

Folkestone & Hythe birding and moths

Site guide: Mill Point

Location: The site can either be accessed by heading west from the Harbour, and following the coast road along, or from the west by turning right off the A259 halfway up Sandgate Hill (between Sandgate and Folkestone).

The whole of this Lower Sandgate Road is now pay and display parking: charges apply from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. inc. Sundays, and cost 80 pence per hour.

Alternatively, from Folkestone, head south from Sandgate Road, and there is free parking on the Leas at the top of the cliff.



The pier at Mill Point

Facilities: The Mermaid Café offers food and drink and there are public toilets on site. There is an adventure playground should you have children to keep occupied!

Access/route: There are numerous paths which allow the trees and bushes to be explored. Steps at the western end and a zigzag path to the east allow a circular route to be taken. Seawatch from the small pier. There is disabled access to most of the area if the paths without steps are used.

Birds: Seawatching has produced a similar range of species to Copt Point, and the site is particularly good in spring, when it offers closer views of up-channel passage from the small pier. In autumn the lack of height can be a disadvantage, especially at high tide, when spray can also be a problem.

Red-throated Divers, Great Crested Grebes, Gannets, Kittiwakes, Guillemots and Razorbills are often numerous offshore in winter, with the occasional scarce diver or grebe. March sees an up-channel passage of Brent Geese, ducks - including Garganey, and Sandwich Terns, with Black-throated Divers, Common Scoters, waders, Great and Arctic Skuas, and other terns joining in April, and Pomarine Skuas in May. Windy weather in summer can produce Manx and Balearic Shearwaters, and in autumn Brent Geese, ducks, skuas and terns feature, with divers, grebes and auks again later in the year.

Mediterranean Gulls are often present, as anywhere, and this is probably the most reliable site for Shag. Unusual species have included Great Northern Diver, Slavonian and Black-necked Grebes, Sooty and Balearic Shearwaters, Storm Petrel, Little Egret, Bewick's Swan, Barnacle Goose, Goldeneye, Avocet, Black-tailed Godwit, Long-tailed Skua, Glaucous Gull, and Little Auk.

The trees and bushes hold common passage migrants in season, and have produced Icterine Warbler, Yellow-browed Warbler, and Common Rosefinch. Visual migration can be witnessed here with pigeons, Swifts, hirundines, pipits, wagtails, and finches in good numbers and Alpine Swift, Hoopoe, Serin, Twite and Snow Bunting have been recorded.

This is not the best site for passage raptors, but Honey Buzzard, Marsh Harrier, and Montagu's Harrier have been noted.

Regular: Red-throated Diver, Great Crested Grebe, Fulmar, Gannet, Shag, Brent Goose, Wigeon, Gadwall, Teal, Shoveler, Eider, Common Scoter, Red-breasted Merganser, Grey Plover, Sanderling, Dunlin, Bar-tailed Godwit, Whimbrel, Common Sandpiper, Turnstone, Arctic Skua, Great Skua, Mediterranean Gull, Little Gull, Sandwich, Common and Arctic Terns, Guillemot, Razorbill, Tawny Owl, Rock Pipit, common passage migrants and visual migration, and Firecrest.

Possible: Scarce divers and grebes, Manx, Balearic and Sooty Shearwaters, Little Egret, Pintail, Garganey, Velvet Scoter, Avocet, Knot, Purple Sandpiper, Greenshank, Pomarine Skua, Little Tern, Black Tern, Pied Flycatcher.

Rarities: Storm Petrel, Bewick's Swan, Barnacle Goose, Goldeneye, Honey Buzzard, Montagu's Harrier, Black-tailed Godwit, Long-tailed Skua, Glaucous Gull, Little Auk, Alpine Swift, Hoopoe, Icterine Warbler, Yellow-browed Warbler, Serin, and Common Rosefinch

Full site list:

1. Red-throated Diver
2. Black-throated Diver
3. Great Northern Diver
4. Great Crested Grebe
5. Red-necked Grebe
6. Slavonian Grebe
7. Black-necked Grebe
8. Fulmar
9. Sooty Shearwater
10. Manx Shearwater
11. Balearic Shearwater
12. Storm Petrel
13. Gannet
14. Cormorant
15. Shag
16. Little Egret
17. Grey Heron
18. Mute Swan
19. Bewick's Swan
20. Greylag Goose
21. Canada Goose
22. Barnacle Goose
23. Brent Goose
24. Shelduck
25. Wigeon
26. Gadwall
27. Teal
28. Mallard
29. Pintail
30. Garganey
31. Shoveler
32. Pochard
33. Tufted Duck
34. Eider

35. Common Scoter
36. Velvet Scoter
37. Goldeneye
38. Red-breasted Merganser
39. Honey Buzzard
40. Marsh Harrier
41. Montagu's Harrier
42. Sparrowhawk
43. Common Kestrel
44. Peregrine
45. Pheasant
46. Oystercatcher
47. Avocet
48. Ringed Plover
49. Grey Plover
50. Lapwing
51. Knot
52. Sanderling
53. Curlew Sandpiper
54. Purple Sandpiper
55. Dunlin
56. Common Snipe
57. Black-tailed Godwit
58. Bar-tailed Godwit
59. Whimbrel
60. Curlew
61. Redshank
62. Greenshank
63. Common Sandpiper
64. Turnstone
65. Pomarine Skua
66. Arctic Skua
67. Long-tailed Skua
68. Great Skua
69. Mediterranean Gull
70. Little Gull
71. Black-headed Gull
72. Common Gull
73. Lesser Black-backed Gull
74. Herring Gull
75. Glaucous Gull
76. Great Black-backed Gull
77. Kittiwake
78. Sandwich Tern
79. Common Tern
80. Arctic Tern
81. Little Tern
82. Black Tern
83. Guillemot
84. Razorbill
85. Little Auk
86. Feral Pigeon/Rock Dove
87. Stock Dove

88. Wood Pigeon
89. Collared Dove
90. Turtle Dove
91. Cuckoo
92. Tawny Owl
93. Common Swift
94. Alpine Swift
95. Hoopoe
96. Green Woodpecker
97. Great Spotted Woodpecker
98. Sky Lark
99. Sand Martin
100. Swallow
101. House Martin
102. Tree Pipit
103. Meadow Pipit
104. Rock Pipit
105. Yellow Wagtail
106. Grey Wagtail
107. Pied Wagtail
108. Wren
109. Dunnock
110. Robin
111. Nightingale
112. Black Redstart
113. Common Redstart
114. Whinchat
115. Stonechat
116. Northern Wheatear
117. Blackbird
118. Fieldfare
119. Song Thrush
120. Redwing
121. Mistle Thrush
122. Grasshopper Warbler
123. Sedge Warbler
124. Reed Warbler
125. Icterine Warbler
126. Lesser Whitethroat
127. Common Whitethroat
128. Garden Warbler
129. Blackcap
130. Yellow-browed Warbler
131. Chiffchaff
132. Willow Warbler
133. Goldcrest
134. Firecrest
135. Spotted Flycatcher
136. Pied Flycatcher
137. Long-tailed Tit
138. Coal Tit
139. Blue Tit
140. Great Tit

141. Common Treecreeper
142. Jay
143. Magpie
144. Jackdaw
145. Rook
146. Carrion Crow
147. Starling
148. House Sparrow
149. Tree Sparrow
150. Chaffinch
151. Brambling
152. Serin
153. Greenfinch
154. Goldfinch
155. Siskin
156. Linnet
157. Twite
158. Lesser Redpoll
159. Common Rosefinch
160. Bullfinch
161. Snow Bunting
162. Yellowhammer