

Bird Scaring

Vigilante vs. Lightweight Model

It is preferable to use the Vigilante model when possible for bird scaring as it has the protective skirt that wraps around the Mylar balloon. The balloon is susceptible to puncture in rough handling or if it is forced to the ground because of rain or high winds. The Vigilante Helikite will come down in the rain but the protective cover protects the balloon from punctures until it dries out and automatically re-launches itself again.

We have found that the Lightweight model is a better choice for use in high altitudes such as the Okanagan Valley of the interior of BC during hot temperature spells of 90+ degrees. Historically this would be for the traditional soft fruits (apricots, peaches, plums, cherries) that are attacked in July and August. This would also apply to market garden crops such as peas and corn. The Lightweight Helikite is a Helikite without a protective cover surrounding the silver Mylar balloon. Instead the balloon is held onto the kite with straps. This means it is lighter and so flies better in extremely hot conditions and higher altitudes. Lightweight Helikites require no adjustment and fly happily in winds up to 25 mph (Force 6) in hot or cold climates. Lightweight Helikites are not as tough as Vigilante Helikites, so Lightweight Helikites cannot be used on winter crops, overnight or anywhere they are likely to come down onto bare ground when wet. Another feature of the Lightweight model is that it does not “swoop” as much and is more suited to protecting confined areas.

The models that GasKite Aerostats sell have been modified to work in the extremes we experience in the mountain area. By making the Helikites lighter, they will fly reliably with less helium, during the hot days and the cool evenings. This allows the helium to expand in the hot day-time temperatures without exerting excessive pressure on the seams and the eventual leaking of the Mylar balloons.

The Vigilante model is the preferred model for the lower altitude and more temperate climate of the lower mainland to protect blueberries and corn. The Fraser Valley is almost at sea level, so the Vigilante will fly despite the occasional hot day.

Revised March 2010-03-22
GasKite Support

Manufactured by:
Allsopp Helikites Ltd - South End Farm, Damerham, Fordingbridge, Hampshire, SP6 3HW, England
Telephone +44(0)1725-518750 - Fax: +44(0)1725-518786 -

Available from
GasKite Aerostats 5703 Gartrell Road, Summerland BC, Canada V0H 1Z7 250-583-9875 Fax 250-404-0308