

Parish of Minster

Minster lies south of the Manston ridge approximately 6 miles west of Ramsgate. It is surrounded by intensively farmed land growing wheat, rape and cabbage types. I have lived here since 1969 and regularly walk the fields. Crossing the Canterbury railway line at the bottom of the village brings you to Marsh Farm Lane, this hedge-lined road takes you to the sewage works then left or right tracks will lead you to the River Stour. Footpaths can take you along the river's edge in either direction, although heading towards the Richborough power station you will come to a dead end at the railway bridge. Following the river westwards can take you to Pluck's Gutter. Winter is possible the best time when most days' hen harriers can be seen, one or two short-eared owls winter and possible peregrine and Merlin hunt the fields. Large flocks of mute swans winter in the fields with a few Bewicks with them and if it is really cold large flocks of teal and wigeon appear. Water rail and Kingfisher are always about. Unusual birds turn up now and then and over the years I have seen Common crane, Pratincole, Grasshopper warbler and even a Tristram's Grackle (probably an escape!) Over the last six years I have recorded 124 species of birds within the parish.

There is a small wood at the end of Watchester lane, which runs parallel to railway westwards. Although not managed a few species turn up here, siskins redpoll other finches and warblers.

Other animals include about a dozen species of mammals, including a few water voles.

Six species of reptile's amphibians. Twenty-four species of butterflies. Twelve species of dragonflies/damselflies. I have noted hawk moths species these include, poplar, eyed, large elephant, lime and convolvulus, hummingbird hawk and privet as migrants. This is of course only from my own records more species probably do occur here. Anyone visiting Minster and wants to know more can e-mail mw through Planetthanet Contact Page. ([Don Wilks](#))

