

BUSHNELL NITRO 1800

By Steve Meadows



EVER SINCE I STARTED SNIPING MAGPIES WITH MY REMINGTON M700 VSSF 22-250 EARLY IN THE 90S, I've had a need for a rangefinder. They're indispensable when sighting in, hunting longer ranges and, of course, challenging mates on, "How far away do you reckon that is?"

ABOVE:
LISA FOUND THE VIEW THROUGH THE MONOCULAR EYE PIECE is sharp, clear and uncluttered.
BELOW:
WELL THOUGHT OUT SILENT OPENING BELT CASE is a welcome addition for bowhunters.

I've had my current unit for maybe nine years (Leica Rangemaster 800), which has been uber-reliable. I chose it for its then super-compact size and excellent optics - it's often used as a low-power monocular in the bush. So, when the latest Bushnell arrived for me to review, I was keen as punch to see how it stacked up and to check out its new features.

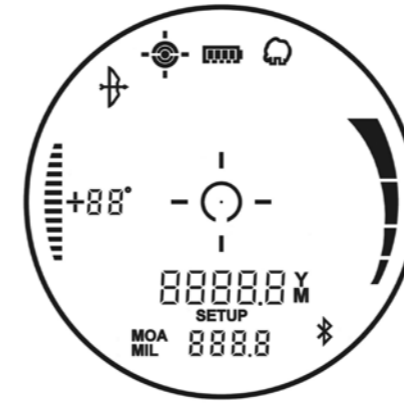
COMPARISONS
Immediately on opening the box, I noticed two

things: one, what a great (silent opening) pouch it comes with, and two, how small this unit is. It's smaller - albeit slightly fatter - than the Leica and ergonomically, much better shaped.

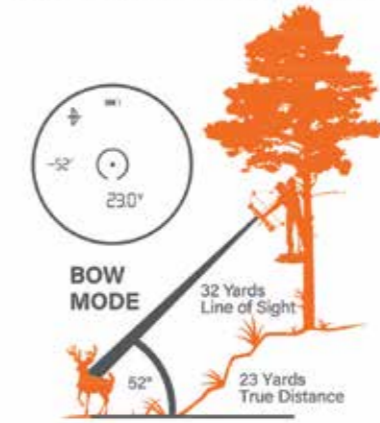
I need no longer worry about optical quality - while reading local street and business signs up and down the highway outside home, I cannot discern any difference between the Leica and this Bushnell; that's impressive for an LCD display unit. This is the primary reason I've stayed away from LCD display rangefinders before - looking through the display usually isn't optically very good, and it dims the image quite a lot too. However, this unit's viewfinder is slightly brighter than my aging Leica, even after I gave the old lenses a good clean to ensure a fair fight.

BENEFITS AND FEATURES

For the rifleman, whether you're into long range or just hunting the hills, it's handy to know distance. And it makes you a better shot



TRUE DISTANCE WITH ARC ANGLE RANGE COMPENSATION



LEFT: **GRAPHIC OF ALL** available icons and display; MIDDLE: **TAKEN FROM THE USER GUIDE**, this image displays well why the inclinometer is so valuable for bowhunters. Even if you're not in a tree stand, a steep shot is common in tight terrain; RIGHT: **THE OPTICS ARE LARGE** and probably why this unit performs so well.

too. For those into long-range shooting and reloading, this unit will Bluetooth connect to your smartphone and engage directly with the Bushnell Ballistics app, and once programmed with your known ballistics and even weather and wind data, will provide - in Mil or MOA - your holdover. It's all spelled out on the downloadable instructional manual, which you can find on www.bushnell.com, or just Google it ... trust me, the full link isn't one you'd want to type!

The RRP is \$869.99, so it's not cheap but it is VERY good. I can't think of anything it doesn't have.

Features that make this unit appealing to a bowhunter:

- It's small, and easily operated with one hand.
- It has a quiet-opening belt case or chest lanyard.
- Readings can be set to yards or metres - whatever you're used to.

- Scrub (bush) mode displays the furthest of any multiple readings that may be the result of ranging through some trees/branches to an animal on the other side.
 - Archery mode displays both actual distance, angle and, importantly, lateral distance (calculated by a built-in inclinometer) - the latter is what your sight should be set to.
 - Scan mode takes constant readings while the button is held down.
 - Can range short distances - the closest I've got was 4.9m!
 - Battery compartment can be opened without coin/tools.
- In fact - it's so appealing, I'm buying and keeping this unit. ■

MODEL Bushnell Nitro 1800 6x24mm LRF A-J Blstc
RRP \$869.99
MORE INFO www.ampro.co.nz



ABOVE:
THE VIEW THROUGH THE MONOCULAR EYEPIECE provides all necessary information at a glance.



QUARTER PAGE HORIZONTAL