

Ramsgate Cemetery

Why would anyone want to go to a cemetery, other than the obvious? Let me explain. When I started birding, back in the winter of 1992, it was the first place I started to watch birds, other than from my bedroom window into the back garden! As weird as it may seem, the cemetery is a really nice, peaceful place to go birding. In those early years there was quite a problem with vandals. I was even accused of it myself, by an irate relative. I didn't think I looked the part, armed with no more than a pair of bins and a notebook! Thankfully, now days, the problem is almost non-existent and a walk round the cemetery is a perfect way to get away from the hustle of Thanet and that "curse of the birders" bloody dog walkers! So if a quiet hour is what you seek, then a stroll around Ramsgate Cemetery is highly recommended and who knows what you might see?

The cemetery has two distinct sides, what I call the old and the new. Entering via the main gate, there is a small Chapel 200m directly in front of you with two rows of sycamores lining the approach road. Walk around the Chapel and you will find two rows of mature Scot's Pine where, in 1996, what I think was Kent's first pair of breeding Serin raised three young. This is the area you need to be if a raptor goes over! To the left and right are sections of mixed Holm Oak, Spanish Oak, Beech and Holly. Sycamores form a wide band along the northern boundary, running west to east following the railway line, stopping abruptly when they reach the central wall. Between the Scot's Pine and these Sycamores is "The Square". Containing several large Oaks, it is a very good spot for Purple Hairstreak butterflies in July and August.

The new (Eastern) side of the cemetery is much more open and is a good place to watch over flying raptors, without the view being obstructed by large trees. This is a very good spot for migrant chats and an early morning visit during April/May regularly turns up Ring Ouzel. Well, I think that I've probably bored you long enough. Below is a full list of birds that I have, or know have, been recorded in Ramsgate Cemetery over the years.

If you know of any species that does not appear on this list, please forward it to www.planetthanet.org for inclusion.

Many thanks and good birding – Craig Sammels

Ramsgate Cemetery Bird List

Fulmar
Cormorant
Little Egret
Grey Heron
Purple Heron
Brent Goose
Shelduck

Mallard
Hen Harrier
Sparrowhawk
Common Buzzard
Kestrel
Merlin
Hobby
Peregrine
Pheasant
Oystercatcher
Ringed Plover
Grey Plover
Lapwing
Dunlin
Common Snipe
Woodcock
Black-tailed Godwit
Bar-tailed Godwit
Whimbrel
Curlew
Spotted Redshank
Redshank
Greenshank
Green Sandpiper
Common Sandpiper
Black-headed Gull
Common Gull
Lesser Black-backed Gull
Herring Gull
Great Black-backed Gull
Sandwich Tern
Common Tern
Stock Dove
Wood Pigeon
Collared Dove
Turtle Dove
Rose-ringed Parakeet
Cuckoo
Little Owl
Common Swift
Wryneck
Green Woodpecker
Great Spotted Woodpecker
Lesser-Spotted Woodpecker
Skylark
Sand Martin

Swallow
House Martin
Tree Pipit
Meadow Pipit
Rock Pipit
Yellow Wagtail
Grey Wagtail
Pied Wagtail (White Wagtail)
Waxwing
Wren
Dunnock
Robin
Alpine Accentor – 2nd Kent record 7th May 1975
Nightingale
Black Redstart
Common Redstart
Whinchat
Wheatear
Ring Ouzel
Blackbird
Fieldfare
Song Thrush
Redwing
Mistle Thrush
Reed Warbler
Icterine Warbler
Western Olivaceous Warbler
Lesser Whitethroat
Common Whitethroat
Garden Warbler
Blackcap
Pallas's Warbler
Yellow-browed Warbler
Wood Warbler
Chiffchaff
Willow Warbler
Goldcrest
Firecrest
Spotted Flycatcher
Red-breasted Flycatcher
Pied Flycatcher
Long-tailed Tit
Coal Tit
Blue Tit
Great Tit
Treecreeper

Red-backed Shrike

Jay

Magpie

Jackdaw

Rook

Carrion Crow

Starling

House Sparrow

Tree Sparrow

Chaffinch

Brambling

Serin

Greenfinch

Goldfinch

Siskin

Linnet

Redpoll (Lesser & Meally)

Common Crossbill

Bullfinch

Hawfinch

Yellowhammer

Reed Bunting

Corn Bunting