

Folkestone & Hythe birding and moths

Site guide: Folkestone Warren

Location: The warren can be accessed by taking the zigzag path down from the Cliff-top Café (see Café guide for directions), or via Wear Bay Road at the eastern end of Folkestone (take the minor road by the Martello tower, parking at the bottom of the hill, TR 247377).

Facilities: The Cliff-top café, or the café at Little Switzerland camp site (open to non-residents).

Access/route: From the Café, follow the zigzag path down, checking the canopy on the way. At the bottom, there are paths east (which enables ascent to Abbotscliffe) and west (to Little Switzerland campsite, and up to the Gun Site). Either allows a return route to the Cafe along the cliff-top, or simply retrace your steps back. Alternatively, accessing from the car park at the bottom, follow the path east, then cross via the railway bridge and explore trees to the west. The concrete apron and foreshore are also worth checking. There is disabled access from the bottom car park, but the zigzag path down is not suitable.

Birds: The site holds a selection of regular woodland species such as Sparrowhawk, Tawny Owl, Green & Great Spotted Woodpeckers, Marsh Tit, Treecreeper, Jay and Bullfinch, and these are joined in summer by the common warblers and Turtle Dove. Nightingale is a former breeder and still occurs on passage. Flocks of tits and Goldcrests are worth checking as Firecrests are regular, and Greenish Warbler, Yellow-browed Warbler and Red-breasted Flycatcher have occurred. Other oddities have included Nightjar, Wryneck, Cetti's Warbler, and Golden Oriole. The cliffs host breeding Fulmar, and the foreshore and concrete apron have held Shag, Purple Sandpiper, Rock Pipit, and, once, Desert Wheatear.

Regular: Fulmar, Sparrowhawk, Turtle Dove, Tawny Owl, Green & Great Spotted Woodpeckers, Rock Pipit, passage migrants in season - especially warblers and crests, breeding Blackcap, Lesser Whitethroat and Chiffchaff, Marsh Tit, Treecreeper, Jay, Bullfinch

Possible: Shag, Purple Sandpiper, Nightingale, Ring Ouzel, Wood Warbler, Firecrest

Rarities: Nightjar, Wryneck, Desert Wheatear, Cetti's Warbler, Greenish Warbler, Yellow-browed Warbler, Red-breasted Flycatcher, Golden Oriole