

by Thayer Syme

Not often does life present second chances. How many times have you thought, "if only I had [fill in lost opportunity here]." Well, here is one chance you do get again. Wingo, the infamous park flyer that seems capable of just about anything, has returned. In addition to the basic airframe, all the accessories that made this flyer so much fun—floats, skis, camera kit and lights for night flying—are back as well. If you can't have fun with Wingo, you just might want to check in with your doctor.

Designed nearly a decade ago, Wingo remains one of the most thoroughly enjoyable models around. The very complete kit includes a motor and prop, and should only take a couple of evenings to prepare for flight. The manual is well detailed, and leads you smoothly through the assembly process. If you can read and follow directions, you shouldn't have any trouble with Wingo. Everything you need for the airframe is in the box, leaving just power and radio systems to choose before you can fly.

In this age of computer radios, brushless motors and Li-Poly batteries, it is refreshing to have a model that flies well with just the most basic equipment. There is no need for exotics here. A basic brushed motor and simple three-channel radio will provide a lot of fun. Of course, you can always hop it up, and certain missions will warrant that, but if you are just getting started in RC or want a basic lazy day flyer, the stock setup does just fine.

#### TIPS FOR SUCCESS

The recommended adhesive is 5-minute epoxy, and I used Z-Poxy throughout. You want to use restraint with epoxy, though. You can add excessive weight easily, and any extra glue left on the model can look sloppy. Since removing cured epoxy means damaged foam, be sure to have a good supply of paper towels nearby. Denatured alcohol or white vinegar can also help clean uncured epoxy without damaging the foam. Work slowly, mixing small batches of epoxy so you aren't tempted to try to assemble the entire model at once.

The wing is designed with removable tips held with tape. I decided to glue the tips in place. There were slight notches where the panels joined at the leading and trailing edges, so I filled them with small wedges of foam trimmed from the packing material. I used Foamhesive glue here for softer glue joints that would not create ridges as I sanded the wedges to match the contours of the wing.

HOBBY LOBBY

# Wingo

## USA

A classic park flyer returns



#### SPECS

**PLANE:** Wingo USA  
**MANUFACTURER:** Free-Scale  
**DISTRIBUTOR:** Hobby Lobby  
**TYPE:** Electric park flyer ARF  
**FOR:** Beginner to intermediate pilots  
**WINGSPAN:** 43.75 in.  
**WING AREA:** 403 sq. in.  
**FLYING WEIGHT:** 22 oz.  
**WING LOADING:** 7.86 oz./sq. ft.  
**LENGTH:** 36 in.  
**RADIO:** 3 channels required; flown with a Hitec Neon III transmitter, Hitec 05MG receiver, 2 Hitec HS-81 servos  
**MINIMAL FLYING AREA:** ball field  
**PRICE:** \$119.90, airframe, motor and prop; \$39.90, float kit  
**INTRODUCTORY PRICE:** \$99.90, motor and prop; \$39.90, float kit

**COMPONENTS NEEDED TO COMPLETE:** 3-channel radio with 2 mini servos, 50+ watt motor, controller, battery

#### STOCK DIRECT DRIVE

**POWER SYSTEM:** S-400 motor and Wingo 4.9x4.3 prop (included in kit), Jeti 12-amp speed control, 8-cell 1100mAh NiMH battery  
**FULL THROTTLE POWER:** 12.9 amps, 122 watts; 5.54 W/oz., 88.7 W/lb.  
**TOP RPM:** 13,830  
**DURATION:** 10 minutes mixed flying

#### GEAR DRIVE

**POWER SYSTEM:** S-400 motor w/2.33:1 gear reduction, APC 8x6 SF prop, Jeti 12-amp speed control, 8-cell 1100mAh NiMH battery  
**FULL THROTTLE POWER:** 11.2 amps, 103 watts, 4.68 W/oz., 74.9 W/lb.  
**TOP RPM:** 6,330  
**DURATION:** 15+ minutes mixed flying

#### SUMMARY

Wingo is a classic park flyer that was discontinued a while back, much to the disappointment of RC pilots around the world. Wingo is well known for its easy assembly, forgiving flight characteristics, and fantastic versatility. Its recent revival has been much anticipated, and fortunately, the USA edition is faithful to the original. If you missed out on your Wingo before, don't hesitate to get one now.

## HOBBY LOBBY WINGO USA

The wing also has two plywood plates that need to be drilled for the strut anchors. The directions aren't specific about where to drill the holes, but it turns out that you want them right in the center. Simply draw a cross between opposite corners to find the center. I drilled them after they were epoxied to the wings.

I also sanded the entire airframe lightly with 220-grit paper to smooth the molding dimples and clean up the leading edge. Sanding foam creates a static charge, making it tricky to remove the dust before applying the decals. Wipe the airframe lightly with an anti-static dryer sheet to eliminate the static, and then vacuum the dust away.

The plywood plates for the floats share a common hole pattern. I carefully laid out one of the rear plates then used it as a drill guide for the remaining three pieces. This saved a little time, and the plates look great with matching holes. Knowing that I would be flying from the water, I wiped a thin film of Z-poxy on these plates and the balsa wing joiners with a finger wrapped in plastic food wrap. All you need is a little gloss, so go easy here. The epoxy may clog the holes in the plywood, so I redrilled the holes as the epoxy got rubbery. By not waiting until the epoxy cured, I didn't have to worry about the drill bit wandering into the plywood and enlarging the holes.

I also deviated from the manual with the application of the decals. The instructions recommend peeling each decal and flooding it with a soapy solution. This technique lets you fine-tune the decal's position, without the adhesive grabbing before you want. Instead, I carefully cut around each decal, then cut away a section of the backing at one end. I then positioned the decal with care, and pushed down the exposed end. Once anchored, I peeled the rest of the backing free, and carefully smoothed the decal into place as I laid it down. Applying such large decals dry requires confidence and luck. If you are at all nervous, go with the soap method.

As always, if you are a first-time pilot, I recommend getting some assistance from an experienced flyer. While it is possible to teach yourself to fly with Wingo, a little help goes a long way to ensuring success.

One last tip; buy a second battery. You won't want to wait for your next flight!



## AIRBORNE

This is what it is all about: getting out with a fun model. Be sure to read the setup and flying notes in the manual before going out to fly. With the stock direct drive S-400 motor and prop, Wingo offers smooth, predictable performance that can build the confidence of a beginner, or put a smile on the face of a seasoned expert. Pick a day with calm winds for your first flights. Wingo can handle a surprising breeze, but there is no reason to add the extra complexity until you are comfortable with this model.

The stability and positive control make takeoffs easy. Just place the model on a smooth surface facing into the breeze, advance the throttle and keep it straight with the rudder. There is plenty of control with the prop wash blowing over the tail, so go easy with gentle corrections at first. As soon as it reaches flight speed, Wingo will rise into the air in a steady climb. Keep the power on with the wings and fuselage level as you climb to a safe altitude before starting to explore the handling. If your model is well balanced and the controls are set up properly, there shouldn't be any surprises. Wingo is as stable as many Free Flight models, so your first turns can be made with only slight pressure on the sticks.

Landings are easy as well. Just line up into the wind and reduce the power. Keep the wings level, and ease back on the stick to raise the nose and flare just before touching down. Truth be told, Wingo is about as close as they come to an "auto-land" model.

Wingo is also surprisingly maneuverable with increased control throws, and is capable of loops and barrel rolls with a slight dive for speed first. If you get disoriented, just reduce the power and let go of the control stick. As long as you have enough altitude, it will right itself and settle into a gentle glide. Once it stabilizes itself, add power again to maintain altitude.

Perhaps the most fun you can have with an RC model is flying off the water, and a web-foot Wingo is a great way to try out float flying. You will want more power here. I second Hobby Lobby's recommendation for a geared S-400 with a larger diameter prop. The extra drag of the floats on the water will require more low-speed thrust for getting airborne. The floats come nearly ready for the lake, and can be ready with only a couple of epoxy cycles. With the upswept wing tips, you will want to take off directly into the wind. Fortunately, Wingo makes that easy, and will weathervane into any breeze for you. Throttle up for takeoff, and hold a little up elevator until your model climbs up on the float step. Once you are skimming along the surface, ease off the elevator and let Wingo accelerate to takeoff speed. In the air, Wingo handles about the same as it



does on wheels, so relax and enjoy the fun. I usually spend all my float flying time shooting splash and goes, looking for that perfect touchdown. You know, that one where you wouldn't be quite sure when it actually touches down, save for the appearance of a wake in the water. If you also want to try out the camera kit, the extra thrust from the geared setup will also help you climb to altitude faster for photos.



### CONCLUSION

Wingo's recent revival has been much anticipated, and fortunately, its new parents have left well enough alone with this favorite. If you are new to the hobby, missed out on Wingo in the past, or find your original getting a bit ragged, here is the chance to go it again. Whether on wheels, floats or skis, Wingo is sure to put a smile on your face. 🍷

### Links

Foamhesive, available exclusively from Billy Hell RC, [www.billyhellrc.com](http://www.billyhellrc.com), (615) 400-9731

Hitec RCD USA, Inc., [www.hitecrctd.com](http://www.hitecrctd.com), (858) 748-6948

Hobby Lobby International, Inc., [www.hobby-lobby.com](http://www.hobby-lobby.com), (615) 373-1444

Z-Poxy is manufactured by Pacer Technology, [www.zapglue.com](http://www.zapglue.com)

For more information, please see our source guide on pg. \_\_\_\_.

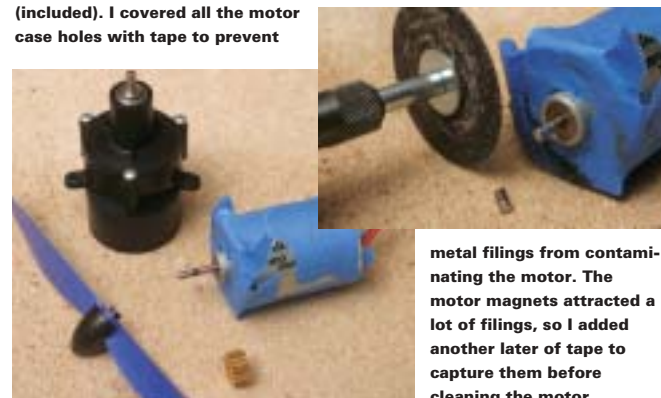


The stock power system mounts the Wingo prop directly on a S-400 brushed motor and works very well. For float flying and increased climb performance and lifting capability, Hobby Lobby recom-

mends adding a 2.33:1 gear reduction drive and APC 8 x 6 prop. Adding the gear drive and larger prop more than doubles the rate of climb and extends the duration.



To mount the gear drive, you will need to shorten the motor shaft with a Dremel tool and cut-off disk as indicated, and secure the brass pinion with green Loctite (included). I covered all the motor case holes with tape to prevent



metal filings from contaminating the motor. The motor magnets attracted a lot of filings, so I added another later of tape to capture them before cleaning the motor.