



FROM £1,900

▲ Fitted to a Sako Finnfire .22LR, the scope was light and easy to use despite its size

Pulsar Sentinel

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

MAGNIFICATION	3x
DIMENSIONS	Length: 288mm; width: 90mm; height: 100mm
WEIGHT	35oz/120g
SCOPE MOUNT	Weaver rail that will close down to fit a dovetail
OPTIONAL EXTRAS	IR illuminators lens doublers
MAX RANGE	Rabbits: 80 yards Foxes: 150 yards
PRICES	Sentinel 76115T: £1,900 Laser illuminator: £500
IMPORTER	Thomas Jacks, tel 01789 264100

Bruce Potts enjoys invisibility after dark with the competitively priced Pulsar Sentinel Generation 2+ 3x50, an impressive performer on foxes and rabbits

The short hours of daylight at this time of year mean that many shooters begin to think about nightvision equipment as an alternative to the commonplace lamping kit to achieve success in their forays for vermin. The problem is that there is so much nightvision equipment of all light intensity grades to choose from. Furthermore, some come at astonishing prices but from dubious sources, making the market a minefield for the uninitiated. Thomas Jacks Ltd is the UK's sole agent for Pulsar, which offers a three-year guarantee and has a hugely diverse range of nightvision equipment for all levels of shooters. With nightvision equipment you get what you pay for in terms of effectiveness, but the Pulsar Sentinel only costs as much as a top-end German or Austrian rifle scope. The Sentinel 76115T is a Generation 2+ model with an intensifier tube to further enhance the image quality and light gain. The test model had a Russian Gen 2+ tube and costs £1,900. It can be upgraded with optional extras such as infrared (IR) illuminators and lens doublers.

Specifications

Made in Belarus, the Sentinel has a 50mm objective lens and a 3x magnification. The magnification was increased by a doubler lens (actually 1.75x), making it 5.25x, which is good given that rabbits are small targets at 50 yards. The overall length is 288mm/9in and the width is 90mm/3.5in. The outside objective lens is more than 2.4in in diameter and the eyepiece is 2in wide, with a soft rubber concertina eyecup to stop extraneous light entering the sight.

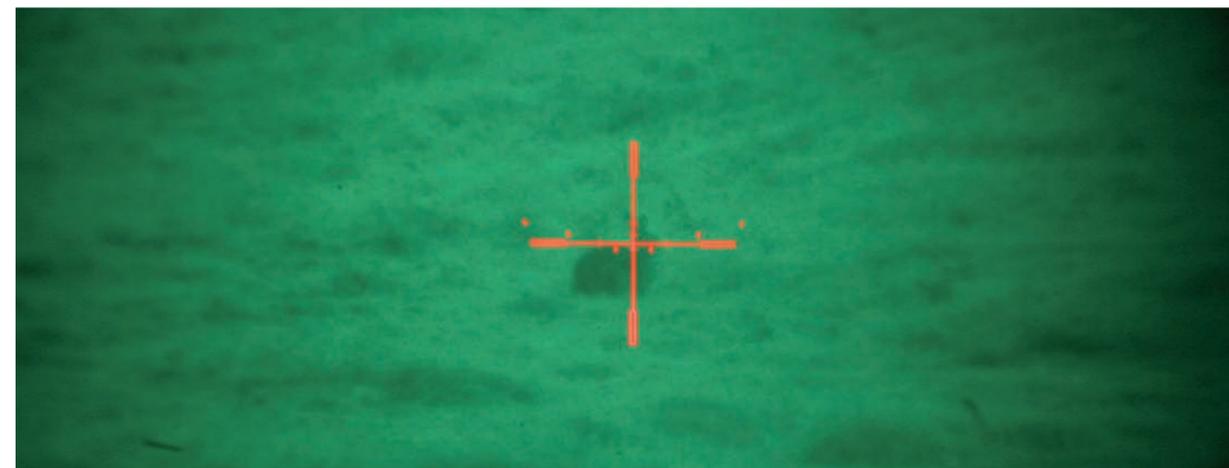
To the right side of the body is the external IR illuminator,



All the controls are situated on the right side of the body

which has a variable spot or flood beam function that helps to boost the image brightness. Beneath this is the battery housing, which holds two standard AA batteries vertically so that the recoil does not dislodge the connection. Behind this is the main control toggle with three position settings. The switch is off in the forward position, on in the middle position and activates the IR illuminator when switched to the back. The reticule can be adjusted for brightness and can be changed from red to green with a push button. This is handy when you want a well-defined yet not overbearing aiming mark.

At the rear of the body are the windage and elevation adjustment turrets. These proved interesting in the tests. Normally if a bullet strikes too far to the left, then you adjust



▲ The view through the sight without IR illumination shows a rabbit clearly visible at 45 yards. It is possible to shoot rabbits up to 80 yards
► The Pulsar Sentinel was also tested on a .20 Satan varmint RPA rifle on which it proved highly effective for shooting foxes out to 150 yards

the windage turrets to the right, but with the Pulsar it is the other way round.

With nightvision equipment, because the image is so intensified, field of view and depth of field are crucial. If your range varies a great deal, to keep the image focused you need to adjust the side-mounted knob constantly. The only problem is that it is positioned on the right side and when you are shooting at night it is easier to hold the rifle in the right hand and adjust it with the left.

All these switches mean you can feel a bit overloaded with adjustments, but there is a device that can switch the unit on or turn on the IR with a simple push button. There is also a button that causes the IR to light up immediately, but it must be held down to operate it. This is useful when scanning for quarry.

The sight can be fitted to the rifle with the common Weaver rail system, but the cross-slot recoil bar is wider than normal, so it is worth checking that it fits. You can use an 11mm dovetail rail but this puts the sight too far off the bore axis.

Zeroing and field trials

It may look a little bulky, but at 120g/35oz the Pulsar is surprisingly light due partly to the titanium and plastic body. You can zero your rifle in with the end cover still attached, but check the zero is still the same when the front cover is removed in darker light. The click adjustments are positive but quite large and one click equates to 20mm at 100m or 3/4in at 100 yards. The reticule is small but has a series of vertical stadia lines for hold-over on trajectory, and horizontal v-marks that help with wind adjustment and act as a crude rangefinder.

I fitted the Sentinel to a Sako custom .22LR and also to an RPA .20 Satan calibre fox rifle to gauge the scope's true performance. All passive starlight devices such as the Pulsar rely on residual light from stars or the moon. You can focus from five yards — which is very handy — to infinity. With the Gen 2+ tube and no IR illumination you can spot rabbits at 100 yards but only really shoot accurately to 80 yards. Rabbits and foxes appear black in the green eyepiece. When the IR illuminator is switched on the image is brightened at the expense of contrast, but the eyes reflect the IR beam, making spotting a rabbit in a furrow or hedgeline much easier.

Thomas Jacks supplies a laser illuminator from Germany



named the Laserluchs, which attaches to the spare Weaver rail. It is an eye-safe laser with superb range, clarity and spot- or flood-beam capacity. With this device switched on, the observation range doubled and the fox's eyes reflected past the 200 yards mark. It was very impressive, but it will set you back an additional £500.

I shot 14 rabbits on the first outing and three rats in the grain store with .22 CB Long cartridges. This was great sport, but I did need the IR illuminator on constantly due to the lack of residual light in the barn. ■

CONCLUSION

I blow hot and cold with nightvision equipment, relying on a lamp for most of my night-time forays, but when you have a reliable distributor such as Thomas Jacks, backed by a three-year guarantee from Pulsar, and have a choice of night sights to suit all pockets, owning such a device becomes very appealing. With a night sight you are invisible — there are no light beams coursing the countryside to worry the anxious public and your quarry is far less spooked. The range depends on the generation of tube use, but you can make up for any deficit by keeping downwind and stalking closer to your quarry unseen.

For the price of a high-end conventional scope, this Pulsar Sentinel Generation 2+ offers good clarity, contrast and accuracy for rabbits at 80 yards and foxes out to a maximum of 150 yards in perfect conditions.