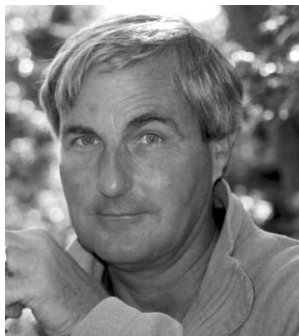


Binoculars

Pete Dunne's PICK OF THE PACK



Pete Dunne, Director of New Jersey Audubon Society's Cape May Bird Observatory is an authority on the optical needs of birders. Known for his many articles in a host of birding magazines, he is the author of *Pete Dunne on Birding*, *Pete Dunne's Essential Field Guide Companion* (as well as many other books), and founding equipment editor for *Birding* magazine's "Tools of the Trade." In addition to serving on the committees that designed the venerable Bausch and Lomb Elite and celebrated Swarovski EL, he has been a consultant to Bushnell, Kowa, Leica, Leupold, Nikon, Pentax, Steiner, Swarovski, Swift, and Zeiss. In 2001 he received the American Birding Association's Roger Tory Peterson Award for "promoting the cause of birding."

Your business is important to us and we strive to bring you the best in customer service. You can view current pricing online or contact one of our sales associates.

Speak to one of our sales associates at:
CMBO Center for Research and Education, Goshen
609.861.0700

CMBO Northwood Center, Cape May Point
609.884.2736

Email our sales associates at: sales@featheredgeoptics.org

www.FeatherEdgeOptics.org
www.BirdCapeMay.org

Dear Birder,

The binocular is the defining tool of birding and choosing the binocular that is right for you is the most important decision a birder ever makes. Choose well and your days afield will be marked by discovery and wonder. Choose poorly and frustration will be your companion.

The good news is that there are many fine binoculars that perform, even excel, in the birding arena. The bad news is that not all of these instruments work equally well for all people and that for every one binocular that meets the high performance demands birding places on binoculars, there are ten instruments that fail.

Only you can pick the binocular that fits your hands, your face, and lets you find and focus on birds with ease. But we can help. It's part of our mission. It is something we take pride in. It is something you can feel confident about. Staying on top of the optics industry is challenging. New products are always emerging. Sometimes older models are improved or, because of changes in design or production standards, lose their performance luster.

Periodically the Optiksmeisters at NJAS run their hands through the river of glass and test all the top brands. The instruments found in this brochure are the instruments that have edged the competition out in their price categories and won our countenance. We won't tell you that there are not other instruments worth considering (in fact, we can show you some). We will tell you that you would certainly be remiss not to give these instruments your considered regard.

Sincerely,



Pete Dunne, CMBO Director

BINOCULARS

THE PICK

Under \$300

LEUPOLD YOSEMITE 6 x 30

When they finally take stock of the greatest human achievements of all time, the Yosemite 6x30 binocular will rank among the top ten – right up there with the wheel, the Guttenberg press, democracy, and ice cream. A real birder-worthy binocular, built to fit birders young and old, that retails for around \$100. It's the perfect get-started binocular offering a sharp, distortion free image, a generous field of view and excellent depth of field, close focus to 16 feet and an interpupillary distance so terse that a kid in its second trimester can use them. The 6x magnification is perfect for backyard birding and woodland birding. If you are a beginning birder on a budget this is a glass that doesn't cut performance corners just to meet a price point. (It makes the perfect gift for birders-to-be, too).



NIKON 7 x 35 ACTION

For as long as I can remember, the most commonly asked question in birding has been: "Can you recommend a good binocular for \$100?" For years, the answer was "no."

Well, Nikon changed that. The Action offers the key performance attributes birders demand: quick focusing, super-wide field of view, close focus 16 feet, commendable optical quality and manages this at a cost that reads like a pricing error. It is, in short, a BARGAIN. If you are a beginning birder (even an incipient beginning birder) on a tight budget it's tough to go wrong with this instrument. Comes with neck strap and case.



NIKON MONARCH 8 x 42



Sometimes you wish a product wasn't so good, so light, facile, functional and attractively priced that even people who can afford more expensive instruments look you in the eye and say: "What do the \$1,000 binoculars do that this one doesn't do?" And we say: "uhhhh...."

Okay. At 330 ft/1,000 yards, the Monarch offers a functional (but not generous) field of view. But the image is good, the quality high, and the weight (at 21 oz.) as attractively low as the price. One out of every two people who come in searching for an entry level birding binocular leave with this glass. Are you next?

Between \$300 and \$500

VORTEX STOKES "SERIES" BROADWING 8 X 42 (and 10 X 42)



Vortex was the new kid on the block when we tested the line-up. The Broadwing brings a very nice and bright image to the table in an affordable package. Both the 8 X and 10 X have a commendable field of view but where these binoculars shine is in the close focus. In fact, you can focus on your shins, closer than the 5 feet close focus that the factory quotes. Another major advantage (unlike many other manufacturers offering a lower end optic) is that Vortex offers a No Fault Lifetime Warranty. Given these qualities, coupled with a silky smooth focus, these optics are well suited for birding and butterflying alike.

LEUPOLD KATMAI 6 x 32 (and 8 x 32)



Sometimes it takes an outsider to start a revolution (even a retro-revolution) – not that Leupold is an outsider. An optical leader in the hunting market for decades (you got a Leupold scope mounted on your rifle, bub, you get instant respect) more recently this American company set its sights on meeting the demands of birders. The result was the Katmai – a super light (18 oz.), super portable, super-close focusing (about 4 feet) rugged, performance-minded binocular and....

IT COMES IN A 6x!!! Long overlooked in the U.S. (my very first binocular was a Zeiss 6 x 24) a 6x binocular is a stellar performer in woodlands, in the backyard, in the hands of birders suffering from age (and caffeine) induced handshake. And, for looking through glass at feeders (even window feeders!!!) less magnification means less distortion. At just over \$300, it won't distort your budget, either.



MINOX 8 x 32

Originally designed for one of the top German optic's companies (now independent), this compact, close-focusing (5 ft.), utilitarian instrument offered a nice, reasonably priced package – but it didn't really distinguish

itself from many other fine instruments until one day we discovered its hidden secret. The thing is magic. People who have trouble finding any binocular that will work for them, at any price, bring this instrument up to their eyes and say: "Oh!" It's that easy and while "Oh" might not sound as great as "WOW!" for those people who cannot find any binocular that works for them, "oh" sure beats AAARG or DARN or #\$\$%^!

No, we don't know why this glass is so universally easy to use. We just know that it is. Good for all-around birding; great for butterfly watching.

\$600-\$1,200



BUSHNELL ELITE 8 x 43

I was on the committee that designed the first Elite – a glass that was at least a decade ahead of its time, the glass that helped define birding in the late 80's. Then came the Elite II, a sports car of a binocular that focused on a dime and won converts into the next millennium. Say "Hi" to the third generation – the superbly light, ergonomically luscious, silky-smooth focusing Bushnell Elite 8 x 43. Bargain priced among premium binoculars, it's a nice place to start your search for a well-crafted and well conceived instrument (and end it, too).

NIKON 8 x 32 PREMIER LX



You're serious and you are bummed. You want a premium binocular that is high on performance but you just plain cannot afford to chunk down an obscene amount of cash. Now (you think) you'll have to compromise.

No. Now you should look at this glass. Optically, it will out-resolve almost every binocular in the case (one exception is the Nikon 8 x 42 model). Or as Paul Guris, Captain of the four time champion Nikon World Series of Birding team put it: "Why would anyone want to buy another binocular?" We don't have a satisfactory answer and if you are looking for a stellar instrument that compromises price, not performance, you can walk out with an 8 x 32 Premier LX and smirk at the next owner of a Leica or Swarovski you pass.

ALSO CONSIDER THIS! If you are searching for a high quality, high performance instrument in the under \$1,000 price range you would be remiss not to give serious thought to buying a used instrument – a Leica, Swarovski, Zeiss or high end Nikon or Bausch and Lomb. High end optics are made to last a lifetime and many are traded in after several years use. Don't settle for less when you can take home an Alpha binocular for up to half the price of a new instrument. With the money you save, you can buy a spotting scope.

\$1,300 and up



LEICA 8 x 32 BN

Some things just feel good – river polished stones, the gear shift knob of an Austin Healy 3000, a lover’s hand. You can add to these the Leica 8 x 32 BN. It just plain feels good. Good and precise, good and comfortable – and it performs even better than it feels. Leica precise; Leica rugged. Drop them, dunk them, use them to chuck a tire if you have to change a flat on a hill. At 22 oz., they won’t break your neck or keep you from adding them to your kit if you’re on a business trip (or the birding trip of your dreams). For many

years, this was the glass of choice among professional bird tour guides. Comes with an unconditional Lifetime, Passport Warranty.

ZEISS VICTORY FL 7 x 42, 8 x 32 and 8 x 42

The venerable Zeiss Classic binoculars helped re-define the birding world. They were the glass of choice among a generation of young Turks (like David Sibley, Jon Dunn, Debbi Shearwater).



They proved themselves around the world – from the plains of East Africa to Monterey Sea Canyon. The Classic Line is dead and a worthy successor has taken its place. If there is a brighter binocular on the market than a Zeiss Victory FL, I’ve not seen it. If there is quality glass that offers a wider, flatter image than the Victory FL 7 x 42, I’ve not seen that, either. Expensive? You bet. No more and no less than the price of optical quality and performance as it’s defined in A.D. 2008.



The New and Improved –



SWAROVSKI 8.5 x 42 (and 10 x 42 EL)

The committee consisted of Paul Lehman, Shawneen Finnegan, Claudia Wilds, me...and the optics engineers of Swarovski. The result was the EL binocular – in A.D. 2000, the finest binocular ever crafted except...

Except we told the engineers “just one revolution of the focus

wheel – one; only one.” Somehow this key piece of information didn’t make it back to Austria with the result that the EL’s stellar performance was undermined by a slow focus. No problem on the hawk watch; vexing in tight woodlands.

Swarovski de-vexed them. Re-engineered the gear ratios; got the focus down from 2½ resolutions to 1½. It’s a whole ‘nother glass – everything the committee hoped for; everything a birder could dream of, with one exception, which is...

SWAROVSKI 8 x 32 EL and 10 x 32 EL

As promised the box was on my desk (beneath three months accumulation of mail). I exhumed the binoculars, let my hands enfold the barrels, brought them to my eyes and...

It was so easy, so effortless, so facile it was almost as if the instrument and I were one. I’ve tested and admired many fine instruments. I have never been so instantly impressed and since their introduction in 2003, I have seen scores of buyers seduced the same way. Women, in particular, find this glass irresistible. Men must ask themselves why they should even begin to consider a larger glass. Comes with Swarovski’s blanket warranty – you break it; they fix it. No charge.



LEICA ULTRAVID 7 x and 8 x and 10 x 42; 8 x and 10 x 50 (also 8 x 32)



OK. I saved this one for last. You understand drama. What does that suggest to you? Long a leader in the optics industry, Leica’s new, premier line stands at the high water mark of rugged, optical performance. All the accolades apply: light, ergonomic, quick, responsive. Of course they are supremely bright. Of course they are superbly sharp.

Of course they carry Leica’s no-questions asked warranty (you break it; they fix it). Is this the planet’s finest binocular? It’s a contender. And if you are searching for the glass that is perfect for you, you would be remiss not to look at an Ultravid.

Comes in leather-covered or rubber-armored.



THINGS TO CONSIDER BEFORE BUYING OPTICS

1. Assess your birding focus or needs to help narrow your search. Are you looking for an instrument to be used primarily for hawk watching or pelagic birding? Woodland or rain forest birding? All around birding? Will the glass also be used for butterfly watching? Hunting? Boating?

2. Compare several makes and models of binoculars. See what feels good in your hands and fits your face. Just because a glass works for your birding friends (or your spouse) doesn't mean they will work for you. If you are buying binoculars for someone else, it is important that they, too, test and find the instrument that is right for them.

3. Performance and quality vary between individual instruments of the same make and model – even in instruments retailing for over \$1,000. Some are simply sharper, brighter, better balanced than others. More than a few instruments are defective right out of the box (e. g. have misaligned barrels, unacceptable field distortion, dust inside the barrels, defective focusing). **We examine all instruments before they are sold.**

4. Do not settle for a lower priced glass if what you really want is outside your budget. Tolerate the ones you own. Save for the ones you really want. If you buy half-step optics, you will only replace them later with the one you really wanted in the first place and that is money wasted.

5. Take your time and do not be shy about utilizing our time and expertise. Meeting the optics needs of birders ranks among the most important things we do. If you like, you can schedule an appointment.



TRADE-INS

The Cape May Bird Observatory will accept trade-ins and deduct the assessed trade-in allowance from the cost of your pre-tax purchase. Instruments eligible for trade-ins include: Bausch and Lomb Elite, Nikon LX and LXL, Leica (or Leitz), Swarovski and Carl Zeiss. You are invited to inquire about the eligibility of other instruments. Trade-in evaluations should be arranged in advance and value will be assessed on the basis of performance, wear, length of ownership and retail price at the time of purchase.

Optics may also be donated to CMBO for use in our classes or resale, and the value can be deducted from your income tax.

At this time trade-ins cannot be accepted by mail. Please call 609.861.0700 or 609.884.2736 for more information.

Quality Used Optics

The price of superior optics has almost doubled in the past three years, forcing many buyers to settle for something less than the Leica, Zeiss, or Swarovski instrument that they aspire to.

Rather than settle for less, why not be both demanding and frugal and buy a superlative used instrument? The savings are considerable, and the quality and performance remains the same.

We are pleased to offer this service. First, to support the birding community and second, to give instruments built to last a lifetime, the lifetime of use they deserve. Many of the instruments in our selection are taken in-trade at our own stores. Some are factory reconditioned.

We examine and test every used or reconditioned instrument upon receipt and subject them to a "10 Point Binocular Check" evaluation before shipping to you (a copy of the evaluation certificate is enclosed with the instrument).

Some refurbished instruments come with a limited factory warranty; any such warranty will be included with qualifying purchases. All used instruments hold a 30-day warranty against defect. There is no restocking charge for un-abused, used, or refurbished instruments returned within 10 days of the date of sale; a \$50 restocking charge applies to un-abused, used, or refurbished instruments returned within 10 to 30 days of purchase.

Buyers interested in quality used optics are advised to examine our selection in person or to call Brian Moscatello at 609.861.0700 or Jason Guerard at 609.884.2736 to discuss availability and prices. Savings off the price of new instruments range from 20 to 75% – which is pretty darn good for binoculars built to last a lifetime.



A LEADER IN THE FIELD OF OPTICS

The Cape May Bird Observatory has an outstanding reputation as a leader in the industry of optics sales. At our stores or online at FeatherEdge Optics you will find a premiere selection of optics for birding in an array of price ranges to suit your needs and fit your budget. What you won't find is endless lists of every brand, make, and model of optics out there. Our group of optics experts has done the dirty work for you by testing each optic in the field, in varying weather conditions, and extreme light conditions. All because we want you to be happy with your purchase so you can enjoy birds and nature surrounding you.

While we have always touted it is indeed best to come into one of our stores where you can hold the glass in your hand and feel the fit against your face, we recognize that busy schedules do not always allow this. Or, perhaps you are here for a weekend and have tested optics at one of our stores but simply cannot decide. Thanks to FeatherEdge Optics online store, there is no need to rush your decision. FeatherEdge Optics online store is open 24 hours a day with full Customer Service at 609.861.0700; 7 days a week from 9:30A.M. to 4:30P.M. or via email at sales@featheredgeoptics.org.

OUR PLEDGE TO YOU; YOUR PLEDGE TO US

Outfitting you with the right optics is part of our mission and while our prices reflect a very low profit margin, all profits serve our conservation, research and education efforts. If you take advantage of our assistance to compare makes and models but purchase your binoculars elsewhere you are doing a disservice to us and to the environment....

FIRST, by not supporting our work with your purchase here,
SECOND, by taking the time we might have directed toward that mission and more forthright buyers.

If you choose to buy optics from another online vendor you choose to accept the limitations and the risks.

AUTHORIZED DEALER

CMBO is an authorized dealer of all the companies' products that we carry and sell to you, our customer. We receive the products directly from the manufacturer. Additionally, we inspect the contents of each box to ensure that all the materials are accounted for and are of the highest quality.

We enclose a copy of our "10 Point Binocular Check" Evaluation Certificate with every optics purchase. Not all glass is created equal; even new out of the box, we have found that optics can be out of alignment or just not as clear as they should be. That is why we test each pair before we send it off to you. Our evaluation process ensures that you are purchasing the highest quality optics we can offer. ■