

## Ten facts about Flight 19

The fate of Flight 19 is said to be one of the strongest pieces of evidence that there is something strange about the Bermuda Triangle, yet the story is often told in a misleading way.

- Flight 19 was a training mission: patrol leader Lt Charles Taylor was the only experienced pilot
- soon after take-off, Taylor's compass malfunctioned, so he decided to fly by 'dead-reckoning' an alternative method of navigation
- Taylor was not wearing a watch (which is necessary for navigation by dead-reckoning)
- One of the Avengers developed a faulty radio
- The weather gradually deteriorated into a major storm; visibility was poor
- At 19:01, the last message was received from Flight 19: a faint, repeated 'FT, FT' – the call letters of Flight 19.
- The Mariner search plane was not lost, but exploded 23 minutes after take-off. Other planes carried on the search.
- The official report did state that the planes had 'vanished' as if they had flown to Mars' - but this is only a figure of speech not to be taken literally
- Upon the termination of the search, the Navy issued the warning that travellers in the area should remain on the alert
- The most likely explanation is that Taylor, flying without a compass in a major storm, led his mission in the wrong direction. They flew East into the Atlantic instead of West to Florida and must have crash landed and sunk off the continental shelf where the sea is so deep that the wreckage would never be found.