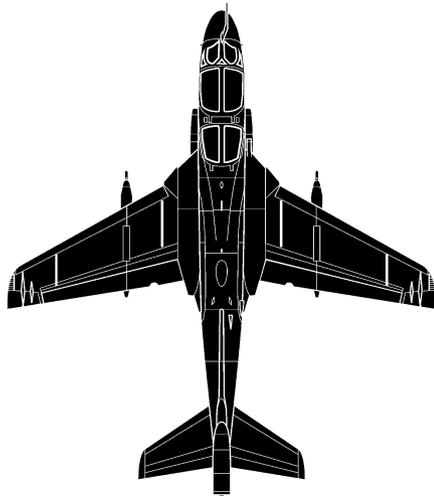


EA-6B Prowler



The EA-6B Prowler is a long-range, all-weather, electronic warfare aircraft with highly advanced electronic countermeasure capabilities for suppression of enemy air defenses. It entered service more than 40 years ago but is still operational in US Navy, Marine Corps, and joint Air Force-Navy squadrons. The Air Force, Navy, and USMC all provide crews. The aircraft offers an umbrella of protection for US forces by jamming enemy radar, electronic data links, and communications.

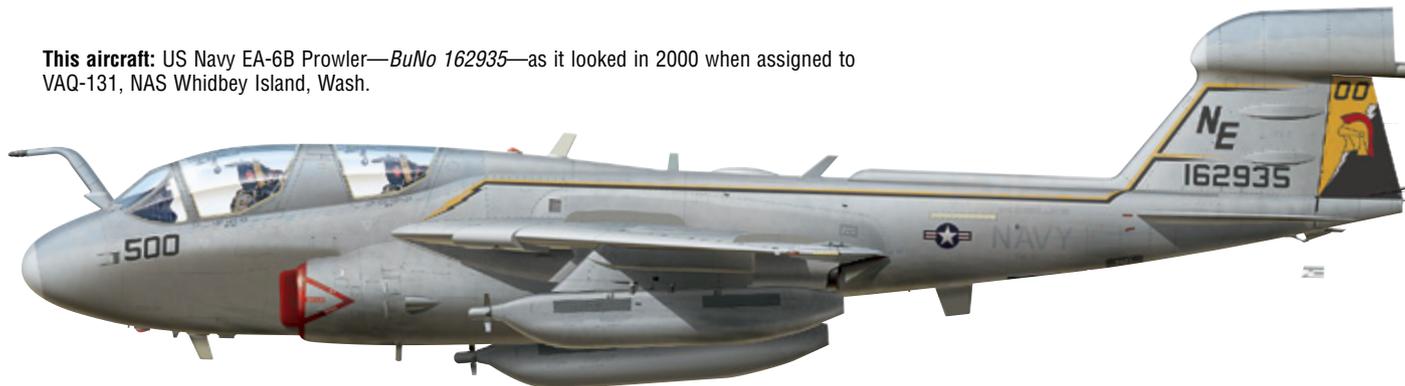
The Grumman-built Prowler was derived from the Navy's A-6 Intruder. The basic two-seat A-6B airframe was lengthened by 4.5 feet and strengthened to accommodate four crew members. The vertical stabilizer was fitted with a large pod to house surveillance receivers able to detect hostile radar at great distances. It was also equipped

with massive electronic arrays capable of jamming radars and communications and AGM-88 anti-radiation missiles for kinetic attacks on such systems. Its electronics are continually upgraded to keep pace with new threats.

The Prowler has flown in combat many times—in Vietnam during Operation Linebacker II in 1972; in the 1980s as part of Navy strikes on targets in Iran, Lebanon, and Libya; in the Gulf War of 1991; and in later operations in the Balkans, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Even stealth aircraft such as the B-2 bomber require supplemental coverage from the EA-6B in certain environments. With the retirement of USAF's EF-111 EW aircraft in the mid-1990s, the Air Force began supplying pilots and electronic warfare officers for Prowler operations.

—Walter J. Boyne

This aircraft: US Navy EA-6B Prowler—BuNo 162935—as it looked in 2000 when assigned to VAQ-131, NAS Whidbey Island, Wash.



In Brief

Designed, built by Grumman ★ first flight May 25, 1968 ★ number built 170 ★ crew of four (pilot and three electronic countermeasures officers) ★ two Pratt & Whitney J52-P408 turbojet engines ★ electronic combat systems, ALQ-99 on-board receiver, ALQ-99 pod-mounted jammer, USQ-113 communications jammer ★ munitions load four AGM-88 High Speed Anti-Radiation Missiles ★ max speed 650 mph ★ cruise speed 480 mph ★ max range 2,100 mi ★ weight (loaded) 61,500 lb ★ span 53 ft ★ length 59 ft 10 in ★ height 16 ft 8 in.

Famous Fliers

J. D. Alexander, Ken Carlsen, Dave Cronk, John Cryer, Mark Darrah, J. R. Haley, Grady Jackson, Frank Kelly, Joe Kuzmick, Willie McCool, Dana McKinney, Dee Mewbourne, Royal Moore, Don Quinn, Russell Sanborn, David Suggs, David Woods.

Interesting Facts

Preceded by interim EA-6A "Electric Intruder," built in small numbers for USMC ★ features canopy embedded with gold, which blocks electromagnetic interference ★ suffered 55 losses in combat or training accidents ★ posted accident rate three times that of any other Navy or USMC aircraft in the 1980s ★ flies under stringent high-angle-of-attack restrictions ★ can sense location of buried improvised explosive devices and jam their detonation signals.



An EA-6B Prowler launches from the flight deck of USS Roosevelt.