

## Binocular reviews : KITE Lynx HD 8x30

Binoculars are very much a personal choice, no two pairs of eyes or hands are the same. Our reviews are designed to give the potential customer a more in depth assessment of a binocular, so they can use this information against their own particular requirements.



**Model reviewed:** Kite Lynx HD 8x30

**Price** - £459.00

**Pros:**

- Exceptional image quality right to the edges
- Very lightweight and compact
- Short focus distance – 1.3 metres!
- Massive field of view with no field curvature

**Cons:**

- Larger hands may find it a tad small
- Not many!

**Background**

When something new comes along, especially in a market that has its well established brands, it can take time for a name to be established. If the names Swarovski/Zeiss/Leica/Kowa are mentioned in the UK birding scene then an image of quality (at a price) springs to mind.

Kite don't have this luxury, being far less known in the UK. But, there is definitely a drive and determination to become a "name" in the UK optics industry.

Their brand new Lynx HD binocular, following the Toucan from earlier in 2013, goes some way to giving them a shot of cracking the mid-range binocular market.

Like the Ibis ED the Lynx HD can be seen as a bit of a pioneer for Kite. Working alongside Nikon on the Lynx HD, Kite have got a binocular that is aimed squarely at the sites of highly regarded models like the Swarovski CL companion.

Let's see whether the Lynx can flourish in a tough and competitive market.

## Design

First things first, the Lynx HD is small and very light, wearing it around the neck leaves you wondering if it is there at all. At just 461 grams, the Swarovski CL 8x30 is 500 grams and Zeiss Conquest HD 8x32 is 630 grams, and standing just 12cm tall it really is a baby binocular, perfect for slipping into a coat pocket.

Despite this the Lynx still has full size, rubber coated, metal eyepieces which feel excellently built and comfortable when in use. The same goes for the focus wheel and diopter adjustments, they have a real premium feel with a smooth action.

Focusing the Lynx HD is a joy. It isn't overly critical but is precise enough to get the binocular in focus easily at all distances without having to search for the sweet spot. A minimum focus distance of under 1.5 metres adds to the flexibility.

The Lynx HD is also comfortable in the hand, negating its small size with a well positioned hinge and focus wheel. Those with very large hands may find it a touch on the small side, but for most this won't be an issue.

The rubber armouring also feels of premium quality. The binocular grips well in the hand and it looks built to last. The only slight negative is that the Lynx HD is a tad plain to look at, with just the gold Kite logo and Lynx HD text standing out on what is a plain, black/dark grey binocular. Simplicity is a Kite trait though and the Petrel, Ibis Ed and Toucan all had this stylish, minimalist appearance.

## Optics

With the Swarovski CL companion and Zeiss Conquest HD peering over its small shoulders the Kite Lynx HD has to perform here to have a chance of standing up to these two giants of the compact binocular market.

As you look through the binocular you are immediately struck by how sharp and bright the image is, a feature of all the Kite binoculars. The image has a real punch which really helps give superb clarity and sharpness to the image, even in low light conditions. Another noticeable aspect of the image is sharpness right up to the edges of the field of view, there's no real loss in clarity or sharpness.

The Lynx HD delivers a real killer blow to its more illustrious rivals with its massive field of view. An unrivalled 151 metre field of view leaves the Lynx HD standing above both the Swarovski CL 8x30 (124 metre) and Zeiss Conquest HD 8x32 (140 metre) and puts it in a class of its own achieving over 150 metres of view at 1000 metre range. The differences may appear small in numerical terms but when you look through these binoculars you will really notice the difference, especially at close quarters such as in woodland.

## Conclusion

The Lynx HD could be a huge binocular for Kite. 8x30 binoculars are becoming more and more popular and Kite have clearly put a lot into the Lynx in order to make it one of the top 8x30 binoculars available.

Overall the Lynx HD is just fantastic to use. Optically it is up there with the best and the massive field of view sets it apart from its main rivals.

Design has clearly been thought about to create a binocular that is a joy to use. It may be a bit small for some but most users will love how easy the Lynx HD is to focus and how comfortable it is to use.

Finally there is the price. £459 is a mid-range price for binoculars but when compared to the near identical, but heavier and narrower in field of view, Swarovski CL 8x30 the Lynx is nearly £300 cheaper. The Zeiss Conquest HD 8x32 puts in a strong claim for being worth the extra £110 but its weight and sensitive focusing can divide opinion.

If you are ever in the North Norfolk area and get a chance, pop into The One Stop Nature Shop, the main UK dealer of Kite products, and try the Kite Lynx HD.

### Others to consider:

- Zeiss Conquest HD 8x32- £569
- Swarovski CL Companion 8x30 - £730

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