

Visionking Monocular

A year or so ago I bought one of these for six or seven pounds online.



Why are you writing about this in a magazine for microscopy you may well ask? Well take a look at the instruction leaflet from inside the box and you'll see.

6x18mm Extreme Close Focus Monocular

Focusing Your Monocular:
To focus simply twist the outer barrel while holding the eyepiece steady until the object you are viewing is clear and sharp.
The close focus optical system allows you to focus on a subject as close as 10 inches in front of you.

To focus on close-up objects, rotate outer barrel outward.

To focus on far away objects, rotate outer barrel inward.

Cleaning Your Monocular:
Blow away any dust or debris on the lens (or use a soft lens brush).
To remove dirt, grease or fingerprints, clean with a soft microfiber cloth rubbing in a circular motion. Use of a coarse cloth or unnecessary rubbing may scratch the lens surface and eventually cause permanent damage.
For a more thorough cleaning, photographic type lens cleaning fluid may be used. Always apply the fluid to the cleaning cloth, never directly on the lens.

Warning:
Do not drop or violently jar your monocular. This may cause the internal optical components of your monocular to become misaligned and reduce the quality of the image.
Do not expose the monocular to excessive moisture.
Do not view the sun with this monocular. Viewing the sun can cause permanent eye damage.

PDF: www.carson.com/CF718guide
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Aside from describing the monocular more accurately than the box does it also tells you that it focuses from infinity to 10 inches or so. This type of monocular is often used as a vision aid and Eschenbach make a range of them but at a very much higher cost.

It isn't a new idea of course. Zeiss made the Turmon for many years and at one time apparently offered a large range of accessories including lenses to give closer focussing and make it into a dissecting microscope. How to do this is well described by Harry Dade in his Quekett and other articles and the Anatomy and Dissection of the honeybee appendix 1. Adding a stand and an object lens from a defunct 8 x 20 monocular gives a nominal x20 dissecting microscope. Stopping the lens down improves the depth of field and the wide focussing range is very useful. Owning two good stereo microscopes means I haven't pursued this option very far yet. I have found it useful for birds on a feeder or insects on a plant, flower inspections and the like. Being able to check the aerials on the tower at Crystal Palace and buds on a tree just by refocussing the same cheap instrument was very satisfying.

Optically and mechanically it isn't the finest piece of equipment I own. You have to be realistic and remember the cost after all. However being small and light it does get taken out which my good binoculars and stereo microscopes don't and if lost or damaged I can live with the loss as well as the field curvature indifferent achromatism and other faults. The one you're carrying always is a better bet than the one you left in the cupboard at home right? I wasn't overly impressed with the Eschenbach my mother was prescribed either - especially at the price!

I am to be fair an old grouch!

References:

Dade H. A, Anatomy and dissection of the Honeybee, Appendix 1

Dade H. A. A featherweight prismatic dissecting microscope, J Quekett microscopical Club Ser. 4, volume 5, p255, 1960.
Describes adaption of the Wray Panora monocular.

Kelly Jack. Article on Fernrohrlupen in Zeiss Historica 2002. In English fortunately.

The Internet also has a number of articles on the Turmon and similar instruments.

The address to download the pdf of the instruction sheet didn't work for me either.

Comments to the author David Stephens are welcomed, email - dstepsss AT gmail DOT com.

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