“At Least Four Species”: Former CIA-Funded Researcher Claims Extraterrestrials Were Recovered From Crashed UFOs



On the podcast “The Diary of a CEO,” physicist Hal Puthoff, 89, has revived the most explosive rumor in American ufology. Yet he himself admits he has no direct access to the information he relays. An investigation into a spectacular statement, and into what it does not prove.

A Statement That Went Around the World

In late May 2026, Dr. Harold “Hal” Puthoff appeared on “The Diary of a CEO,” the podcast of British entrepreneur Steven Bartlett, alongside filmmaker Dan Farah, director of the documentary “The Age of Disclosure.” During a roundtable on unidentified aerial phenomena, the researcher dropped a line that was picked up by the American, British and Australian press: people involved in craft-recovery operations had allegedly told him that “at least four distinct types” of living beings exist.

Puthoff immediately spelled out the limits of his claim. He said he has had no direct access to this information, but that he believes the people he spoke to. He added that, according to the researchers he consulted, there are many variations on these four forms, and that he has even heard of amphibian-type creatures.

Who Is Hal Puthoff?

He is no stranger to the UFO community, nor to the American intelligence services. A Stanford-trained physicist, Puthoff led a “remote viewing” research program at the Stanford Research Institute in the 1970s and 1980s, funded by the CIA and later by the Defense Intelligence Agency. That program, later known as Stargate, was shut down in 1995 after an evaluation concluded it had no operational value. Puthoff worked on it with Russell Targ and tested the famous Uri Geller, a collaboration that has durably divided the scientific world.

More recently, he served as an adviser to AAWSAP, the Advanced Aerospace Weapon System Applications Program, a Pentagon program launched in 2008 at the urging of Senator Harry Reid and entrusted to Bigelow Aerospace. In 2017, he helped found To The Stars Academy, an organization created by musician Tom DeLonge that helped bring

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the Pentagon’s interest in UAP into public view.

Grays, Nordics, Reptilians, Insectoids: The Alleged Bestiary

During the show, Puthoff did not detail the nature of the four species. According to the New York Post, it was his former AAWSAP colleague, physicist Eric Davis, who had previously mentioned four categories: the “Grays,” the “Nordics,” the “Insectoids” and the “Reptilians.” The Grays correspond to the archetype of small, hairless beings with large black eyes. The Nordics are said to be the closest to humans. Reptilians are described as scaly creatures walking on two legs, and Insectoids evoke praying mantises.

This catalog is nothing new: it matches almost point for point the typology that has circulated in UFO literature since the 1950s and 1960s. Author Kent Heckenlively, interviewed by Fox News Digital, pointed out that Grays are the most frequently described, while Insectoids are reported more rarely.

Dan Farah’s Testimony: Sources “Too Frightened to Speak”

Beside him, Dan Farah says several senior intelligence officials interviewed for his film stated on the record that dozens of craft of non-human origin have crashed over the decades. He also says he spoke privately with people linked to these operations, many of whom fear speaking publicly. He recounts that one source withdrew at the last minute, convinced that an interview would cost them their life.

None of these people is named, and no document, sample or image has been produced to support these accounts.

The Shadow of David Grusch and Congress

These statements follow in the wake of David Grusch’s testimony. A former US Air Force intelligence officer and ex-member of the UAP task force, he stated under oath before a House committee in July 2023 that the US government held “non-human biologics” from crash sites. Like Puthoff, Grusch said he got his information from witnesses rather than observing it himself. His hearing set off a global debate over the possible existence of secret retrieval and reverse-engineering programs within the military and intelligence apparatus.

The 2026 political context adds further resonance: the Trump administration is promoting a policy of transparency on UAP, and the Pentagon released a second batch of documents on the subject in late May. Puthoff, for his part, welcomed this momentum, judging some of the disclosures remarkable.

Reconstructed Dossier: What the Established Facts Say

Summary document reconstructed by the editorial staff from public sources. It contains only verifiable elements.

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DOSSIER – ALLEGED RECOVERIES OF NON-HUMAN CRAFT

1947: Roswell incident (New Mexico). A 1994 US Air Force report attributes it to Project Mogul, a balloon program designed to detect Soviet nuclear tests. A second report, in 1997, explains the accounts of "bodies" as parachuted test dummies.

2008-2012: Pentagon AAWSAP program, funded by federal money and carried out by Bigelow Aerospace.

July 2023: David Grusch testifies before Congress; allegations of "non-human biologics," with no physical evidence made public.

2024: The Pentagon's AARO office publishes the first volume of its historical record report and concludes it has no verified evidence of recovered extraterrestrial technology.

May 2026: Hal Puthoff's statements about "at least four" types of beings, relayed secondhand.

Status of the evidence: No physical item has been submitted for independent examination.

Critical Analysis: Thirdhand Testimony

Methodologically, Puthoff's statement carries very little evidentiary weight, and he himself does not claim otherwise. It rests on a chain of transmission: unknown people allegedly took part in recoveries, they allegedly told researchers, who allegedly told Puthoff, who tells a microphone. Each link adds uncertainty, and none can be verified.

The Pentagon, for its part, has taken the opposite view. In 2024, the AARO office reviewed decades of files and interviews and found no verified evidence of recovered extraterrestrial technology. Its first director, Sean Kirkpatrick, defended that position, and independent analysts such as Mick West stress that many crash rumors rest on memory confusion, retold stories and misidentifications.

The striking resemblance between the evoked "bestiary" and popular culture is also worth noting: the Grays, popularized notably after the Betty and Barney Hill case in 1961, have taken hold in film and television, raising the question of possible contamination of the accounts by the collective imagination. Skeptics finally recall that the "disclosure" community has long maintained close ties among officials, producers and media players, which encourages the circulation of stories without independent checks.

NASA puts it soberly: the agency has not discovered life on another planet and has no scientific evidence of extraterrestrial life, but cannot say at this stage that aliens do not exist. It continues its search, notably for microbial forms.

Why These Stories Fascinate

Beyond the question of evidence, the affair reveals a social phenomenon. With a respected researcher on one side, a hit documentary on the other, a platform of millions of listeners and a favorable political climate, the "crash retrieval" hypothesis has become a central narrative of contemporary American culture. It is a narrative where documented facts (the existence of AAWSAP, the congressional hearings, the Navy videos) mingle with unverifiable assertions, at the risk of blurring the line between the two.

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> “I have not had direct access to that, but I believe the people I talked to.”
> — Hal Puthoff, on the four types of beings allegedly recovered

That sentence sums up the situation on its own: a sincere conviction, probably, but not proof. Until a sample, an authenticated document or a direct witness is submitted to independent examination, the story of the four species will remain what it is today: a secondhand assertion, spectacular and unsubstantiated.

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