

A Short Review of Opticron Traveller BGA ED 10x32

Lee Thickett (July 2020)

It is nearly 3 years since I reviewed Opticron's Traveller 8x32 and in that time it has become a firm favourite of mine. It is neat and compact and possesses a graceful, minimalist aesthetic, combined with an excellent performance in the field.

The Traveller 10x32 retails at approximately £318, \$449 and €449, and looking around the UK market I found the following competitors: Zeiss Terra ED £349 and Hawke ED X £284.

Length and weight

Traveller 119mm / 4.7in long, weight 453g / 16ozs

Terra 125mm / 4.9in long, weight 510g / 18ozs

ED X 120mm / 4.7in long, weight 540g / 19ozs

Field of View and Eye Relief

Traveller 113m / 339ft @ 1,000m/yds, ER 17mm

Terra 112m / 336ft (Zeiss website stating 367ft is in error), ER 16.5mm

ED X 108m / 324ft, ER 15mm

Close Focus

Traveller 1.8m / 5.9ft

Terra 1.6m / 5.3ft

ED X 3.0m / 9.8ft

On length and weight, Traveller is the shortest and lightest, while the Hawke looks porky at 87g / 3ozs heavier.

Traveller and Terra are close on field of view but the Hawke trails behind the Opticron by 5m / 15ft, which therefore has almost 9.5% more area of view than ED X.

Close focus distance is less important to those specialising in birding so the Hawke's 3.0m is probably acceptable, but if you have a broader interest in the natural world then the Terra's 1.6m is the best, while Traveller's 1.8 is excellent too.

Checking for chromatic aberration using black street lamp poles and overhead telephone cables demonstrated that the centre field was free and only a tiny bit of CA was apparent further out. The sweet spot is large and only a very narrow band of soft focus is visible around the edge due to field curvature. This was easily brought into focus with a nudge of the focus wheel.

I was entertained most days by the presence of a juvenile Robin which had ventured onto our bird feeder while I was topping it up, and whispered a soft trill before flying a short distance away to wait for me to withdraw. This enterprising young bird had a wisp of a nestling feather at the base of its tail allowing me to recognise it on subsequent days. Its plumage was a complicated pattern of spots and speckles in a ginger-brown over a slightly darker warm brown background. Despite dull, overcast weather for much of the time, the Travellers captured the overall warmth and complexity of the plumage well.

A spectacular visitor to our garden is the Bullfinch and a male is quite a sight. He looks magnificent with his salmon-pink breast and coal-black crown and nape, but what caught my eye was the stoutness of his jet-black beak. 'Jet-black', refers to the gemstone called Jet, which was often made into shiny black jewellery. And males look as if have beaks made out of Jet that are stout enough to open coconuts.

Summing up, the Travellers are not new on the market, having been around for at least 3 years, but are still competitive, feel good in the hand, have a lovely focus action and perform nicely for the eyes. Don't overlook them if you are in the market for a 32mm bino at this price level. Give them a try and make up your own mind whether they suit your needs.