



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Houston, Texas	Accident Number:	CEN24LA035
Date & Time:	November 3, 2023, 11:32 Local	Registration:	N5875G
Aircraft:	GRASSMAN TIMOTHY B RV-14A	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Birdstrike	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot of the personal flight stated that during a two mile final for landing at the destination airport, he encountered a group of four large birds. He pitched the airplane down to avoid striking one of the birds, but he did not have time to avoid them. The airplane struck one of the birds at an airspeed of 105 kts and at an altitude of 880 ft mean sea level. The bird, identified as a black vulture, remained draped around the vertical stabilizer, and there was some loss of stability about the vertical axis. The pilot still had positive control of the airplane, and he declared an emergency landing without further incident. The airplane sustained substantial damage to the vertical stabilizer.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

The bird strike to the airplane's vertical stabilizer during an approach for landing.

Findings

Aircraft	Vertical stabilizer - Damaged/degraded
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Factual Information

History of Flight

Approach-VFR pattern final	Birdstrike (Defining event)
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Airline transport; Flight instructor	Age:	48,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	5-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane single-engine; Instrument airplane	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 1 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	August 9, 2023
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	August 14, 2023
Flight Time:	16572 hours (Total, all aircraft), 20 hours (Total, this make and model), 2241 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 207 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 64 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	GRASSMAN TIMOTHY B	Registration:	N5875G
Model/Series:	RV-14A	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	2023	Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental (Special)	Serial Number:	140691
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	July 21, 2023 Condition	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2050 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	19.2 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	C91A installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	Y10-390-EXP292
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	215 Horsepower
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	CXO,245 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	10:38 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	4 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	160°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.31 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	19°C / 9°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:	Houston, TX	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Houston, TX	Type of Clearance:	VFR
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class D

Airport Information

Airport:	Conroe/North Houston Regional Airport CXO	Runway Surface Type:	Concrete
Airport Elevation:	245 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	14	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	7501 ft / 150 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Full stop;Straight-in

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	30.392952,-95.444438

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Gallo, Mitchell
Additional Participating Persons:	Stephen Horacek; Federal Aviation Administration, Houston FSDO; Houston, TX
Original Publish Date:	January 4, 2024
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class 4
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=193365

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The NTSB does not assign fault or blame for an accident or incident; rather, as specified by NTSB regulation, “accident/incident investigations are fact-finding proceedings with no formal issues and no adverse parties ... and are not conducted for the purpose of determining the rights or liabilities of any person” (Title 49 *Code of Federal Regulations* section 831.4). Assignment of fault or legal liability is not relevant to the NTSB’s statutory mission to improve transportation safety by investigating accidents and incidents and issuing safety recommendations. In addition, statutory language prohibits the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report (Title 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b)). A factual report that may be admissible under 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b) is available [here](#).