

# Bush Flying Tales Techniques As Flown And Taught In Alaska



Alaska, known for its rugged terrain and vast expanses of untouched wilderness, has been a hub for bush flying activities for decades. Bush flying, also known as wilderness flying, involves piloting small aircraft into remote areas with limited or no established airstrips. The challenges faced by bush pilots in Alaska provide an enriching source of tales and techniques that have been passed down through generations of aviators.

## **The Origins of Bush Flying in Alaska**

Alaska's unique geography, characterized by mountains, glaciers, and dense forests, is what initially necessitated the development of bush flying techniques.

In the early 20th century, pioneers such as Bob Reeve and Noel Wien began exploring ways to navigate these challenging landscapes. These aviators honed their skills to bring supplies, mail, and personnel to remote regions that were otherwise inaccessible.



## Survival Flying: Bush Flying Tales & Techniques as Flown and Taught in Alaska

by Graham Field (Kindle Edition)

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 5978 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Print length : 199 pages  
Lending : Enabled



### The Bush Pilot's Skillset

Bush pilots in Alaska possess a unique set of skills that distinguish them from their counterparts flying in more urban environments. They must have impeccable flying abilities, as the conditions they encounter can be unpredictable and unforgiving. With limited navigational aids and often adverse weather conditions, bush pilots rely heavily on their intuition, experience, and knowledge of the areas they operate in.

Moreover, bush pilots need to be resourceful problem solvers. They should be able to fix mechanical issues in austere settings with limited tools and facilities. Additionally, they must have a solid understanding of survival skills in case of an unforeseen emergency or prolonged stay in the wilderness.

## **Techniques for Landing on Unimproved Strips**

Bush pilots in Alaska regularly encounter unimproved landing strips, which vary in length and terrain. Landing on such strips requires a special set of techniques to ensure a safe touchdown. One common technique is the "STOL" (Short Takeoff and Landing) approach, which allows pilots to land on shorter runways than would typically be possible.

Another technique used frequently by bush pilots is the "wheel landing." Instead of touching down on all contact points of the landing gear simultaneously, pilots use the main wheels first while maintaining control before allowing the tailwheel to gently touch the ground. This technique is particularly useful on rough or short runways.

## **Navigating Challenging Weather Conditions**

Alaska's weather patterns can change rapidly, posing challenges to bush pilots. Fog, low visibility, high winds, and snowstorms are common obstacles that need to be navigated skillfully. Pilots rely on their ability to read weather forecasts and observations, the use of aviation instruments, and their knowledge of local weather patterns to make informed decisions.

A technique often employed by bush pilots in low visibility conditions is called "following the contour." By maintaining a low altitude and closely following the terrain, pilots can maintain visual reference points, providing a sense of direction and minimizing the risk of getting disoriented in adverse weather.

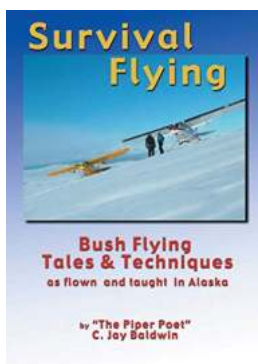
## **Stories from the Wild Skies**

The experiences of bush pilots in Alaska are rife with captivating tales of adventure and survival. Flying through narrow mountain passes, narrowly avoiding collisions with tall trees, wildlife encounters, and heroic search and

rescue missions are just a few examples of the countless stories shared among bush pilots and aviation enthusiasts.

Bob Reeve's famous "drop on a dime" maneuver, where he would skillfully descend onto a mountain saddle to deliver supplies, has become a legendary tale inspiring aspiring bush pilots to this day. These stories not only serve as a testament to the courage and skill of Alaska's bush pilots but also highlight the importance of proper training and adherence to safety procedures.

Alaska's bush flying traditions have shaped the techniques and skills of pilots for years. The challenging environment, varied weather conditions, and isolated communities have given rise to a unique aviation culture. The stories and techniques passed down from one generation of pilots to the next serve as a reminder of the bravery and resourcefulness required to navigate the Alaskan wilderness from above.



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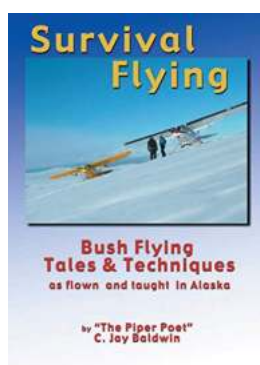
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"Survival Flying" is a candid examination of Alaskan aviation history and a proposal for a new form of flight training. Using stories from the Alaskan bush, Jay Baldwin examines the myths and procedures that have claimed so many aviators in the North. By examining accidents, including a few of his own, he combines his rich military and civilian flight instruction careers, with his decades of flying gliders, float planes, jet trainers, tactical fighters, wide-body airliners and bush planes to develop a flight training philosophy that turns our current programs upside down.

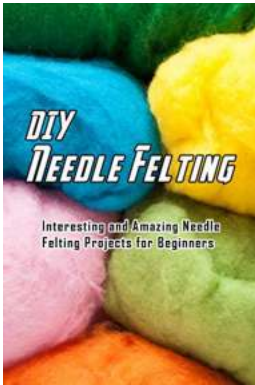
"Survival Flying" is a "threat-based" program derived from the special challenges of the Alaska bush and departs radically from "maneuver-based" instruction endorsed by the Federal Aviation Administration. It draws skills from many branches of aviation and uses the latest Crew Resource Management tools. It examines historical accident data to develop a syllabus for training pilots to minimize risk in otherwise risky environments. Whether you ever set foot in Alaska or not, every pilot and passenger will benefit from the concepts and stories in "Survival Flying". Brace yourself for a challenge to all you have held dear in your previous flying. If you want to survive, you may be making a few changes.

- Jay Baldwin



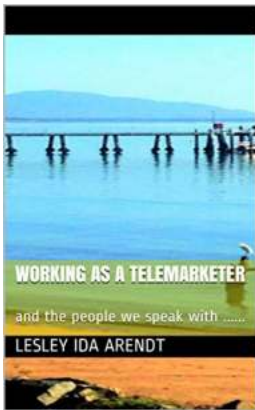
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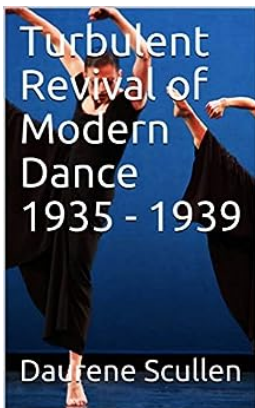
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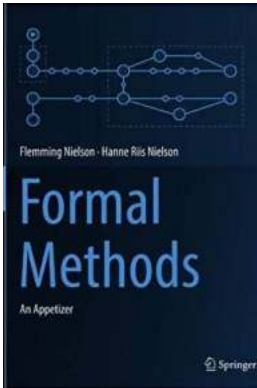
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