NTSB DETAILS LEARJET'S EMERGENCY LANDING AFTER COLLISION WITH DEER

News / Business aviation

The NTSB released details of an accident in which a Learjet 35A corporate jet collided with a deed on takeoff from Grosse Ile Municipal Airport, Michigan, USA.

On June 22, 2015, a Learjet 35A, registered N640BA, planned to perform a corporate flight from Grosse Ile Municipal Airport, Michigan to Chicago-Midway Airport, Illinois. There were two passengers and two pilots on board.

The pilot reported that during the takeoff roll, while accelerating through 130 knots, a "faint bump" was felt. The flight crew continued the takeoff and experienced extreme difficulty controlling the airplane. They headed over Lake Michigan to avoid any built-up areas. By adjusting the airspeed the crew were able to stabilize the airplane in flight. At 160 knots the aircraft wanted to roll right but above that airspeed the crew were able to keep the wings level.

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The flight crew reported that there were no annunciations or warnings on the flight deck, but they were able to identify damage to the leading edge of the right wing.
The flight crew diverted to Toledo-Express Airport, Ohio and performed a high-speed landing without incident. The airplane sustained substantial damage to the right wing.
Following the accident, a deer was found on the runway at the departure airport. The departure airport perimeter is partially fenced and co-exists on an island with a nature conservancy.

The FAA's Wildlife Strike Database shows two other occurrences at Grosse Ile Municipal Airport involving a deer. In October 2002 a Piper PA-28 impacted a deer on takeoff, causing a fuel leak from the tank drain fitting and a dent in the fuel tank.

In January 2006 a Piper PA-34 Seneca sustained substantial damage when it impacted a white-tailed deer with the right hand prop during takeoff.

The investigation into the Learjet accident is ongoing.

07 SEPTEMBER 2015

SOURCE: AVIATION SAFETY NEWS
ARTICLE LINK:
https://50skyshades.com/index.php/news/business-aviation/ntsb-details-learjets-emergency-landing-after-collision-with-deer

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