

DREW'S LAB

★ OPTICS EXPLAINED ★

Back in August a friend of mine visited me in Scotland for some shooting, and showed me all his shooting related toys. After a weekend of stalking, night shooting and pigeon shooting he showed me the Laserluchs 5000 Infra-red illuminator and said could I do a review and test on the item.

I was very happy to oblige as I had been waiting for ages to test this unit. Laserluchs make IR units and so far I've only tested the ones they do for around £500, and they have been outstanding in performance for such a small unit. However the Laserluchs 5000 is only around £210 and the LED type is IR rather than the laser type I had previously tested. The unit runs at 850nm wavelength which is ideal for digital and tube type night vision scopes.



So I opened the plastic case it came in and there it was, bigger than I expected due to the large torch head but light all the same. My first port of call was the kitchen scales and it weighed in at 270 grams, the same as my single battery Nightmaster 800. The unit takes 2 CR123 batteries which have a good life span and retail for about £8 for 2. Good rechargeable batteries might be an option too.

The unit has nice features, in addition to the good build quality and finish I loved the focus ring - such a smooth action and this brings the beam from 15 degrees right into 3 degrees smooth as silk. The second thing I liked was the toggle switch on the rear to operate the unit - I couldn't stop switching it off and on, and it's got a partial aluminium cover to prevent accidental switch on.

So then I decided to test it against my Nightmaster 800 single battery unit with my Pulsar N550 on my tikka 222 rifle. I had to use my adjustable bracket that I got with my Nightmaster but it's a 25mm tube on the Laserluchs so fitted no problem. Off I went armed with DVR player and IR units. Laserluchs do their own bracket for about £56.

Now when making videos I find that it never goes to plan and no animal ever makes an appearance to showcase a product when you want it. At my permission I decided that a bank, a few trees and 220 meters would do for a test as it was moonless night about 10 o'clock. First the Nightmaster - it's a great unit, lights up no problem at the distance. Then over to the Laserluchs 5000 and I have to say the picture is clearer, and the beam is more controllable with the focus ring going in and out very sweetly from flood to spot in seconds. The knurled focus ring helps in the dark.

Both units could do with a dimmer - Laserluchs do one for about £130 and Nightmaster have brought out a dimmable version which is cool too, I have handled it but not tested it yet (but will soon!) Pulsar however supply all IR's with a power wheel which is ideal when you hit cover in front of your target reducing the intensity of the IR beam, allowing you to shoot at the critical moment. A good example of this is when you see a fox and you lie down to shoot from prone off a bi pod, blades of grass or reed just in front of you cause reflection obscuring your view