

Folkestone & Hythe birding and moths

Site guide: Folkestone Harbour

Location: Heading in to Folkestone on any of the major routes follow signs to the Harbour (TR 243360). Parking on roads around the Harbour.

Facilities: There are a number of pubs, restaurants and shops, and public toilets here.

Access/route: Check the inner harbour, then head along the northern side, under the railway, to check the outer harbour and inner pier. The adjacent sands are also worth a look. Access to the main pier is by permit only, further details from the office at the southern entrance.

Birds: Check the abundant Herring Gulls for Yellow-legged or Caspian, or in winter for Glaucous or Iceland. Mediterranean Gulls are frequent.

Redshank and Turnstone are often feeding in the harbour and roost on the inner pier. In hard weather Ringed Plover, Sanderling, Dunlin and even Knot are possible. In spring waders such as Bar-tailed Godwit sometimes rest on the sandy beach, and Sandwich and Common Terns are regular there.

Shags are regularly seen, especially after stormy weather, with up to 15 together off the pier once. Rock Pipits are frequently present, and Kingfisher occasionally. The trees and bushes on the cliff to the east have had Firecrest several times, and other migrants are likely.

Unusual species have included Storm Petrel, Mandarin, Wood Duck (of uncertain origin), Grey Phalarope and Little Auk.

Seawatching from the pier is likely to produce a similar range of species to Copt Point, but could be worth the effort for improved views.



Folkestone Harbour at low tide



above and below: first-winter Caspian Gull - Folkestone Harbour - December 2006



Regular: Shag, Redshank, Purple Sandpiper, Turnstone, Mediterranean Gull, Herring Gull, Rock Pipit

Possible: Ringed Plover, Sanderling, Dunlin, Bar-tailed Godwit, Yellow-legged Gull, Kingfisher, Firecrest

Rarities: Storm Petrel, Mandarin, Knot, Grey Phalarope, Caspian Gull, Iceland Gull, Glaucous Gull, Little Auk