



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Factual Report

---

<b>Location:</b>	Thomaston, GA	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ERA18LA226
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	07/04/2018, 0930 EDT	<b>Registration:</b>	N8314W
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Piper PA28	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>	Landing gear collapse	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

---

On July 4, 2018, about 0930 eastern daylight time, a Piper PA-28-180, N8314W, was substantially damaged while landing at Thomaston-Upson County Airport (OPN), Thomaston, Georgia. The student pilot was not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and no flight plan was filed for the local flight, which originated from Griffin-Spalding County Airport (6A2), Griffin, Georgia, around 0830. The personal flight was conducted under the provisions of Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91.

According to the pilot, he performed a preflight inspection of the airplane with no anomalies noted. After departure, he completed one full stop landing at 6A2, before departing for OPN. While on final approach to runway 12, he configured the airplane for landing and lined up with the centerline of the runway. The main landing gear touched down on the runway numbers, and when the nose landing gear contacted the runway, the airplane veered to the left. The pilot attempted to counteract the turn by applying rudder, however, the airplane continued to the left side of the runway. The right-wing tip touched the pavement, the propeller struck the runway, and the nose landing gear wheel separated as the airplane continued off the runway. The airplane came to rest about 75 ft off the left side of runway in a grassy area.

Examination of the airplane by a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) inspector after the accident revealed that an engine mount was substantially damaged, and the nose landing gear and right wing incurred minor damage during the accident sequence. The rod that attached the nose wheel to the nose landing gear assembly remained in the nose wheel fork and was bent. However, a nut that secured the nose wheel onto the rod of the nose wheel fork was not located. The runway was searched, and it was still not located.

According to FAA airworthiness records, the airplane was manufactured in 1965 and was purchased by the pilot in November 2017. It was powered by a Lycoming O-360-A3A, 180-horsepower engine equipped with a Sensenich fixed pitch propeller. According to airplane maintenance logbooks, the most recent annual inspection was completed on November 10, 2017, at a total time of 2,599.2 hours.

The landing gear wheel attachment part was sent to the NTSB Materials Laboratory for examination. The examination revealed that the part was a 3/8-inch rod threaded on both ends. One end had a nut attached and the other end exhibited bare threads. Further review of the threads revealed that they had been deformed in a manner consistent with the nut having been pulled off the threads.

According to the FAA Inspector, the nose wheel had not been removed since the annual inspection and the airplane had over 250 landings since the last maintenance on the nose gear tire.

According to the pilot, the nut that secures the nose wheel to the rod and fork assembly, that was not located, cannot be seen during a preflight inspection since it was covered by a wheel fairing.

### Student Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Student	<b>Age:</b>	47, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	Lap Only
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 3 Without Waivers/Limitations	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	01/24/2018
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	No	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	75 hours (Total, all aircraft), 75 hours (Total, this make and model), 39.7 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 69.8 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 40.5 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 2.4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N8314W
Model/Series:	PA28 180	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	28-2487
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	11/10/2017, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2400 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	2599.2 Hours as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	O-360-A3A
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	180 hp
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	OPN, 796 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0935 EDT	Direction from Accident Site:	128°
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Visibility	10 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 8000 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	30°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.2 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	25° C / 20° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Griffin, GA (6A2)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Thomaston, GA (OPN)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	0830 EDT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

## Airport Information

Airport:	Thomaston-Upson County (OPN)	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	797 ft	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:	12	IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:	6350 ft / 100 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Stop and Go; Traffic Pattern

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	32.957500, -84.267778 (est)

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Heidi Kemner
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	Ronald Bean; FAA/FSDO; Atlanta, GA
<b>Note:</b>	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=98128">http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=98128</a>