

Folkestone & Hythe birding and moths

Site guide: Capel-le-Ferne (Cliff-top Café)

Location: From Folkestone take the B2011 towards Dover. Just after the Battle of Britain memorial take the minor road on the right (Old Dover Road). Follow this for about 1 mile, then the Café is on the right (TR 257384). Parking here (for patrons only), or in the lay-bys just beyond.



Looking west from the 'vis mig' towards the café and the Gun Site

Facilities: The Café serves breakfast, tea and coffee, snacks and ice cream, and has toilets. The nearby Lighthouse Inn serves meals and drinks.

Access/route: View from the Café or from the cliff-top either side. The bushes and trees around, and especially below, the Café are worth checking for migrants. There is disabled access to the Café, but the zigzag path down into the canopy is not suitable.

Birds: This is an excellent site for watching for migrant raptors as they often gain height over the Warren allowing excellent views. Honey Buzzard is considered to be regular, with Black and Red Kites, Marsh, Hen and Montagu's Harriers, Buzzard and Osprey also recorded. Sparrowhawk, Hobby and Peregrine are frequent. Purple Heron and White Stork have also occurred.

Visible migration begins in March, with Chaffinches, Siskins and a few Bramblings, and continues in April with hirundines, Meadow Pipits, *alba* wagtails, Goldfinches, and Linnets.

Swifts take over in May and continue to move around through the summer, as well as forming the first returning passage of the autumn.

Yellow Wagtails and Tree Pipits feature from mid-August, with hirundines in September, finches and thrushes in October, and Stock Dove and Wood Pigeon in early November.

More unusual visual passage has included Little Ringed Plover, Alpine Swift, Red-rumped Swallow, Raven, Serin, Crossbill and Hawfinch.

In spring and autumn the bushes and trees provide cover for common passage migrants, and have an enviable record of producing some of the rarest birds that have occurred in the area, including Olive-backed Pipit, Booted Warbler, Greenish Warbler and Pallas's Warbler.

Wryneck, Dartford Warbler, Red-breasted Flycatcher, and Golden Oriole have also been seen, whilst this is one of the better sites for Woodcock, Nightingale, Wood Warbler and Firecrest.

Regular: passage migrants and visible migration in season, Sparrowhawk, Peregrine, Turtle Dove, Green Woodpecker, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Jay, Bullfinch

Possible: Honey Buzzard, Marsh Harrier, Merlin, Hobby, Woodcock, Redstart, Ring Ouzel, Firecrest, Brambling, Lesser Redpoll

Rarities: Purple Heron, White Stork, Black and Red Kites, Hen and Montagu's Harriers, Goshawk, Buzzard, Osprey, Little Ringed Plover, Alpine Swift, Wryneck, Red-rumped Swallow, Olive-backed Pipit, Booted Warbler, Dartford Warbler, Greenish Warbler, Pallas's Warbler, Wood Warbler, Red-breasted Flycatcher, Golden Oriole, Serin, Crossbill, Hawfinch



Red-rumped Swallow - Cliff-top Café - May 2004 (Dale Gibson)



Black Kite - Cliff-top Café - May 1994 (Dale Gibson)