

Fliers of Urth

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 02 Aug 1999

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Mitchell A. Bailey — 02 Aug 1999, 18:25

Now let me get this straight: the cherry-leaf fliers the Autarch and a few privileged characters of the Commonwealth (including Vodalus) possess supposedly get their lift from the supposed repulsion of antimatter to a gravitational field of pro-matter (i.e. that of Urth) — I.e. antimatter generates antigravity?

This looks like a definite case of "hard-physics-this-ain't". General relativity definitely says that antimatter would behave indistinguishably from promatter, gravitywise. Supposedly there are some exotic field theories out there that predict _maybe_ differently, but they aren't any of them widely accepted.

So far as empirical confirmation is concerned, the amount of antimatter ever manufactured and collected so far can be inventoried by the particle (antiprotons and positrons). So far, no one has succeeded in making antihydrogen atoms not moving at relativistic velocities, but there's some work at CERN ongoing. That's sort of problematical for measuring acceleration in a gravitational field. Some early, very questionable experiments suggest that antimatter does indeed fall down.

Did Mr. Wolfe write himself out on a limb assuming that one of the exotic field theories which call for antigravity antimatter would pan out? Or did he have something else in mind altogether?

Now, regarding the odd noisy "locust"- like fliers which were still extant during Typhon's reign - does anyone else get the idea that their thrumming racket, strange shape, and advancing extinction indicates these are more or less conventional military helicopters? Such beasts are quite demanding, maintenance-wise.

Perhaps the Ascian pentadactyls of Sev's time are more advanced helicopter-like designs using protected rotors/blowers or their entire spinning hulls for lift, hence the strange wind Sev always notices accompanying them?