

Elements of a Birdwatcher's Armoury

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As their interest begins to rise,
Birding newcomers quickly realise
Their keen eyes and ears are not enough;
And that, to gain full satisfaction
From their bouts of birdwatching action,
They require a lot of *other* stuff.

In the modern suite of birding tools
That helps us enjoy nature's jewels
Things divide into many classes.
Within these verses let us list them
And discuss using simple system,
Starting with the choice of field glasses.

Binoculars boost a birder's eyes
As they search the trees or scan the skies.
"Ten by forty two" is what some choose
But others think that "eight by fifty"
Has merit since they're light and thrifty.
These optic choices create strong views!

Factors such as ruggedness and weight
Are also brought into this debate.
Note though, binoculars do not cope
When it comes to long distance viewing
(Which birdwatchers are often doing);
What's needed is a good telescope.

They're rather awkward to lug around
And you need to find some even ground
But when you do, they are so useful.
With firm tripod and powerful 'scope
One no longer needs to peer in hope
And birdwatching becomes more fruitful.

These optic tools serve to magnify
But the aim is to identify
For which birders resort to field guides.
Although old-style birders stick to books
Modern ones exploit, with smirking looks,
The many functions an app provides.

A camera is often toted;
Alas, note-taking's been demoted,
Replaced by big zoom lens images.
Click, move on, ask the ID later,
Not notice relevant field data,
This bad practice, one discourages.

'Though when the camera's used for art
As *is* the habit, in greater part,
Such splendid photos now are taken.
A glimpse of behaviour perhaps
Or the bird's beauty captured in snaps
Stimulates interest to waken.

Binoculars, telescope, field guide
And camera; all are well-tried
Tools in a birdwatcher's armoury.
Their pros and cons are oft expounded
Using arguments quite well-founded;
These verses provide a summary.

But the most important tool of all
Is a notebook; it helps one recall
The subtle details of some sighting.
'Though apps are fine if simply "listing",
For birds a bit more interesting
A person should be field-note writing.