

# **BELL P-39 AIRACOBRA**

## **P-39 SERVICE**

*Manufacturer:* Bell Aircraft Corp., Buffalo, New York, USA  
*Models:* Model 4, 5, 12, 14, 15, 23, 26, 39  
*Designations:* P-39; A-7, FL, F2L, P-45, P-76, P-400, TDL  
*Names:* Airacobra; Airabonita (XFL-1)

*First official flight:* XP-39 06/04/1938  
*Factory production period:* 1938 – 1944  
*Primary service period:* 1941 – 1945  
*Last official flight:* - -

## **P-39 VARIANTS**

1938	<b>Model 4</b>	<b>XP-39</b>	1	
1940	<b>Model 5</b>	<b>XFL-1</b>	1	
1940	<b>Model 12</b>	<b>YP-39</b>	13	<b>Total: 0015</b>
1941	<b>Model 12</b>	<b>P-39C</b>	20	
1941	<b>Model 14A/15</b>	<b>P-39D</b>	923	
1941	<b>Model 14</b>	<b>Airacobra Mk. I</b>	675	<b>Total: 1618</b>
1942	<b>Model 23</b>	<b>XP-39E</b>	3	<b>Total: 0003</b>
1941	<b>Model 15B</b>	<b>P-39F</b>	229	
1942	<b>Model 15B</b>	<b>P-39J</b>	25	<b>Total: 0254</b>
1942	<b>Model 26A</b>	<b>P-39K</b>	210	
1942	<b>Model 26B</b>	<b>P-39L</b>	250	
1942	<b>Model 26D</b>	<b>P-39M</b>	240	
1943	<b>Model 26C/F</b>	<b>P-39N</b>	2095	
1943	<b>Model 26Q</b>	<b>P-39Q</b>	4905	<b>Total: 7700</b>
				<b><u>Total: 9590</u></b>

## **P-39 PRODUCTION**

### **XP-39**

*Prototype single seat fighter, rear mounted engine, unarmed.  
produced 1938*

Bell Buffalo, New York (BE)  
38-326 -

**1 Total: 0001**

### **XFL-1 Airabonita**

*USN prototype for carrier ops., shorter fuselage, tail-wheel.  
produced 1940*

Bell Buffalo, New York (L)  
BuNo. 1588 -

**1 Total: 0001**

**YP-39**

*Service test models, minor design modifications, armed.  
40-039 originally designated YP-39A.*

*produced*

Bell Buffalo, New York (BE)

40-027 / 40-039 -

13 **Total: 0013**

**P-39C**

*As YP-39, minor combat changes.  
Original designation was P-45.*

*produced*

Bell Buffalo, New York (BE)

40-2971 / 40-2990 -

20 **Total: 0020**

**P-39D**

*As P-39C, armament / combat upgrades.  
Model 14A built as a Lend-Lease variant.*

*produced*

Bell Buffalo, New York (BE)

(Model 15) P-39D

40-2991 / 40-3050 -

41-6722 / 41-7052 -

41-7057, 41-7058 -

41-7080 / 41-7115 -

429

(Model 14A) P-39D-1

41-28257 / 41-28406 -

41-38220 / 41-38404 -

41-38563 -

336

(Model 14A-1) P-39D-2

41-38405 / 41-38562 -

*12 to RAAF as A53-8 / A53-18,  
A53-20.*

158 **Total: 0923**

**Airacobra Mk. I**

*Export version of the P-39D for the RAF.*

*produced*

Bell Buffalo, New York (BE)

(RAF) AH570 / AH739 -

(RAF) AP264 / AP384 -

(RAF) BW100 / BW183 -

(RAF) BX135 / BX434 -

675 **Total: 0675**

*~84 used in RAF service.*

*212 sent to Russia, further 49 (ex RAF) lost in transit.*

*379 to USAAF with the non-standard designation P-400.*

**XP-39E**

*Prototype, laminar flow wing, new tail, engine upgrade.*

*Original designation was P-76, later developed into the P-63.*

*produced 1942*

Bell Buffalo, New York (BE)

41-19501, 41-19502 -

42-71464 -

3 **Total: 0003**

*P-39E – Production XP-39E, 4000 ordered but later cancelled.*

**P-39F**

*As P-39D, prop and exhaust changes.  
produced*

Bell Buffalo, New York (BE)  
41-7116 / 41-7344 -  
10 to RAAF as A53-1 / A53-7,  
A53-19, A53-21, A53-22.

229 **Total: 0229**

*(Model 26) P-39G – Improved version of P-39F, 1800 ordered but  
completed as P-39K to N.*

*P-39H – Not used.*

*P-39I – Not used.*

**P-39J**

*As P-39F, engine upgrade.  
produced*

Bell Buffalo, New York (BE)  
41-7053 / 41-7056 -  
41-7059 / 41-7079 -

25 **Total: 0025**

**P-39K**

*As P-39D, prop, equipment changes.  
produced*

Bell Buffalo, New York (BE)  
42-4244 / 42-4453 -

210 **Total: 0210**

**P-39L**

*As P-39K, modified prop, nosewheel, wing rockets.  
produced*

Bell Buffalo, New York (BE)  
42-4454 / 42-4703 -

250 **Total: 0250**

**P-39M**

*As P-39L, engine upgrade.  
produced*

Bell Buffalo, New York (BE)  
42-4704 / 42-4943 -

240 **Total: 0240**

**P-39N**

*As P-39M, engine upgrade.  
produced*

Bell Buffalo, New York (BE)  
42-4944 / 42-5043 -  
42-8727 / 42-9726 -  
42-18246 / 42-19240 -  
205 additional airframes cancelled.

2095 **Total: 2095**

*P-39O – Not used.*

*P-39P – Not used.*

**P-39Q**

*As P-39N, minor armament / detail changes.  
Many sent to France and Russia under Lend-Lease.*

*produced*  
Bell Buffalo, New York (BE)  
42-19446 / 42-21250 -  
44-2001 / 44-4000 -

44-32167 / 44-32666	-	
44-70905 / 44-71504	-	4905
<i>995 additional airframes cancelled.</i>		<b>Total: 4905</b>

**Total: 9590**

## **P-39 CONVERSIONS**

### **USAAF**

<i>A-7</i>	-	<i>Reserved P-39's converted to remote Powered Targets, cancelled.</i>
<b>XP-39B</b>	<b>1</b>	XP-39(38-326), conversion to YP-39 standard, engine upgrade.
RP-39C	20	P-39C, 1942, redesignation as "restricted from combat".
TP-39F	1	P-39F, trainer conversion with extra cockpit.
ZP-39Q	1+	P-39Q, 1948, redesignated as "obsolete".
<b>(Model 39) RP-39Q</b>	<b>1+</b>	P-39Q, "restricted" tandem trainer conversions, unarmed.
<b>(TP-39Q)</b>	<b>1+</b>	1944, redesignation of RP-39Q.

### **US Navy**

<b>F2L-1K</b>	<b>2</b>	RP-39Q, transfers to the USN as target tugs. Assigned BuNo. 91102, 91103. 5 more aircraft never delivered.
<b>XTDL-1</b>	<b>1</b>	P-39Q, 1946, USN test-bed as a pilotless drone, no BuNo. assigned.

### **British RAF**

<b>Airacobra Mk. IA</b>	<b>3</b>	P-39C, 1941, Lend-Lease "war test" aircraft in RAF service. Assigned RAF s/n: DS173 / DS175.
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## **FOREIGN MILITARY / CIVILIAN SERVICE**

- *P-39's delivered to the Air Forces of Australia, the Free French, Italy, Portugal and in large numbers to Russia.*
- *Several sold on the civil market post WW2 as circuit racing aircraft.*

## **BELL P-63 KINGCOBRA**

### **P-63 SERVICE**

<i>Manufacturer:</i>	<i>Bell Aircraft Corp., Buffalo, New York, USA</i>	
<i>Models:</i>	<i>Model 24, 33, 34, 37, 38, 39, 41, 43, 45</i>	
<i>Designations:</i>	<i>P-63; F-63, F2L, L-39, P-38</i>	
<i>Names:</i>	<i>Kingcobra; "Fred" (Russia, US codename)</i>	

<i>First official flight:</i>	<i>XP-63</i>	<i>07/12/1942</i>
<i>Factory production period:</i>		<i>1942 – 1946</i>
<i>Primary service period:</i>		<i>1943 – late 40's</i>
<i>Last official flight:</i>	-	-

## P-63 VARIANTS

1942	<b>Model 24</b>	<b>XP-63</b>	2	
1943	<b>Model 24</b>	<b>XP-63A</b>	1	<b>Total: 0003</b>
1943	<b>Model 33/33A</b>	<b>P-63A</b>	1725	
1944	<b>Model 33A</b>	<b>RP-63A</b>	100	<b>Total: 1825</b>
1944	<b>Model 33C</b>	<b>P-63C</b>	1227	
1944	<b>Model 33C</b>	<b>RP-63C</b>	200	<b>Total: 1427</b>
1945	<b>Model 37</b>	<b>P-63D</b>	1	
1945	<b>Model 41/41A</b>	<b>P-63E</b>	13	
1945	<b>Model 43</b>	<b>P-63F</b>	2	<b>Total: 0016</b>
1945	<b>Model 41G</b>	<b>RP-63G</b>	32	<b>Total: 0032</b>
				<b><u>Total: 3303</u></b>

## P-63 PRODUCTION

### **XP-63**

*Prototype fighter developed from the XP-39E,  
4-bladed prop.*

*produced 1942*

Bell Buffalo, New York (BE)

41-19511, 41-19512 -

**2 Total: 0002**

### **XP-63A**

*As XP-63, engine upgrade, wing bomb racks.*

*produced 1943*

Bell Buffalo, New York (BE)

42-78015 -

**1 Total: 0001**

### **P-63A**

*As XP-63A, engine / combat upgrade.*

*Most sent to Russia under Lend-Lease.*

*produced*

Bell Buffalo, New York (BE)

42-68861 / 42-69879 -

- 1014 as **P-63A-BE**.

- 5 as **RP-63A-BE**.

42-69975 / 42-70685 -

**1725 Total: 1725**

### **RP-63A**

*As P-63A, "restricted" manned target version.*

*Redesignated as **QF-63A** in 1948.*

*produced*

Bell Buffalo, New York (BE)

5 mixed with **P-63A-BE** s/n.

42-69880 / 42-69974 -

**100 Total: 0100**

**P-63C**

*As P-63A, ventral fin, engine upgrade, more armour.  
Most sent to France (114) and Russia.*

*produced*

Bell Buffalo, New York (BE)

42-70686 / 42-70860 -

43-10893 / 43-10932 -

43-11133 / 43-11717 -

44-4001 / 44-4427 -

1227 **Total: 1227**

**RP-63C**

*As P-63C, "restricted" manned target version.  
Redesignated as **QF-63C** in 1948.*

*produced*

Bell Buffalo, New York (BE)

43-10933 / 43-11132 -

200 **Total: 0200**

**P-63D**

*As P-63A, modified wings, bubble canopy,  
engine upgrade.*

*produced*

Bell Buffalo, New York (BE)

43-11718 -

1 **Total: 0001**

**P-63E**

*As P-63D but with "A" canopy.*

*produced*

Bell Buffalo, New York (BE)

43-11720, 43-11721 -

43-11725 / 43-11735 -

13 **Total: 0013**

*1030 additional airframes cancelled.*

**P-63F**

*As P-63E, redesigned tail, engine upgrade.*

*produced*

Bell Buffalo, New York (BE)

43-11719, 43-11722 -

2 **Total: 0002**

**RP-63G**

*As RP-63C, engine upgrade.*

*Redesignated as **QF-63G** in 1948.*

*produced 1945 – 1946*

Bell Buffalo, New York (BE)

43-11723, 43-11724 -

45-57283 / 45-57312 -

32 **Total: 0032**

*420 additional airframes cancelled.*

**Total: 3303**

## **P-63 CONVERSIONS**

### **USAAF**

TP-63C 1 RP-63C, double cockpit fitted for conversion training.

XP-63N 1 RP-63G, 1948, conversion for V-tail testing.  
1 P-63A converted in 1945 as a test-bed.

**(Model 38) TP-63A 1+** P-63A, double cockpit fitted for conversion training.

*(Model 34) XP-63B - XP-63A, proposed upgrade, cancelled.*

*(Model 45) XP-63H - P-63E, engine upgrade, cancelled.*

### **US Navy**

XF2L-1 2 P-63A, reserved for USN but not taken up.

**L-39 2** 1 P-63A / 1 XP-63N, 1946, conversions for swept-wing research, (L) – Bell factory code, (39) – Model 39.

### **British RAF**

**Kingcobra Mk. I 2** P-63A, 1944-1948, delivered to the RAF for evaluation.  
Assigned RAF s/n: FR408, FZ440.

## **FOREIGN MILITARY / CIVILIAN SERVICE**

*- P-63's served with the Free French and Russia.*

*- Many P-63's sold on the civil market post WW2 as circuit racing aircraft.*