

Group test

THE BEST WIDE-ANGLE EYEPIECES UNDER £500

Tele Vue 31mm Nagler Type 5

VITAL STATS

- ▶ **PRICE** £500
- ▶ **FOCAL LENGTH** 31mm
- ▶ **FIELD DIAMETER** 42mm
- ▶ **EYE-RELIEF** 19mm
- ▶ **OPTICAL DESIGN** 6 elements
- ▶ **WEIGHT** 1,000g
- ▶ **CONTACT** 01243 379322
- ▶ **WWW** telescopesales.co.uk

- ▶ **FOR** Exquisite optics
- ▶ **AGAINST** Expensive and heavy

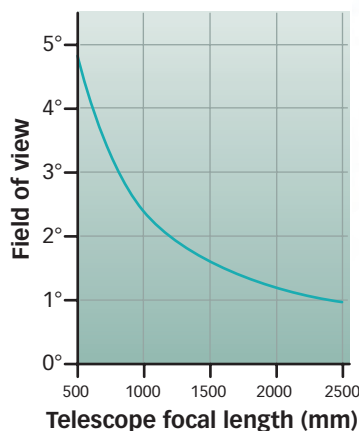
VERDICT

OPTICS	97%
FIELD OF VIEW	90%
EYE-RELIEF	91%
BUILD & DESIGN	93%
VALUE FOR MONEY	55%
OVERALL	85%

Regarded by many as the ultimate wide-field eyepiece, this superb six-element multi-coated optic from American manufacturer Tele Vue set the standard against which the other eyepieces were compared. In terms of its optical quality and engineering it was quite unsurpassed, but it was far from a one-sided contest.

While there will always be a market for premium equipment, the sheer cost of the 31mm Nagler Type 5 has to be put into context: for the same money you could buy a 12-inch Dobsonian and still have some money left for one of the cheaper eyepieces on test.

Standing some 140mm high and 80mm in diameter, the Nagler is certainly an imposing ocular, yet nothing quite prepares you for the full kilogram it weighs. If you



yielding a true field of 4° with the Tele Vue-85 refractor.

The much-touted 'space walk' experience is simply stunning, with good eye-relief, faithful colour rendition, a sharply defined field edge and a uniform optical quality across the visible field.

have a small refractor on a medium-build mount it may prove difficult to balance satisfactorily.

Unlike the other eyepieces on test, the field stop lies inside the field lens and cannot be measured directly. However, our tests revealed it to be a shade over 42mm,

Moonfish 30mm Ultrawide

BBC Sky at Night
☆☆BEST BUY☆☆

VITAL STATS

- ▶ **PRICE** £59
- ▶ **FOCAL LENGTH** 30mm
- ▶ **FIELD DIAMETER** 45mm
- ▶ **EYE-RELIEF** 22mm
- ▶ **OPTICAL DESIGN** 5 elements
- ▶ **WEIGHT** 570g
- ▶ **CONTACT** sales@moonfishgroup.com
- ▶ **WWW** moonfishgroup.com

- ▶ **FOR** Huge field; excellent value
- ▶ **AGAINST** Short eye-relief

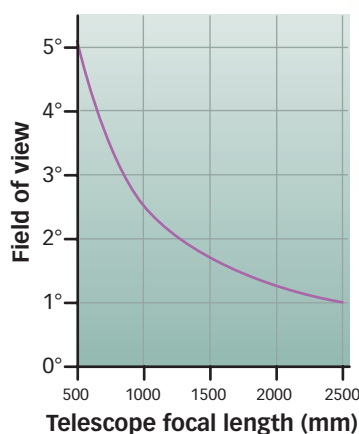
VERDICT

OPTICS	77%
FIELD OF VIEW	96%
EYE-RELIEF	70%
BUILD & DESIGN	89%
VALUE FOR MONEY	98%
OVERALL	86%

Online company Moonfish Group has a growing reputation and a growing product range that now encompasses eyepieces, diagonals, Barlow lenses, binoviewers and filters. The company is a truly European affair, operating from addresses in the UK, Spain and Switzerland.

One of Moonfish's first products was a 80mm wide-angle eyepiece that has now undergone something of a makeover. It now has a feature unique to the oculars on test: just unscrew the rubber eyecup on the top to reveal an M49 camera thread. In 'digiscoping mode', the multi-coated 38mm diameter eye lens is recessed just 3mm into the top of the body, making it ideal for afocal imaging, with minimal vignetting.

At 570g the five-element Moonfish Ultrawide is second only to the



Nagler in terms of weight, but at 114mm high and 59mm in diameter it feels a lot smaller than the latter. In use it doesn't have a very long eye-relief, but what immediately grabs your attention is the phenomenally wide field of view. On the company website it states

that the field stop is just under 41mm in diameter. Our tests revealed that figure to be 44.8mm, delivering a staggering 4.3° field with the Tele Vue-85 refractor. The view was coma-free out to 70-75 per cent of the field radius with good contrast and colour correction.