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model kit

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Boeing "BIRD OF PREY"

The Bird of Prey, which Boeing was slated to unveil on Oct. 18, is a single-seat, subsonic aircraft that was flown by company and U.S. Air Force test pilots. First flight of the Phantom Works-built aircraft occurred in the fall of 1996, and operations continued through 1999. It flew 38 missions.

Flight operations were conducted at the secret Groom Lake base on the Nevada Test Ranges north of Nellis AFB. USAF officials remain sensitive about the location, so Groom Lake facilities had to be airbrushed out of the top photograph.

The basis for the technology demonstrator was to help prove advanced low- observable lean design, integration and manufacturing capabilities. Boeing built large fuselage and wing skins using low temperature-cured carbon composite technology. The large structures were designed to provide a significant radar cross-section improvement because their use reduces the number of seams on an aircraft. Additionally, the design is expected to yield substantial savings in maintenance costs from those of earlier stealth aircraft such as the F-117 and B-2. This is because fewer seams will have to be covered and treated specially.

THE DESIGN THAT includes a gull-wing (shown in the middle photo with the Bird of Prey in a hangar) avoids flat surfaces on the top and bottom to improve stealth against radars looking at the aircraft from above and directly below. The propulsion system was configured to block direct view of the engine fan, to further reduce radar returns (see bottom photo).

Boeing applied the engineering and manufacturing tools from the X-36 tailless fighter demonstrator it built and flew for NASA, its unsuccessful X-32 Joint Strike Fighter candidate and the X-45 unmanned combat air vehicle that the company has been flying since early this year. Additionally, some of the technology has migrated to the F/A-18E/F. The testbed also was used to hone Boeing's rapid prototyping techniques.

The Bird of Prey features a 22.66-ft. wingspan, and is 46.66 ft. long and 9.25 ft. high. Takeoff weight is 7,379 lb. The aircraft is powered by an unspecified Pratt & Whitney engine. About 400 personnel have been involved in the project. Like other classified programs, the Bird of Prey used components of other aircraft, such as an AV-8B Harrier ejection seat, to keep production costs low.

The $67-million project was overseen by the Air Force but financed entirely by Boeing so it is proprietary. The company will donate the aircraft to the U.S. Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, at a ceremony at the St. Louis headquarters of Boeing Military Aircraft and Missile Systems. Company executives are expected to be joined by Air Force Secretary James Roche and USAF Chief of Staff Gen. John Jumper.

Boeing's chief test pilot for the program was Rudy Haug. The aircraft was also flown by a second Boeing test pilot, Joe Felock. Additionally, Doug Benjamin, currently a test pilot for the company, flew the aircraft while on active duty with USAF.

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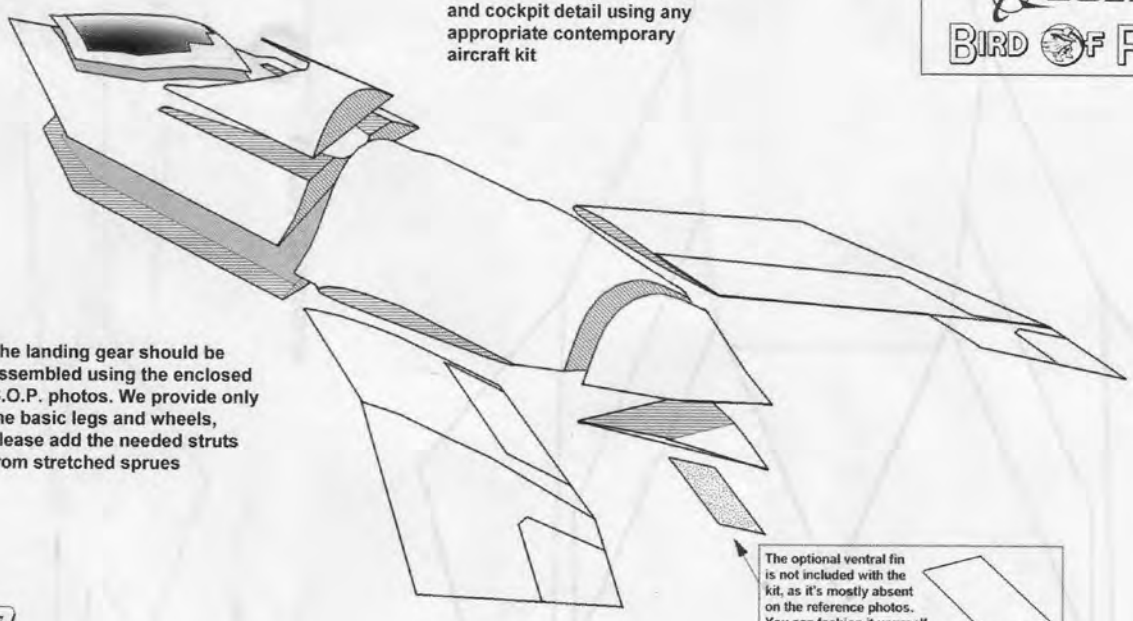
BOEING
BIRD OF PREY

Please add the ejection seat and cockpit detail using any appropriate contemporary aircraft kit



The landing gear should be assembled using the enclosed B.O.P. photos. We provide only the basic legs and wheels, please add the needed struts from stretched sprues

The optional ventral fin is not included with the kit, as it's mostly absent on the reference photos. You can fashion it yourself using this template.

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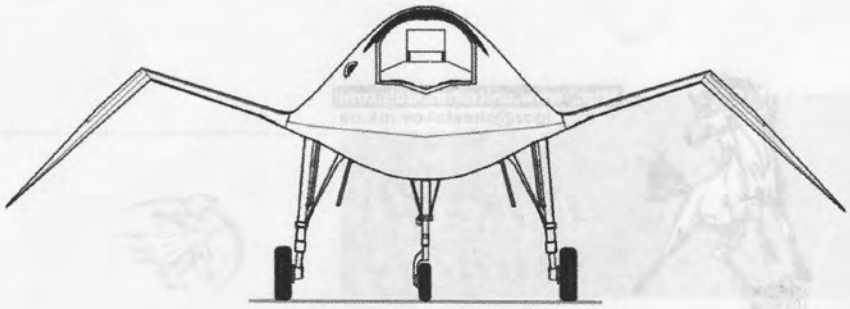

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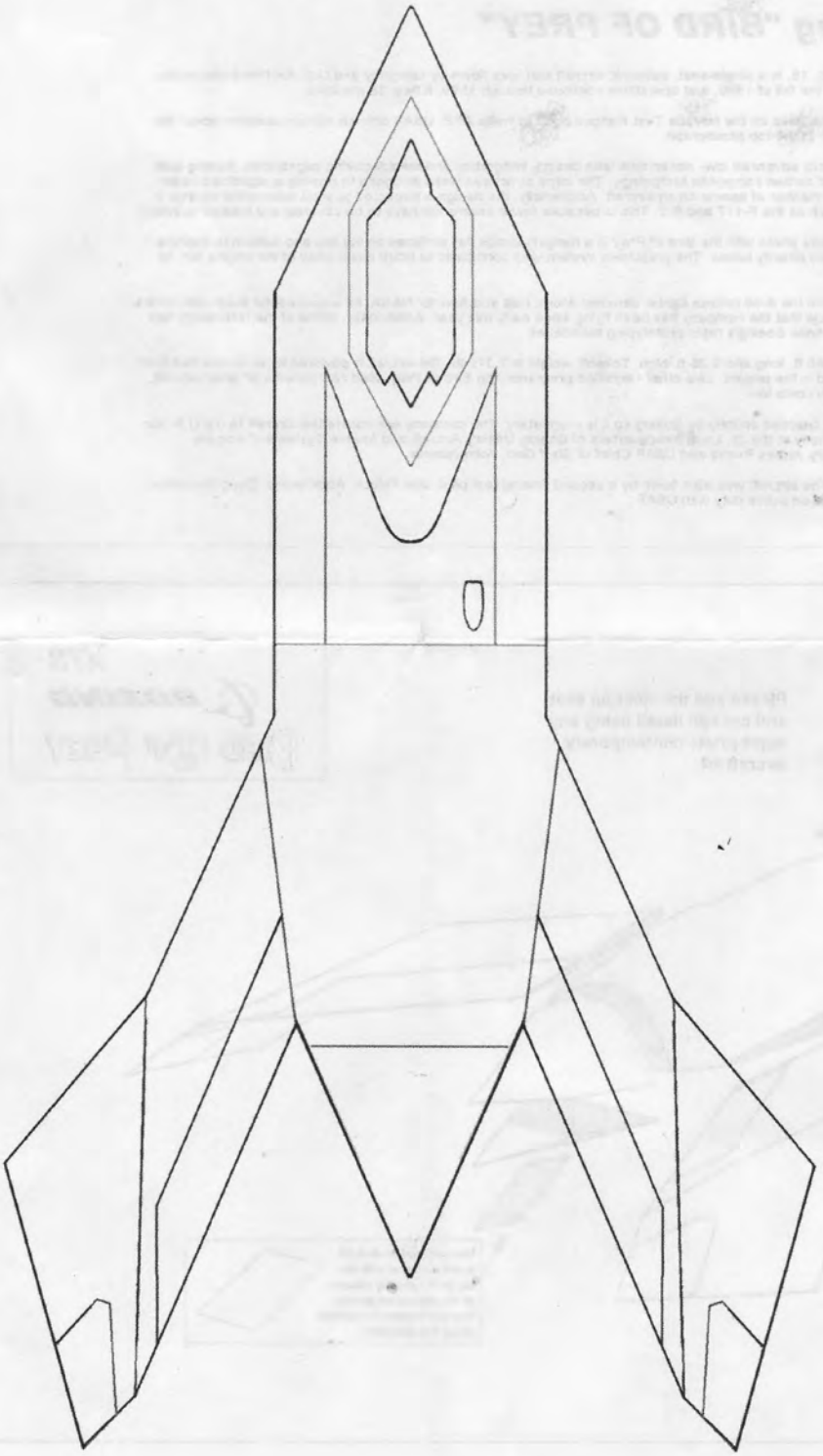
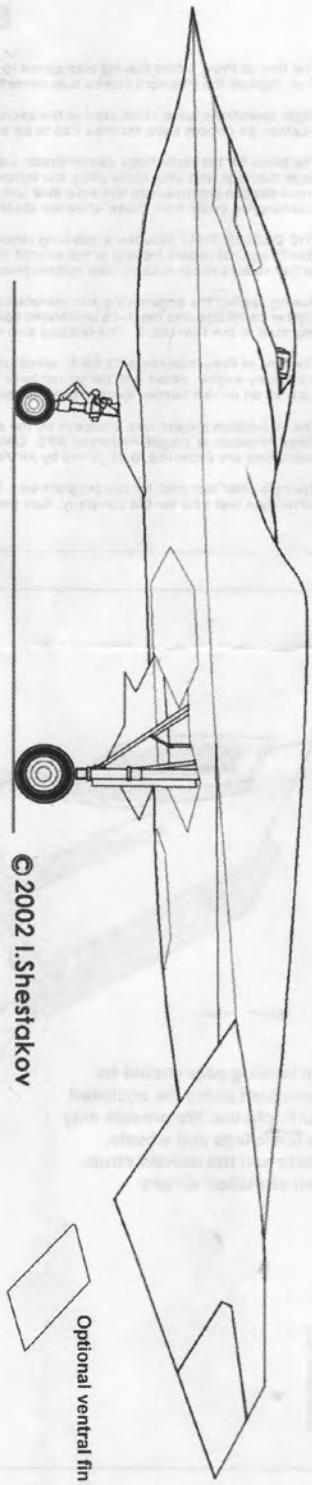
BOEING

BIRD OF PREY





Optional ventral fin

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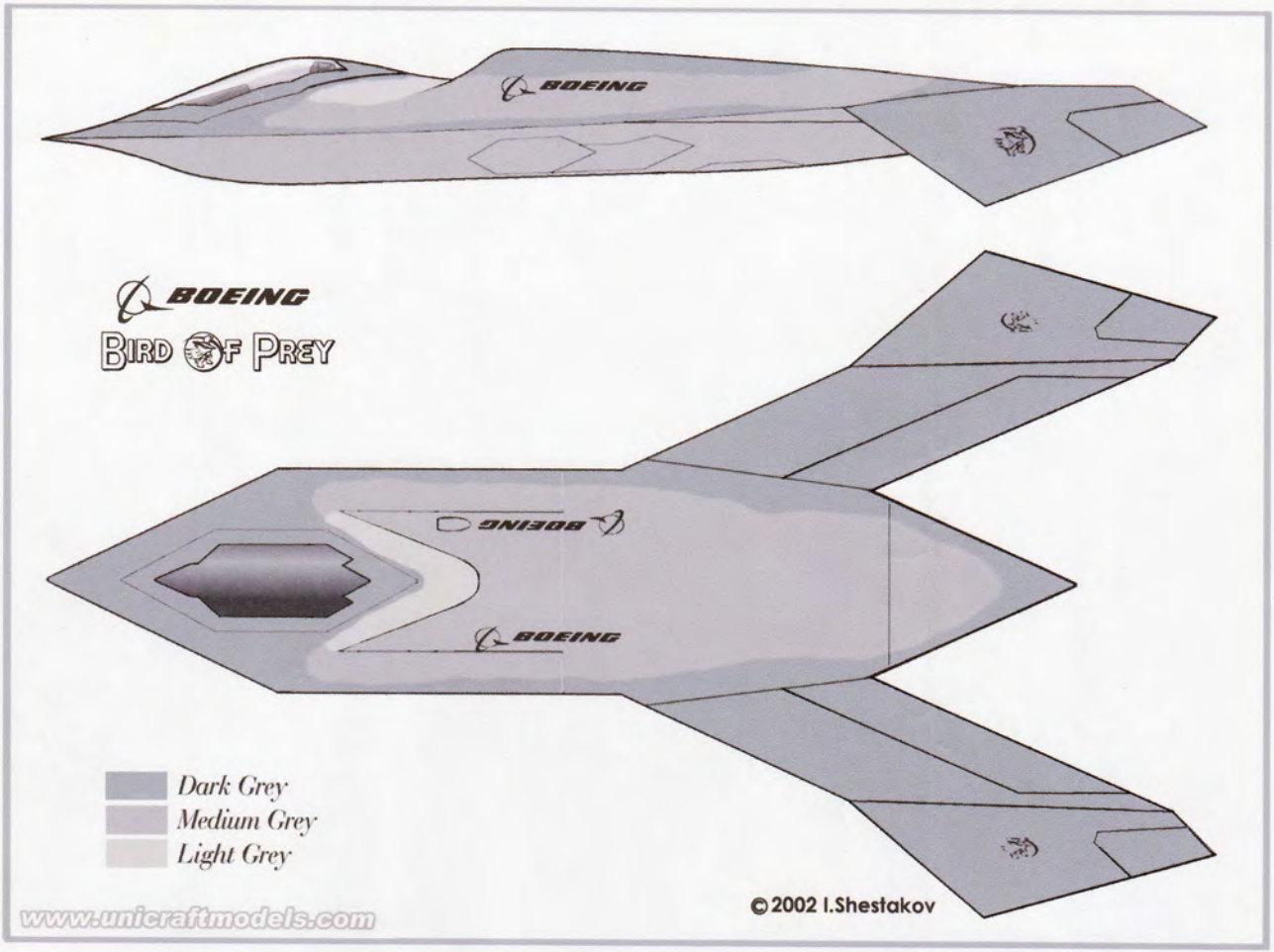
BOEING
BOEING
BIRD OF PREY
BOEING
BOEING
Dark Grey
Medium Grey
Light Grey
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