



Pentax Papilio binoculars

NEW BINOCULARS FOR MACRO-INSECT WATCHERS

Butterfly-, dragonfly- and insect-watchers now have a powerful new tool. We use close-focusing binoculars that are capable of focusing down as closely as 6 feet from the insect. This gives a life-size image with plenty of working distance so as not to disturb the subject. There are several such binoculars available.

But new binoculars from Pentax represent a real break-through in ultra close-focusing design. Called "Papilio", they come in two models, 8.5X and 6.5X. They incorporate objective lenses that turn slightly inward as you focus more closely which allows the eyes to easily fuse the two images into a single (3 dimensional) image. This allows the binoculars to focus down to an amazing 19 inches! At that close range they are equivalent to holding a butterfly in the hand just 10" from the eye and then observing it with a 5X magnifying glass! When you observe at 5X life-size, you can inspect minute structural details quickly, in the field.

We've used them for the past 2 years and highly recommend them. They are compact, light-weight (10 oz.), suitable for eye-glass wearers, and relatively inexpensive at about \$130-\$150. (A convenient source of binoculars is the Middleton-based national mail-order firm of Eagle Optics at www.eagleoptics.com or stop into their retail store for a look-see!)

Karl Legler 2007