

Airforce spent millions to shoot down a U.S. weather balloon

written by Moon of Alabama

February 13, 2023

February 11 — Yesterday, the U.S. airforce shot down [another weather balloon](#):

The Pentagon said it shot down an unidentified object over frozen waters around Alaska on Friday at the order of President Biden, less than a week after a U.S. fighter jet brought down a Chinese spy balloon over the Atlantic in an episode that increased tensions between Washington and Beijing.

This ‘unidentified object’ was much smaller than the previous balloon.

Three U.S. officials said that as of Friday evening, the government did not know who owned or sent the object seen above Alaska, which, like the Chinese balloon last week, was shot down by an F-22 fighter jet using a Sidewinder air-to-air missile. Several officials said they believed the object shot down Friday was a balloon, but a Defense Department official said it broke into pieces when it hit the frozen sea, which added to the mystery of whether it was indeed a balloon, a drone or something else.

Mr. Kirby said that the object was “much, much smaller than the spy balloon that

we took down last Saturday" and that "the way it was described to me was roughly the size of a small car, as opposed to the payload that was like two or three buses."

The [Chinese weather balloon](#) taken down earlier had likely nothing to do with spying. The [crazy disinformation](#) and [politics around it](#) are just propaganda. There were antennas on Chinese weather balloon, but all weather balloons are carrying [radiosondes](#) to send down whatever they find.

After their measuring tasks are done, weather balloons are [supposed to fly higher](#) until the pressure within the balloon is much higher than the thin air surrounding it. In consequence, the balloon will rip open, and its radiosonde and debris will come down on a small parachute. There is usually an address on these and a request to send them back for reuse. In case you find one, please do so.

Sometimes the mechanism sending the balloon higher will fail. The balloon will then just follow the winds until something happens that brings it down.

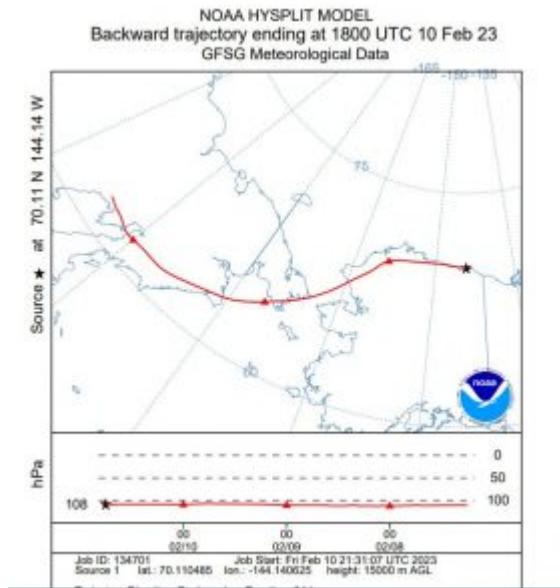
That may well have happened to the Chinese weather balloon as well as the weather balloon sent up by the National Weather Service from its measuring stations in Kotzebue or Noma in northwest Alaska.

Dan Satterfield @wildweatherdan - [21:41 UTC · Feb 10, 2023](#)

I back forecasted the latest "Balloon" shoot down in AK. Based on the location and time, it tracks back to near the Kotzebue NWS Rawinsonde site. Did we shoot down an NWS Weather balloon?? There is no data for the 12Z launch from that site and all the rest worked. #Chinaballoon

If not, then it goes back to the Bering Sea and then to NE Russia.

Also possible they did not launch a balloon at Kotzebue this morning at 12Z.



A [rawinsonde](#) is by the way a combination of wind sensors and radiosonde:

rawinsonde – An upper-air sounding that includes determination of wind speeds and wind directions.

Historically, wind data were obtained by tracking a balloon-borne radiosonde with a radio direction finder. Contemporary methods include measuring position or radiosonde velocity from a global positioning system or Loran radio navigation signals.

Another weather station is in Nome, Alaska, which is in the same area as Kotzebue.

Dan Satterfield @wildweatherdan – [21:54 UTC · 10 Feb 2023](#)

Nome sounding stopped at 100 mb today. It could be the NOME radiosonde balloon had issues.

If the measuring stopped at 100 millibar air pressure the balloon failed to rise

further up into thinner air.

More:

Dan Satterfield @wildweatherdan [22:14 UTC · 10 Feb 2023](#)

Could be the NOME Balloon if it failed and data stops at 100 mb at NOME on the 12z launch. It could have not gone up and burst as it should.

That isn't the only account that came up with such findings:

altNOAA @altNOAA - [3:15 UTC · Feb 11, 2023](#)

I could still be wrong, but it looks like balloon was launched at approx 2:00 am (Alaska Standard Time) from the National Weather Service WSO in Kotzebue, AK. It was intended for the 12z data (balloons launched twice per day approx 1 hr before 00/12 Zulu time). 6am eastern.

And to whoever flew this one... I hope your buddies are not too hard on ya. And thank you for your service!

This page should be populated with a SKEW-T diagram showing the 12z data from Kotzebue. The sounding diagram doesn't exist because the data doesn't exist because the balloon that was to send that data no longer exists.

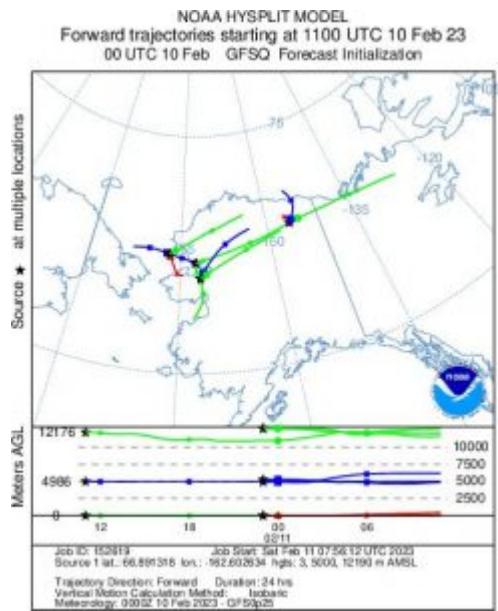
(Pic of failed page search)

and

altNOAA @altNOAA - [8:04 UTC · Feb 11, 2023](#)

The USAF either shot down the 12Z weather balloon from Kotzebue or (bear with me here), they shot down a little tiny spaceship from the Planet Smallrocksia. I'm seriously leaning toward our weather balloon. And it's pretty

well supported with the balloon optimization Hysplit.



I will admit that I'm not 100% on either possibility yet (99.998% positive it wasn't a little tiny spaceship tho). I'm not even 100% sure if a 12z balloon was released at Kotzebue. But, I'm going to find out.

So it looks like the airforce sent up an AWACS surveillance plane, a tanker, and an F-22, the most expensive fighter plane ever, to fire a \$400,000 Sidewinder missile to take down a failed weather balloon.

Had the balloon continued to fly, it would have turned toward the north pole. So a few million were spent to shoot down a U.S.-launched failed weather balloon on the tiny, tiny chance that some passenger plane would have crossed its path at its unusual 40,000 feet flight level.

I think that was a waste of money.

But it brought Biden some better press than the Chinese weather balloon disaster did. So there is the real reason for doing it.

Source: [Moon of Alabama](#)

