

## DBA VHD 8x42

Dan Rouse (July 2016)



The DBA VHD are the top of the range from Opticron and you can see why. The binoculars offer you the comfort and size of a compact with the quality and style of larger binoculars. The 8x42 I reviewed weighed 696g which is ideal and it's amazing how many top end product features you get for your money.

The binoculars arrive in a classic Opticron box with a number of accessories including a canvas case, rainguard, objective lens covers, cleaning cloth, user guide & guarantee. The one accessory that really stood out was the neoprene strap. Having had trouble with some straps where they rub against your neck or they cut your collarbone, this neoprene strap is ultra-comfortable. It has a rubber gel-like pad which sits on your neck perfectly, two adjustments for

length as well as a quick release which is ideal when using the binoculars on a tripod. The lens covers are thick rubber which provides some reassurance, they also sit comfortably and tight on the front of the binoculars. This means you don't have to worry about them sliding off when taking them out of the case or spotting something interesting and pulling them off hap-hazard in your haste.

With the textured rubber armouring, a dual hinge - single axis body and nitrogen gas filled waterproofing (tested to 5m in depth), these binoculars are extremely durable. They offer grips on the side of the body which are ideal in the rain and wind as they give you something to hold onto. The open bridge provides an ideal place to put your hands while the 500° wheel focusing allows you to turn the wheel in very small movements to focus to perfection. The wheel is also rather large (31mm diameter) which helps with small hands like mine. Having small hands sometimes makes it difficult to grip the binoculars and turn the wheel smoothly, but the larger wheel gives me the option of turning with my index finger or in high winds, the option of gripping and turning with my thumb.

One other stand-out feature is the central dioptre adjuster. It is found on the top of the focusing wheel and it allows you to personalise the binoculars to your sight by simply pulling out the end, turning and clicking back into place. The end remains static and doesn't turn as you turn the wheel.

Another great feature of these binoculars is the long eye relief eyepieces and multi-stage eyecups that make them ideal for glasses wearers like myself. You get the same crystal clear quality with the eyecups up or down and wearing glasses isn't an issue. They have two stages between having the eyecups up or down, and the cups are rather stiff when you turn them. I prefer this as it means you can physically control at what stage you want the eyecups to stay at, even with pressure applied – the eyecups lock into position and don't move!



In my experience, the DBA VHDs hold their own against other top range 8x42 binoculars for light transmission. When viewing in poor light the amount of light you get is outstanding! A field of 122m at 1000m is not the widest compared with some but that's not to say it's not good enough. Near focus is 2.5m and suitable for occasional use on butterflies and the like. For regular use on this type of thing, a real close focusing pair of binoculars would be better suited.

One of the best features of this particular model is the ED glass that Opticron have chosen. It really sets it aside making the images you see seem almost perfect. There's no blurring around the outside, no distortion or colour fringing.

The only complaint I would have after reviewing this pair for over a month is that the neoprene neck straps does take some time to set up with the different adjustments, but would I go back to a regular strap instead of the neoprene? Absolutely not, the strap is extremely comfortable even if it means having to spend a good hour or so fiddling with it to get the strap to sit perfectly but after all the fiddling, the strap makes the experience of carrying binoculars around your neck quite comfortable.

Overall, I would highly recommend these binoculars to anyone looking to move onto a better pair or anyone starting out. With the Opticron 30 year guarantee, the durability of this particular model and the great customer care done by Opticron – you won't need to upgrade from this model!

Dan Rouse, July 2016

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