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If you squint your eyes it could pass for a private jet

Is solar-powered flight getting any nearer? As noted previously on [Metafilter](#), solar powered aviation has travelled a long way since the heady days of the [Gossamer Penguin](#). But could it actually one day power commercial flight?

Trouble is, a [quick look at the prototypes](#) reveals that most solar-powered planes remain a world away from passenger aviation. But that could be subject to change. Although we are not quite at the stage of the [easyJet ecojet](#) just yet, what might be just over the horizon is something like the [Hy-Bird](#), a hybrid of hydrogen, solar-power and lithium-polymer batteries. The Hy-bird still looks like a bit like a prototype, but it is beginning to look more like a proper plane. If you squint your eyes, [it could pass for a private jet](#). Lisa Airplanes, the Hy-bird's manufacturer, is planning to take the plane on a voyage that will [circumnavigate the planet later this summer](#).

According to [Inhabitat](#), [the Hy-bird gets just 10% of its power from solar](#), but that's still a significant contribution. Yes, we should all fly less if we want to reduce CO2. But the prospect of a truly green-powered aeroplane is enough to spark the imagination. Could we both save the planet and still be able to fly?

posted by [MrMerlot](#) (25 comments total)