

Minutes later, the JOC directed us to nearby radar detections. We took up a hovering position at approximately 700 feet above ground level (AGL). In the distance, we saw countless orange orbs swarming in all directions against the backdrop of the mountain. The display lasted several minutes before fading. The JOC then redirected us to our previous position based on fresh radar hits. I provided coordinates to the pilots, and we moved to intercept, hovering again at 700 feet AGL. Through NVGx, the pilots and I (using the naked eye) observed two large orbs flare up side by side, close to the helicopter – stationary and just above the rotor disk to our right. They were oval-shaped, orange with a white or yellow center, and emitted light in all directions.

After a few seconds, a third orb flared up below the pair, followed by a fourth below that, forming a total of four or five in a “T” formation under the original two. Moments later, they dimmed in reverse order, remaining stationary until they vanished from view. The entire event lasted 10-15 seconds. I didn’t take photos, as I was focused on assessing what it was and whether it posed a threat.

After this encounter, the pilots briefly considered landing due to the objects’ proximity but opted to remain hovering at 700 feet AGL for further observation. We then spotted the fighter jets entering visual range at about 23,00 feet AGL, identifiable by their blinking navigation lights. As watched from afar, the same type of orbs appeared directly above the fighters. They flared up one at a time in a horizontal formation, matching the jets’ speed and flight path. After 10-15 seconds, they dimmed sequentially and disappeared. This repeated several times as the jets transited the airspace and eventually landed. I remarked to the pilots that it seemed the same orbs we had encountered were now “chasing” the fighters. We also observed orange orbs flaring up and down around us for several minutes, forming a distinct triangle before vanishing.

Low on fuel, the pilots decided to return to the JOC. After landing, I briefly spoke with them – mostly to express thanks. We were virtually speechless after these observations. I then entered the JOC for a quick debrief before driving home.