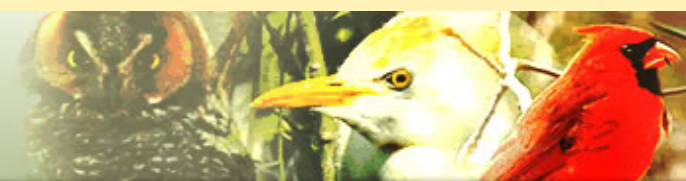


- Home
- Product Reviews
- Product Directory
- Product Reviews
- Product Reviews
- Bird or Advanced Search
- Calendar
- New Products
- Tide Info
- New Reviews
- Weather
- Recent Reviews
- Memberlist
- Last Day
- Accommodation
- Last Week
- Birding Pal
- Last 2 Weeks
- Walks Directory

WELCOME TO  
**BIRDFORUM.NET**  
The Net's Largest Birding Community Dedicated To Wild Birds



[Gallery](#) ▼ [Birding Locations](#) ▼ [Equipment Reviews](#) ▼ [Bird Database](#) [Classifieds](#) [Chat](#) [Resources](#) ▼


general discussion
FREE!!

talksmall CUISINE POLITICS ENTERTAINMENT SPORT HOBBIES LEISURE




[Click here to see more.](#)

**Welcome, Guest**

Welcome to BirdForum, the net's largest birding community, dedicated to wild birds and birding, and absolutely FREE! You are most welcome to register for an account, which allows you to take part in lively discussions in the forum, post your pictures in the gallery and more.

Click here to go to the forums home page and find out more.  
[Click here to join.](#)



BirdForum  
**Reviews Home**

User Name  Remember Me?

Password

[Register](#) [Forums](#) [Search Reviews](#) ▼ [Gallery](#) ▼ [Bird Database](#) [Reviews](#) ▼ [Chat](#) [FAQ](#)

[Home](#) | [Register](#) | [Login](#)

Home > Large Binoculars [PREV PRODUCT](#) [NEXT PRODUCT](#)

**William Optics 8x42 APO**

Reviews	Views	Date of last review
<b>3</b>	<b>3280</b>	<b>Thu Jan 5, 2006</b>
Recommended By	Average Price	Rating
<b>100% of reviewers</b>	<b>None indicated</b>	<b>8.5</b>



supersize



supersize



supersize

Description:	<p>Prism type: Schmidt-Pechan roof.  Objective: Achromatic triplets  Body: Composite  Coatings: multicoated.  Field of view: 7 degree WF  Eye tubes: Screw up, screw down.  Close Focus: 3 Feet, ~1m.  Waterproof, fog proof.  Weight: 700 g</p> <p>Availability  The WO 8x42 APO binocular is available from the following authorised dealers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ace Cameras</li> <li>- Bray Imaging</li> <li>- F1 Cameras.</li> </ul> <p>Other Optics  William Optics products include the following binoculars:</p> <p>8x25 compact = GBP 54.00  8x42 and 10x42 SEMIAPO = GBP 99.00  8x42 APO = GBP 199.00</p> <p>Note that the prices are the manufacturers recommended retail prices.</p> <p>Product details can be found at the following URL:</p> <p><a href="http://www.william-optics.com/index-product.htm">http://www.william-optics.com/index-product.htm</a></p>
Keywords:	Roof prism binocular

## Author



## Leif

Registered User

Registered: 3/2003  
Location: Bedfordshire  
Posts: 1589

Review Date: **Mon Mar 7, 2005**Recommend? **yes** | Price paid: **Not Indicated**

<b>Pros:</b>	Remarkably compact, and light, very good brightness, excellent eye relief, wide field of view, screw in screw out eye tubes, waterproof, excellent close focus, very little chromatic aberration and modest price.
<b>Cons:</b>	Slight image softness. Somewhat stiff focus wheel (though it might ease with use). Fiddly diopter control.

## Foreword

This is a review of a William Optics 8x42 APO binocular written at the request of William Optics. The review sample was sent to me by post from Taiwan and I was allowed to keep it if desired. Please note that William Optics have had no influence on the content, apart from supplying some product images, and answering some questions.

For anyone not familiar with William Optics, they are well known in America for making refracting telescopes, and other equipment for the amateur astronomer. As far as I know they are new to the binocular market.

## Overview

The WO 8x42 APO is a roof prism binocular with 8x magnification and 42mm objectives. It has a modest price (£199), and an excellent specification.

## Mechanics

The most striking feature is the remarkably small size: the binocular is significantly smaller than many competing instruments, and not much larger than many 8x32 instruments! It is also very light, weighing in at a mere 700g. According to the manufacturer it uses composites in its construction, though the objective cells and hinge appear to be metal. The binocular has the shape typical of a roof prism instrument, i.e. two stubby tubes, joined by a central hinge which is nice and stiff.

The body is almost completely covered in a black rubber armour. It has a non slip surface and is sufficient to protect it from light knocks.

The eye tubes screw in and screw out. They are held in place by friction, rather than any locking mechanism, and those on my sample stayed put when extended. The ends are covered with rubber for comfort, and I had no problems using them.

The focus wheel is situated between the two eyepieces. It is large, rubber covered, and well placed. The focus is very smooth, but somewhat stiffer than I would like, although it has loosened somewhat with use.

The dioptre wheel is mounted on the right eyepiece, and is held in place by friction. I found it rather fiddly, albeit functional. Note that on my sample the dioptre was faulty in that it had a noticeable offset even when set to the neutral position. No doubt the manufacturer would repair or replace a production sample under the warranty.

Overall the binocular feels good in the hand and seems solidly built, surprisingly so given the low price. The small size will be appreciated by people with small hands, and those who want an instruments that can be stuffed in a back pack, or travelling case.

The binocular is waterproof according to the manufacturer though I did not put the claim to the test. In any case, it should easily survive a heavy downpour.

#### Optics

The image is in most respects excellent, with decent brightness, due in part to silver coatings on the prisms, and a field of view - 7 degrees – that is exceptional in a budget roof prism binocular. The image softens noticeably about three quarters out from the image centre, and is poor at the edge. There is a little distortion off axis but nothing serious. The one flaw in the image, in my opinion, is a slight softness, which I assume is due to the absence of phase coatings on the prisms (see also the footnote section).

Chromatic aberration is minimal, with almost no colour fringing, even in high contrast situations, for example when watching a black crow fly against a bright sky. The objectives are triplets, although William Optics make no mention of the type of glass used. Such good colour correction is unusual in a roof prism binocular.

Flare, though sometimes present, is well controlled. I saw a little ghosting at night when viewing street lights, but nothing to worry about. According to the manufacturer the optics are multi-coated and I see no reason to doubt this claim.

I saw no obvious colour cast, though I should come clean and make it clear that I am relatively oblivious to colour casts unless they are very obvious.

The minimum focus distance is claimed to be a remarkable 3 feet, and my sample easily focusses to within 2m consistent with the claim. (I prefer to use the metric system.)

Eye relief is exceptionally good given the price and the field of view, and I had no problem viewing the entire field while wearing eyeglasses. Although the manufacturer does not give a value for the eye relief, I would estimate it, based on my experience with other instruments, to be at least 17 mm, which makes it especially suitable for eyeglass wearers who usually need at least 15 mm.

#### Accessories

The binocular is supplied with a basic but quite useable rainguard, simple pop on

objective covers (which hook onto the strap: a clever idea, though I suspect they will soon be lost), a basic strap (which I quickly replaced with a neoprene one), and a very basic and unstylish but functional pouch.

#### Comparison

I was able to compare the William Optics binocular with a Swarovski 8x20 B, a Nikon 8x32 SE, a Zeiss 8x42 FL a Nikon 8x40 Egret, and a Viking 8x40 binocular.

The Viking 8x40 is a decent performing budget porro prism binocular (price about £100), but alongside the William Optics, it is outclassed, being larger, heavier, more cumbersome to hold, with lower contrast, a darker image, and a greater minimum focus distance. It does though have excellent eye relief, and is excellent value for money.

The Nikon 8x40 Egret is a budget porro prism instrument (~£150 or less) from a well known optics manufacturer. Alongside the William Optics instrument the optics hold up very well, having similar on axis sharpness, contrast and brightness, though careful testing with a resolution chart showed the Egret to have slightly but noticeably better on-axis resolution and contrast. Away from the image centre the Egret has noticeably more distortion and softness. It also has much less eye relief, making for a less comfortable view, and effectively reducing the useable field of view for eyeglass wearers. It also has a much larger minimum focus distance of 4m compared to less than 2m (measured value) for the William Optics binocular. From an ergonomic viewpoint the Egret is outclassed by the William Optics binocular, being much larger, a bit heavier, with fiddly rubber eye tubes, and no water resistance.

The Zeiss 8x42 FL (~£920) is one of the finest instruments available. Alongside the William Optics binocular the FL has, not surprisingly, noticeably superior resolution, contrast and brightness, and a wider field of view. However, from an ergonomic perspective the William Optics binocular does rather well, being much more compact, a bit lighter, and with similar eye relief. Clearly this comparison is completely unfair (and somewhat pointless) given the huge price difference.

The Nikon 8x32 SE (~£450) behaved rather like the Zeiss FL, although it was noticeably dimmer in low light. However, the SE is not waterproof (though it is said to have some water resistance), and has fiddly rubber eye tubes.

The Sarovski 8x20 B is a very expensive compact binocular (~£300) with a diminutive size, and superb build quality and optics. Alongside the William Optics binocular it does in many respects hold its own. Even in low light it shows almost as much detail in distant objects, though the image is significantly less bright. However, it has a somewhat narrow field of view, significantly less eye relief, and much smaller 2 mm exit pupils, all of which make for a significantly less relaxing view. Clearly the William Optics instrument is more suited to eyeglass users.

#### Summary

Overall this is a nice little binocular with some outstanding features. The optics have decent brightness, remarkably little chromatic aberration (less than many premium instruments), excellent eye relief, excellent minimum close focus distance, and an impressive field of view (the equal of at least one premium instrument), in a remarkably small and light waterproof package. The only caveat is the slight image softness.

#### Footnote

I mentioned the slight image softness to the William Optics representative, and he passed my comments to his technical colleagues. A few weeks later he informed me that William Optics have decided to add phase coatings to the prisms, and increase the number of layers in the anti-reflection coatings, in order to improve the sharpness.

Note that, according to William Optics, for an introductory period of a few months,

they will sell the binocular at £149, rather than £200.



[profile](#) [SendPM](#) [Find](#) [buddy](#)

### viennawood

Registered User

Registered: 5/2005  
Location: P.R.CHINA  
Posts: 1

Review Date: **Mon May 30, 2005**      Recommend? **yes** | Price paid: **Not Indicated** | Rating: **7**

<b>Pros:</b>	Optical performance
<b>Cons:</b>	Stiff focus wheel

This product is made in China. Its ODM is XI'AN VISION OPTO-ELECTRONIC CO., LTD. (SICONG GROUP)

These products are called \"Navigator Series\" in XI'AN VISION's homepage. For more information:

<http://www.aoi.com.cn/english/index.htm>

<http://www.aoi.com.cn/english/Na1.htm>

The manufacturers recommended retail prices is about 1500RMB in China. (About 180USD)

I have one and I am satisfied with its optical performance. I think its optical performance approaches Olympus EXPI 8x42. The latter is better in brightness and sharpness due to its phase coating, although very slightly. But the former has a wider field of view (7 degrees vs 6.3 degrees), although it results in a poor edge image. Anyway poor image is better than no image.



[profile](#) [SendPM](#) [Find](#) [buddy](#)

### timmbottoni

Registered User

Registered: 1/2006  
Location: Chicago Suburbs  
Posts: 5

Review Date: **Thu Jan 5, 2006**      Recommend? **yes** | Price paid: **Not Indicated** | Rating: **10**

<b>Pros:</b>	Compact size, color free images, good close focus
<b>Cons:</b>	

This is the first decent pair of binoculars I have owned, and I like them a lot. They are a good all purpose set, with great optics in a very compact size. I highly recommend them for the money.

There is no false color in these, and they show great clarity, and sharpness out to 90% of the image.

The twist up eye cups are nice, and I like them, but don't wear glasses, but it seems like the eye relief would be good for any users.

NOTE: In Spring of 2006 a new version has been announced that included Phase Coated prisms.

Timm



[profile](#) [SendPM](#) [Find](#) [buddy](#)

Powered by: ReviewPost 2.5  
Copyright 2003 All Enthusiast, Inc.

# BIRDFORUM

[Contact Us](#) - [Home](#) - [Archive](#) - [Binoculars](#) - [Photography](#) - [Top](#)

BirdForum 3.65  
Powered by: vBulletin Version 3.0.0  
Copyright ©2000 - 2006, Jelsoft Enterprises Ltd. © BirdForum Ltd 2004  
Smiley set from <http://www.unprovoked.com/>