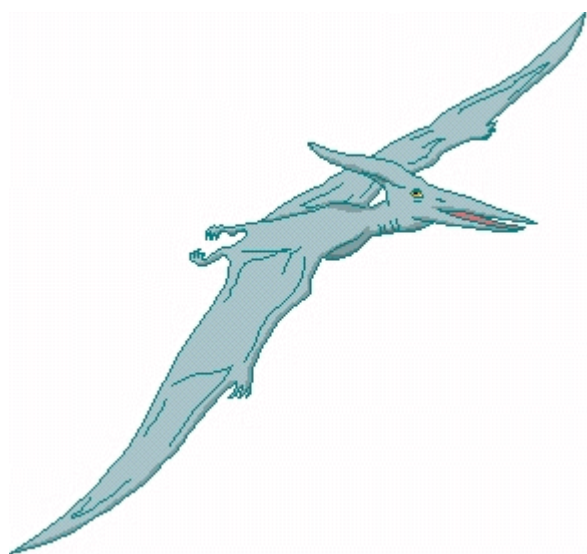
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# Non-Ropen Pterosaur Sighting in Papua New Guinea

Two Americans returned home to the Portland area of Oregon on Saturday, April 18, 2015, after having searched for a living pterosaur on New Britain Island in Papua New Guinea for several weeks. Not only did they see an apparent living pterosaur in daylight, but the biologist Peter Beach \*recorded video footage of the flying creature, although the video quality is poor. This was the eleventh pterosaur expedition in which Americans were heavily involved in Papua New Guinea over the past twenty-two years, and it was the first such expedition in which an American visitor witnessed an apparent modern pterosaur in daylight. Many Westerners would call this kind of flying creature a “pterodactyl” or a “dinosaur bird”.

\* (In the first report, right after they returned to the USA, it was incorrectly assumed that no photo or video was obtained; it was soon learned that video was obtained but of very poor quality.)



*Pteranodon-like Pterodactyloid pterosaur*

## **Not a Ropen but a Possible Pterodactyloid**

At the time of the sighting, one or more natives caught the attention of the two Americans as the large creature flew overhead. One of the Americans had forgotten where he had put his camera, and the other tried to videotape the apparent *Pterodactyloid* pterosaur but in the excitement missed pointing the camera in precisely the right direction, which was to some extent towards the sun. (Neither American is a professional wildlife photographer.) Yet both men did see the form and features of the flying creature, and both of them got the impression that it was a pterosaur, and a limited amount of video footage was recorded of the flying creature.

It appeared to be short-tailed, however, and so it was unlike the long-tailed ropen that appears to be more common in Papua New Guinea. Is this *Pterodactyloid*-type also bioluminescent? We don't yet know, for the new sighting, during this expedition in March and April of 2015, was in daylight.

Although the sighting was hardly a scientific proof of the existence of modern pterosaurs, we can learn from the experience. Let's begin by going over who these men are: Peter Beach and Milt Marcy.



Milt Marcy (left) and Peter Beach, by the Yakima River, state of Washington

## **Dinosaur Search in Africa**

According to Wikipedia:

*In January 2006, the Milt Marcy Expedition traveled to the Dja river in Cameroon, near the Congolese border. It consisted of Milt Marcy, Peter Beach, Rob Mullin and Pierre Sima. They spoke to witnesses that claimed to have observed a Mokèlé-mbèmbé only two days before, but they did not discover the animal themselves. However, they did return with what they believe to be a plaster cast of a Mokèlé-mbèmbé footprint.*

That was one of many expeditions in central Africa, over many years, by various Western explorers, in search of a non-



extinct Sauropod dinosaur. A few of those American dinosaur “hunters” have also searched for living pterosaurs, including David Woetzel.

I specialize in modern pterosaurs, not modern dinosaurs, but I did interview Marcy and Beach in August of 2014, on the banks of the Yakima River in Washington state.

### **Bioluminescent Pterosaurs in Northwestern USA**

Glowing nocturnal flying creatures in Washington state may appear irrelevant to sightings of apparent pterosaurs in Papua New Guinea, but Milt Marcy and Peter Beach have searched for them in both locations. We can learn at least one thing from that.

I found these two men quite credible, as I interviewed them in August of 2014, by the river where they had witnessed strange flying lights at night. They admitted that they were unable to see anything like a pterosaur in daylight, and almost all of their night sightings were only of the flying lights.

Some weeks after our interview, Marcy and Beach witnessed similar flying lights but over a different river in that northwestern area of the USA. Again they saw no form or features of a pterosaur. That brings up an important point.

### **Honesty in Searching for Living Dinosaurs and Pterosaurs**

Is it possible that Milt Marcy and Peter Beach were dishonest when they returned from their African expedition in 2006, when they admitted that they had seen nothing like any dinosaur? How easy for a liar to make up a story, if a dishonest man were to go to some remote area of the planet where his lie could hide in the dark! How unbelievable that two men would try to deceive the world into believing in modern dinosaurs, when those two would spend their own money on an expedition and afterwards admit that they had seen nothing like a dinosaur!



Why did those two men tell me nothing about any sighting of an apparent pterosaur that they had seen in daylight at a river in the northwestern USA? They had no such sighting and were honest.

So why would Mr. Marcy tell me about an apparent pterosaur he had observed early in 2015 in Papua New Guinea, admitting that he was not 100% sure it was a pterosaur? He was still being honest.

And why would Mr. Beach hesitate when I asked him how sure he was that he had observed a pterosaur with Mr. Marcy in Papua New Guinea? He was trying to think of something else that it could have been. He was thinking of different birds and bats that may have presented the appearance of what he had seen that day with his friend Milt. He was being honest.

Peter Beach was once a biology professor at a small college. He is well aware that a human with a bias can observe something and misidentify it because of that bias. I give him credit for being careful about assuming that he and Milt must have seen a pterosaur. Both of these men have shown us honesty in their investigations.

### **So was it a Pterosaur?**

I have spoken with both of them by phone this past week. I feel that the three of us agree that it is more than 50% likely that it was a living pterosaur they had observed in Papua New Guinea. So where does that leave us?

At the end of 2012, I compiled data from 128 of the more-credible sighting reports that I had received over many years. Each one of those 128 appeared to me to have been more than 50% likely to have been from an encounter with a living pterosaur. What does that mean? To those who understand probability, it means that if my assessment of each of those 128 reports was anywhere near the mark, it is practically impossible for all of those reports to have come from non-

pterosaurs: Not all pterosaurs are extinct.

Who am I do declare myself objective enough to make such a proclamation? I have spent the past eleven years researching and searching for living pterosaurs, although most of the searching was for truth within eyewitness reports rather than for the creatures themselves. I appear to have written more on this subject than all other cryptozoologists in the world combined, in nonfiction books and web pages and blog posts, which does not in itself prove the validity of my ideas, proving only that I am serious. In 2004, I returned from an expedition in Papua New Guinea, admitting that I had seen nothing like a pterosaur. In 2013, I finished examining 14,333 game-camera photos of a location where such a flying creature had been reported, and I admitted seeing nothing like a pterosaur. By early 2015, I had received eyewitness reports from five continents of this planet, not rumors or second-hand reports but the words of the witnesses, from those persons themselves. As of April 24, 2015, I have never myself seen anything like a living pterosaur. In other words I am honest. To the point, honesty is the first step and the biggest step to objectiveness.

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### **Pterosaur Sighting in Papua New Guinea Early in 2015**

*Peter Beach and Milt Marcy, both of the Portland area of Oregon, led an expedition in Papua New Guinea, in March and April of 2015, searching for a living pterosaur that previous American explorers had failed to see clearly. This time Americans did see, in daylight, the form and features of an apparent pterosaur.*

### **Investigators of Reports of Living Pterosaurs**

Garth Guessman, David Woetzel, Paul Nation, Jonathan Whitcomb—each of these four American men has explored in Papua New Guinea, searching for a living pterosaur.

## **Flying Pterosaur Creature**

*The problem is not in the eyewitnesses but in the indoctrination, over generations, that all species of dinosaurs and pterosaurs must have become extinct millions of years ago. That's the problem.*

## **Sightings of Flying Creatures**

*[In] July of 2010, My wife and I were sitting outside when motion from above the tree tops to our left caught my attention; it's very hard to explain how I felt at that moment. We were looking at two extremely large birds flying together and heading north . . . I can only guess to be 15-20' wing spans and the motion of their wings as they flew was very slow.*

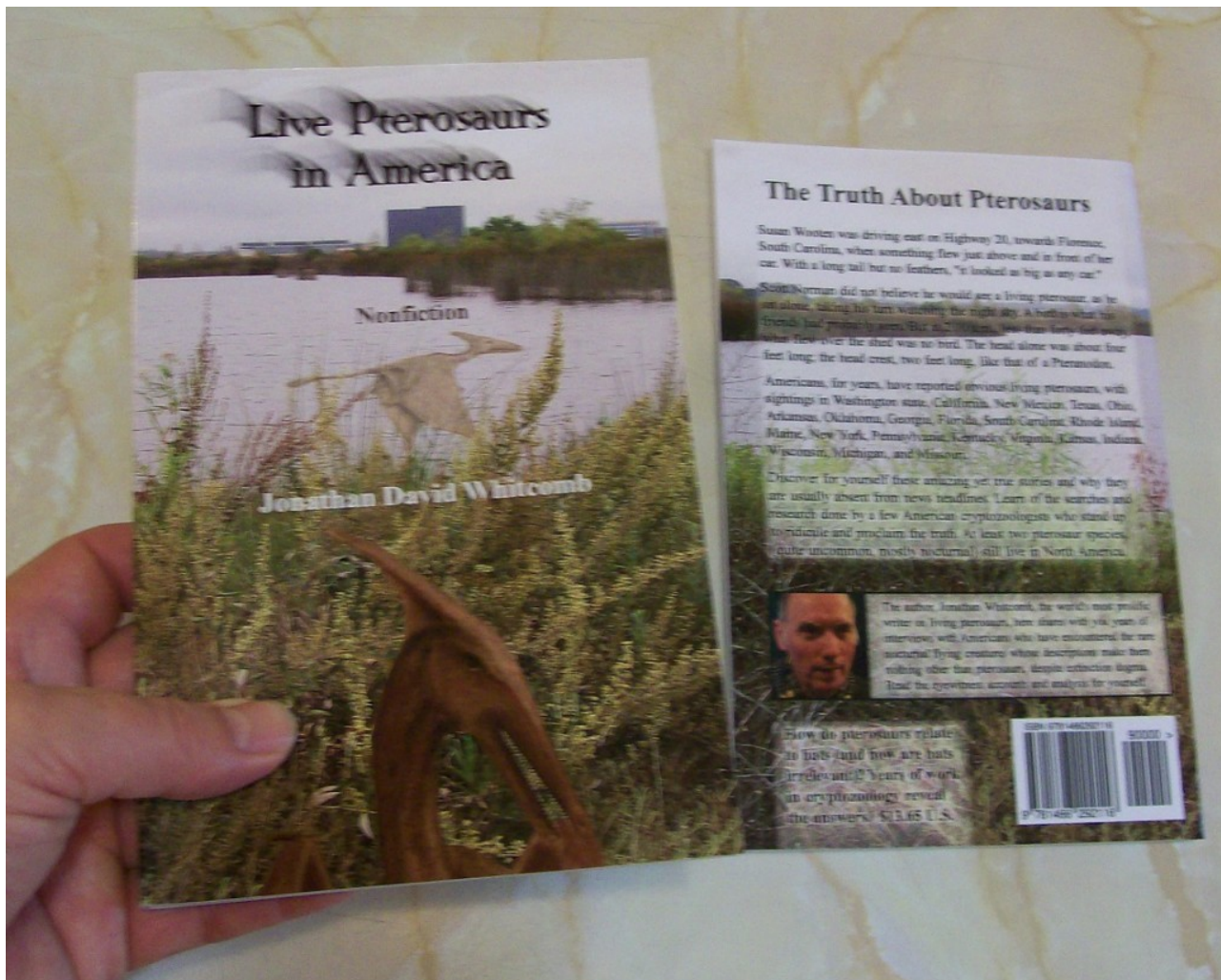
## **Can Ropens Hide in Caves?**

*Last month, I learned about multi-eyewitness sightings of flying lights in the northwestern United States, lights that the observers believe are bioluminescent pterosaurs, possibly ropens. It seems these lights fly over at least two rivers in this part of the country and near one particular river the lights enter and exit nearby caves.*

## **Bioluminescent Pterosaurs in Washington State**

*The flying creatures are nocturnal, not usually seen there in daylight . . . I emphasize that sightings of apparent living pterosaurs are throughout the states of Washington and Oregon . . . We were unable to get a picture but we saw many . . . flashing lights. I would have assumed that [they] were*

fireflies but we [don't] have them in Washington.



Probably the best-selling nonfiction book on modern “pterodactyls” – *Live Pterosaurs in America* (third edition) by the cryptozoologist Jonathan David Whitcomb

From the Amazon page:

Reports of huge flying “pterodactyls” in American skies have floated around the internet for years; but before about 2005, details were scarce. . . . Universal pterosaur extinction has been an assumption; some pterosaur species are still living. The author, one of those American explorers who interviewed natives in Papua New Guinea, has been interviewing American eyewitnesses since 2004.

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# The Van Meter Flying Creature

Yesterday I noticed a post by a skeptic who wrote about the legend of the Van Meter creature of 1903, a reportedly winged monster that frightened citizens in a small town in Iowa. (Actually, it appears there was more than one of the creatures.) I will not mention the pen name of the skeptic here, but she had previously written about me, assuming that I had been deceiving people about the ropen or living pterosaurs. She grouped me with those whom she proclaims are “deceiving people to undermine science.”

So perhaps I am not without bias when I first encounter any post by this woman, but I took notice that she again attacked the possibility of a modern pterosaur. Let’s look deeper than this outspoken skeptic appears to have looked. We’ll consider how bioluminescence might explain the strange reports from a century ago.

If the town of Van Meter, Iowa, stood alone with a series of sightings in the early 20th century, what about recent sightings? What about reported encounters with pterosaur-like animals in recent times, in the neighboring states of Wisconsin and Missouri? I doubt that Van Meter really stands alone.

Please consider what I wrote on page 31 of the third edition of my nonfiction book *Live Pterosaurs in America*:

*Later I received an email from a man in Wisconsin.*

*“ . . . wanted to tell someone about a sighting I had back in*

*the late 1970's or early 1980's. I grew up on a farm and picked cucumbers to make money as a kid. All of my sisters and brother did also. Anyways one late afternoon, I had just brought out the tractor to pick up the bags of cucumbers when I noticed a strange looking bird in the sky. . . . it looked like something straight out of the dinosaurs era. It scared the . . . out of me right away. I knew it was not a sand hill crane, which we have a few hundred migrating thru. What stood out was the long pointed head and the fact that there was a very long tail between the legs and with a ball shaped on the end of it. . . ."*

On page 228 of the fourth edition of *Searching for Ropens and Finding God*, I wrote about a sighting in Missouri:

*On the afternoon of January 2, 2013, a U.S. Marine, who is stationed at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, saw something strange overhead. He told me, "I could not believe my eyes. It appeared to be several feet long, and had a very large wing span, perhaps 10 feet or more. It was gliding for the most part . . ."*

*It had a long head with a "cone protruding from behind its head." He also told me it had "a very long tail with what I can only describe as a diamond shape at the end."*

In spite of the protest of one skeptic, the Van Meter flying creatures may have been nocturnal pterosaurs, related to others that have been reported more recently across the United States. If it's not the same species, it may still be related, and bioluminescence may be the correct explanation for its glow.

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**Bioluminescent Flying Creatures in America**

*“It was late in the evening almost dark . . . I was walking from my car to my house [in Sun Valley] and something in the sky caught my eye. My girlfriend also looked up and right away said is that a bat . . . What caught my eye was the bright radiation like light coming from the belly of this Pterodactyl looking animal . . .”*

## **Van Meter Creature**

*“The Van Meter Visitor” is a large paperback with 238 pages, on a subject whose main points could easily be summed up in a medium-length article, if no photos or sketches were included. This book has a generous selection of photos and other images, many of which are directly or indirectly related to the winged creature.*

## **Van Meter Visitor – The Book**

*I don't recommend The Van Meter Visitor for those who are ignorant of live-pterosaur investigations, for this book may keep those readers ignorant of the best explanation for the strange winged creature seen in Van Meter, Iowa, in 1903. But this book may nevertheless be useful for the reader open to the possibility that the authors of this paranormal book are themselves ignorant of the plausibility of live pterosaurs.*

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Fourth edition of *Searching for Ropens and Finding God*

From the back cover:

“Settle into a comfortable chair and prepare for what may become the most unsettling scientific discovery since Copernicus and Galileo.”