

OUTDOORS

Gear Review:

Quality binoculars a must for wildlife watching

■ The Alpen Apex 495 binoculars are waterproof and comparable in quality to more expensive brands

Anyone into birding, wildlife watching or hunting knows the importance of a good pair of binoculars. While 8-power binoculars will bring most distant objects into view, I prefer the higher magnification of 10-power. Alpen's new Apex 495 binoculars have now become my favorite. These 10 X 42 binocs are waterproof, fogproof and are comparable in quality to those two to three times the price.

The 495 is available in green or Mossy Oak and are relatively lightweight at just 24 ounces. Fully multi-coated BAK4 glass, PXA phase coating and HR metallic coating give these binoculars crisp, sharp clarity in bright or dim light and even in the wettest conditions.

The ergonomically styled binoculars have pull-up, twist lock eyecups to provide extra field of view. Other features include a close focus of 5 feet, rubber armoring for comfort, protection and durability, soft rubber rain guard, travel case, wide comfortable neck strap and Alpen's lifetime warranty.

The binoculars retail for about \$270 at Sportsman's Warehouse in Bend.



SCOOT STAATS/CENTRAL OREGONIAN

The Alpen Apex 495 binoculars come in green or Mossy Oak, (shown here) and are available retail for about \$270 at Sportsman's Warehouse in Bend