

U.S. military tracking ANOTHER balloon

By Geoff Earle, Deputy U.S. Political Editor For Dailymail.com 16:36 EST 23 Feb 2024 , updated 21:09 EST 23 Feb 2024



- **The military dispatched jets to investigate**
- **It was not deemed to be a threat**
- **Chinese spy balloon last year sparked a diplomatic incident with China**

The U.S. military is [tracking yet another balloon over the western United States, a year after a Chinese spy balloon provoked a diplomatic crisis.](#)

The military dispatched aircraft to investigate the situation, [CBS](#) news reported, adding that it has not been determined to be a threat.

Like the spy balloon that entered U.S. airspace and slowly made its way across the U.S., the current balloon was spotted in [Colorado](#).

The spy balloon that entered U.S. airspace over [Alaska](#) in January eventually flew over a U.S. military base in [Montana](#). It wasn't until it was over the Atlantic that the military shot it down off the coast of South Carolina, citing security risks of downing it over land.



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That in turn provoked [Beijing](#), which vowed countermeasures, adding yet another strain a relationship already battered by trade practices, tariffs, Taiwan, human rights, and China's ties with Russia before President Vladimir Putin launched his Ukraine invasion.

Republicans criticized President [Joe Biden](#) for not having it downed sooner. The incident prompted a period when the military shot down other unidentified objects.

The earlier incident forced Secretary of State Antony Blinken to cancel a planned trip to China while criticizing it as an 'irresponsible act.'



President Biden faced a diplomatic crisis when a Chinese spy balloon traversed the country last year

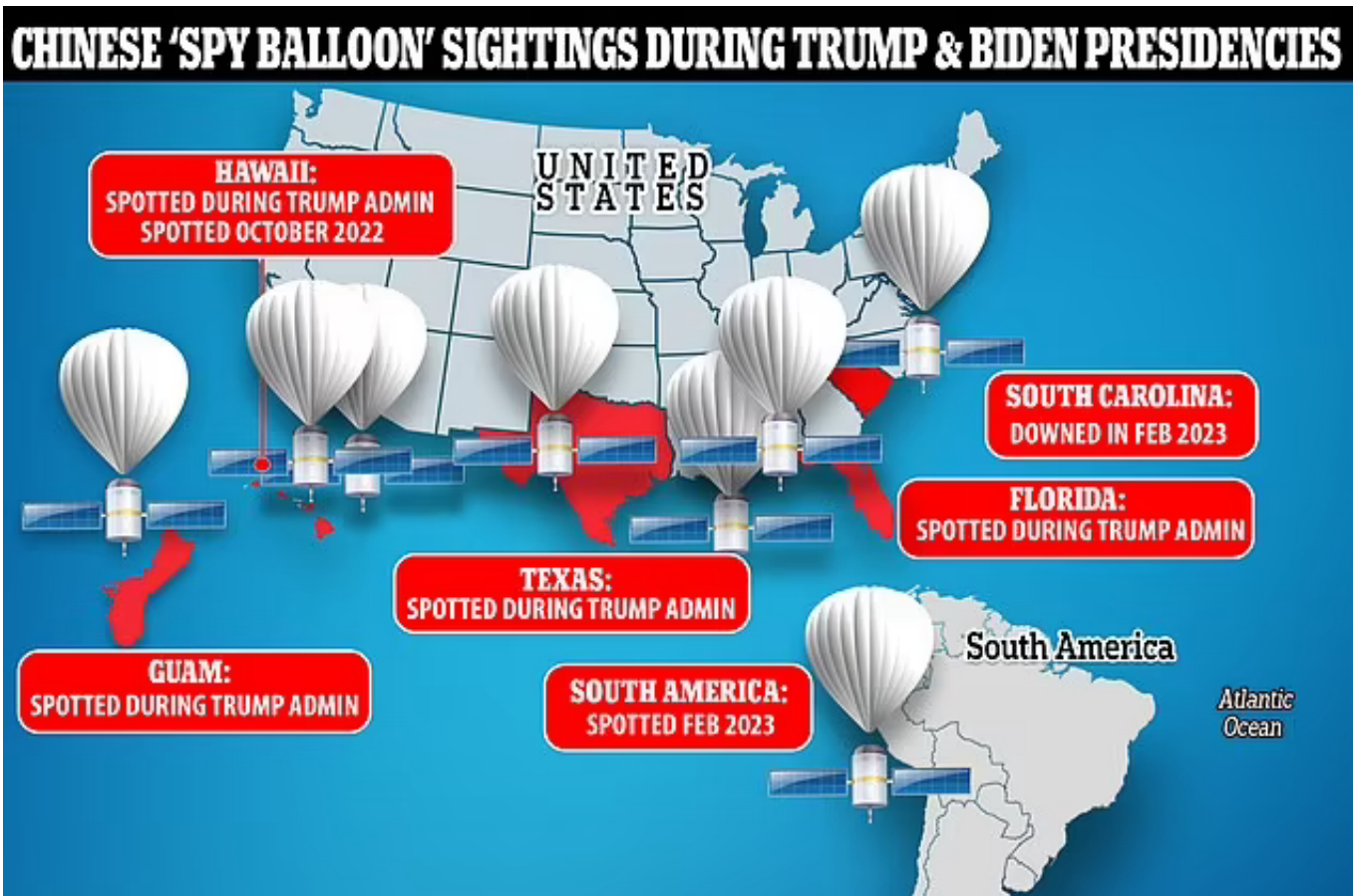


The military scrambled jets to investigate the balloon



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Navy sailors recovered parts of the spy balloon after a U.S. jet shot it down off the coast of South Carolina last year



Last year's incident brought forth information on a series of sightings



Last year's balloon incident preceded a series of shoot-downs, beginning with the Feb. 4 downing of the Chinese spy balloon

Biden in June said he didn't think 'the leadership knew where it was and knew what was in it and knew what was going on,' calling it 'more embarrassing than it was intentional.'

He then [met with Chinese President Xi Jinping in San Francisco in November in an effort to put the U.S.-China relationship on a firmer footing.](#)

The White House and the Pentagon had no immediate comment.

The balloon is being carried east by the Jet Stream, which boasted near record wind speeds last week, allowing a Virgin Atlantic transatlantic flight to top 800 miles per hour.

It is crossing while Biden already has his hands full with other foreign policy challenges. On Friday he appealed to House Republican leaders to bring lawmakers back to vote on a stalled package to provide \$60 billion to aid Ukraine.

He met this week with the wife of slain Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny. There are reports Ukrainian forces are rationing ammunition while facing continued Russian attacks. And Israel's war on Gaza is leading to continued civilian casualties while posing political problems for Biden as he faces more primary election tests.

Last year's incident brought forth information on a series of sightings. Some earlier incidents were dated back to the Trump administration.

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According to a statement by NORAD, North American Aerospace Defense Command and the Federal Aviation Administration 'detected a small balloon at an altitude varying between 43,000-45,000 feet', [military.com](https://www.military.com) reported.

'The balloon was intercepted by NORAD fighters over Utah, who determined it was not maneuverable and did not present a threat to national security.'

NORAD said it would continue to track it and monitor the balloon. The FAA 'also determined the balloon posed not hazard to flight safety. NORAD remains in close coordination with the FAA to ensure flight safety.'