

## T3 Trailfinder 8x25

Federico Buldrini (December 2015)



I purchased the T3 8x25 since they fit my requirements for a very compact binocular easily usable for general wildlife observation when doing mountain biking in the countryside. Same as the Discovery 10x50 which I also own, the T3 is part of Opticron China made series. I received the package five working days after the payment.

### Accessories

The bins come in a soft plastic bag, well padded inside, with velcro opening, without lanyard but with a large belt loop: basically a smaller version of the one provided with the Discovery. The cleaning cloth comes in a small plastic bag. The nylon neck strap provided is decent. Since the T3 comes without I rainguard I got one to come in the same package. Opticron offers one spare rainguard for all sizes of compact bins, which is a bit large for the T3 and so hasn't much friction retention.

### Body and mechanics

The body is made of a combination of aluminium alloy and polycarbonate. The build quality proved itself good, giving a solid feeling and good balance. There is a mild texture on the rubber armouring, plenty enough for a solid grip.

Both the diopter adjuster and hinge are quite tight, still easy to adjust precisely. The eyecups can be twisted up to four stages and when set stay well in place, without "play" or movement. The focus wheel is smooth, sensitive and quick; it takes little less than one turn from closest point to infinity. No fogging or water leaking issues were detected.

As for the size, these binoculars are indeed true to their category: they're so compact they are smaller than my hand.

### Optics

The T3 sports Schmidt-Pechan type prisms.

Given the lens diameter, the image delivered is bright, crisp and good contrasted. Colours reproduction is quite neutral, just a bit on the warm side. To my eyes the image is almost edge to edge sharp, with about 80% of sweet spot. The FOV, even not so wide for a 8x, is plenty enough for such compact bins and it's paired by a good depth of field in both long and short distances. The particulars pop out quite nicely, though the general picture is a bit flatter compared to the Discovery 10x50.

As for the performance, I can say that with good light, given the lens diameter and the price tag, these bins are impressive. On a sunny, cloudless, early afternoon I could recognise a grey heron at 800m and clearly tell that a kestrel in flight at 250m was an immature, rather than a female.

In the same spot, on a very foggy and humid day, I was able to identify three grey herons at 200m while the kestrel was only a silhouette against a greyish sky. The amount of details was rather decreased, but still enough for accurate identifications.

I could find some edge softening outside the sweet spot, but no field curvature. If observing with low sun behind or just above the binoculars there might be some light reflection inside the oculars, depending by the light's angle of incidence. There is almost no chromatic aberration. I've looked hard for it both in sunny and foggy days, but the amount of light gathered by the small lens seems not enough to create fringing.

For my experience, the closest focus possible is around 1m. To get a really circular picture when so close I had to fold the oculars towards each other a bit and slightly retrocede the eyes.

### Conclusion

To my experience the T3 proved a very good value for money, with its extreme compactness its strongest point for my kind of uses.

*Federico Buldrini has been interested in nature since the earliest childhood. He currently studies Natural Sciences at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Italy and cultivates his interest in ethology. He also took part in the IWC and CorMan Project bird census, in 2014 and 2015, in three areas of his province.*