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Hobbyist drone pilot records best flight so far



This is a view of sunrise on Saturday (March 25) from a couple of hundred up.

Story, Photos and Video By Jeff M. Hardison © March 30, 2017 at 11:07 a.m.

JEMLANDS -- With a very low level of wind on Saturday (March 25), an opportunity presented itself to fly an unmanned aerial system (or drone) over a hayfield in Jemlands, an unrecorded subdivision in Levy County.

“This was the best five-minute flight so far for The Dragonfly,” hobbyist drone pilot Jeff Hardison said. “I had a blast.”

VIDEO LINK CAN BE FOUND ON FRONT OF MARCH PAGE

This narrated five-minutes and 13-seconds video shows The Dragonfly’s view as it takes off, flies over a small crop of tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, squash and a grapevine and then flies over a hayfield.

The FAA-approved hobbyist pilot said the drone stayed well below the 500-foot altitude threshold and was so close to trees that no form of manned aircraft could possibly have been endangered.

There were no airplanes or helicopters heard in the area, either, during this five-minute flight.

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Hobbyist drone pilot Jeff Hardison is seen Saturday morning in this still photo taken from a video.



Here hobbyist drone pilot Jeff Hardison is seen in another photo from taken from a different video, where the camera had been repositioned for more of a vertical view on Wednesday morning (March 29). In this photo, he is barefoot - which is not the safest practice.

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As shown in this early morning view of crops on Wednesday, the change of camera angle and the low altitude flight created the best opportunity for this action that was attempted and completed.

There were no people or animals within the flight area either, making this a textbook example of a safe hobbyist level of flight.

“I’m hoping to sell more ads,” the publisher said, “so that I can afford a more expensive drone. I plan to conduct research, too, to find out what is required for me to fly a better version of this toy and camera for potential use in other areas beyond my hobbyist flights.”

A second video made on Wednesday morning (March 29) is not seen here, although a couple of still shots taken from that flight are shown.