

WALKSTOOL COMFORT 55

You can find folding tripod stools in virtually every hardware, camping and outdoor store in the world, even in supermarkets and motorway service stations. They come in various sizes and colours, but most have one thing in common, they're rubbish! I've lost count of the number of these stools I have bought (thinking they were a bargain for a tenner or so), used for a few weeks, and then they ripped to shreds. Usually it's the fabric around the stress points at the top which goes first, or else the 3 way joint buckles and you end up sitting on a heap of rather uncomfortable metal rods. But..... Here comes Walkstool!

When I first got hold of these tripod stools I thought they would go the same way as all the others before them. Ten months down the line, I'm impressed. The fabric is not even showing a hint of tearing, the 3 way joint is intact and, perhaps, most importantly, I've discovered new uses for the seat. The neat design gives you 2 sitting heights; low, without the legs extended so that you perch on the collective feet of all 3 legs in the centre, and high, with the legs fully extended into the more conventional tripod. The low setting is surprisingly comfortable and easy to balance. It's probably good for your back too, because you can't slouch or you'll fall off. And the high setting is very robust. Great for hide work, waiting behind the camera for an extended period, or just taking a breather. And what of the new uses? Well, it doubles as a very handy long lens rest for my still camera. If I don't have a tripod with me, I can perch the camera and lens on the stool at either of the two heights and get a very stable, elevated bean-bag rest. Great for photographing very mobile subjects like otters or deer. A word of warning, I once got sloppy, and didn't engage one of the legs into its locking point before sitting on the stool. The seat didn't collapse, but I did bend the housing making it difficult to retract the leg later. Entirely my fault, but worth noting if you are using one. They come in different sizes and weights, but for me, it's the 55cm Walkstool Comfort that ticks all the boxes. I love their logo too, a bum with legs!

Simon King

www.simonkingwildlife.com