

TEST FIRE

Surefire Fury P2X Torch

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The race is on. The LED race that is.

Light Emitting Diode (LED) technology is skyrocketing. These shining wee orbs of white electronic magic now appear in everything from Range Rover headlights to illuminated buttons on your humble kitchen toaster. Old lamp technology relied on white hot tungsten filaments for illumination. Compared to the electronic wizardry now found in LED's, the old system was very inefficient, about 90% of the electrical energy shoved into it was lost through heat. In terms of heat, whilst an old 100W light pumped along at 160 degrees, it's cool modern LED counterpart purrs at around 30 degrees.

So what does all this mean for hunters?

It's great news, that's what. For a start, you get;

- more run-time from your torch batteries in the bush
- more light (measured in Lumens these days) power from the batteries in your torch
- less heat, safer to carry, and almost lifelong durability

Now that introduction to LED's is over with, let's get into the guts of this review, testing the latest torch from a U.S. company called Surefire, called the Fury P2X.

Surefire is not really a household name in New Zealand but these guys make some seriously good stuff. Based in Fountain Valley, California, the company runs a huge engineering plant, predicated by CNC machines that chomp raw aluminium blocks into all manner of lighting equipment, rifle suppressors, muzzle breaks, knives and even a gaggle of pens specifically designed to break glass!

Make no mistake, these guys manufacture serious instruments for both civilian and military use. Their catalogue makes shamelessly intimidating reading, especially when you see lighting mounts specifically designed to fit onto grenade launchers, pistols and 50 calibre machine guns.

The torch tested here is part of Surefire's softest "Everyday carry" category, however this gutsy wee unit is hardly a "soft" torch in my view.

For a start, at full bore it punches out an incredible 500 lumens of light. That's staggering horsepower for a wee two battery torch. I was spotlighting hares from my deck that were 200 yards away with it...unbelievable, this is where the LED technology race is taking us and it's great!

The Fury runs on two Lithium CR123A three volt batteries that feed the Cree XM-L LED. The torch comes with a pair of their own brand Surefire batteries in the box. The CR123A is not a commonly used battery however they are readily available, and seem to be the growing choice of power plant for high performance torches these days, over the venerable AA or AAA that we're all accustomed to.

First click on the rear switch places the light on low mode, a 15 lumen peep of light which is good enough to find slippers under your bed. Click again and BAM! A scrub scorching 500 lumens rockets out of the puny thing like a 7mm Magnum projectile on steroids.

The beam is reasonably focussed but does spill out to quite a degree, there is no focussing adjustment, so what you see is what you get. On full power it's designed to last 1.5 hours whilst on its low, slipper-finding setting, it will

last a whopping 46 hours (almost two days).

I noticed a warning on this unit advising that it's not designed for attachment to a rifle; this is due to a lack of internal shock buffering mechanisms which are found on Surefire's other, more hard-core, models.

WHAT I LIKED:

- Massive industry leading 500 Lumen illumination at full power
- Faultless machining of the all alloy, hard anodised unit
- Simple, elegant bombproof construction
- Great balance and grip in your hand

WHAT COULD BE BETTER:

- Not specified as waterproof (but I doubt this unit will fail unless fully submerged for a while.)
- The machined flats on the front barrel of the torch that provide an anti-roll function (eg: won't roll about on your 4WD dashboard when taking a corner) could have been deeper.
- The rear on/off button sits proud of the back end of the torch which makes it susceptible to switching on inside your pack.
- Price places it in the upper range of the market.
- More flexibility in Warranty clause. (Warranty is invalid if fault is due to use of other than SureFire brand batteries or accessories).
- Programmability - to enable functions to be customised. You have to click twice to get to the maximum level. (My preference is to have the torch switch with one click onto full power.)

CONCLUSION:

This really is a super little torch, a tad conservative in looks, but virtually indestructible and very well built. It's reasonably expensive at \$250 but will last a long time rattling around the rusty footwells of any old Hilux.

These days every hunter should possess a LED torch, given the greater levels of efficiency and reliability they have over their older incandescent brothers. This torch from Surefire is definitely a high quality, strong yet lightweight unit with enormous market-leading grunt for a torch this size - certainly worth looking at.

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