

Opticron Imagic IS 10x30

Mike Read (May 2023)

Since purchasing my new Imagic IS 10 x 30 (there are also 12x and 14x versions) binoculars, my birding and general wildlife watching has been transformed and I once again am enthusiastic about it. You see I suffer from Parkinson's condition and the associated shakes previously gave very wobbly views through my binoculars. My left sided shake is worse than my right. Being light in weight and compact enough to hold in one hand, I am still able to bird watch when my left side is having an off day.



Having been used to the high quality of Opticron optics for many years, their Image Stabilised Imagic binoculars seemed an obvious choice when my previous binoculars were broken in an accident. However, I did check out other brands and found some of them to be twice Opticron's price and considerably heavier. I find the Imagic IS binoculars easy and comfortable to use; the on/off switch can be operated with the index finger while the easy-to-turn focus wheel can be turned with the little finger so that way I maintain a good grip on them throughout. They are light enough to look through for prolonged periods if watching something like Hobbies catching dragonflies for instance. Whilst some may dislike the automatic battery switch-off, my style of holding means it is easy to turn off and back on again without losing sight of the bird. And as I am always forgetting to turn them off when I finish looking through them, the 'auto-off' is mighty useful for retaining battery power. What is more, as the stabilisers are powered by just 2 AAA batteries, it is easy to carry spares in my pocket (I use rechargeable batteries) for when they need replacing. Seconds later and I am back watching a steady image of the bird.

During a recent outing with my local group I was pleased to see Yellowhammers and Corn Buntings as we walked some footpaths around a Cranborne Chase area where many farms are part of a 'cluster' and conservation measures are important. As we ate our picnic lunch, a low flying raptor caught our attention and it turned out to be a Honey Buzzard. Without the image stabilisation, my shaking would have been so much that the bird would probably have been identified as a Common Buzzard!



The eye-piece correction is great (does anyone have 'equal' eyes?!) and for glasses users, the eye cups can be lowered easily so that the binoculars can be shared with a non-glasses users. Some friends who saw them thought they looked a little odd however one friend who also has shaky hands tried mine and immediately purchased pair! These binoculars encourage me out in the countryside more and we all know how walking and being in green places is good for our mental health. Also, being out and about encourages me to carry my camera to take landscape and wildlife photographs.

When you consider that the Imagic IS binoculars come complete with a binocular strap, soft case and a pair of batteries, why would you not want to own a pair, especially if your hands are not the most stable! Ten out of ten to Opticron.

Mike Read has been working as a professional nature and landscape photographer for over 35 years and has travelled widely to build up an extensive library of stunning images. He was also a tour guide to such locations as Iceland, Yellowstone National Park, the Falklands, New Zealand and various parts of Europe.

Mike has been giving illustrated talks to various groups for over 40 years.

As a photographer and as a writer, he has contributed to a wide range of wildlife, photography and other magazines and has written and co-authored several books including The Robin, The Barn Owl, New Forest Moods, Red Kite Country, Perfect New Forest and New Forest National Park.