

# 2017



## Folkestone and Hythe Bird Report



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## Introduction

Welcome to the sixth Folkestone and Hythe Bird Report which covers the 195 species recorded in 2017, the same total as the previous year. Whilst there were no additions to the area list there were many highlights to report, including the second record of Short-toed Treecreeper, the third Greenish Warbler, the fifth Water Pipit, the ninth Egyptian Goose and the ninth and tenth Great White Egrets. Sightings of Long-tailed Duck, Spoonbill, Black Kite, Goshawk (2), Rough-legged Buzzard, Crane, Caspian Gull, Iceland Gull, Bee-eater (2 records/flocks), Hoopoe and Hawfinch added further excitement.

The early winter period was notable for some exceptional counts of Cormorant (far exceeding previous records), a record winter count of Oystercatcher and an impressive Starling murmuration involving the second ever largest count, whilst the spring produced the second largest ever movement of Chaffinches and a record day total for Red Kites. Seawatching provided a number of highlights, including a record-equalling count of Fulmar, the second highest spring passage of Pintail, record day counts and spring totals of Grey Plover and Knot, the second largest count of Arctic Terns and a good passage of Pomarine Skuas (including a record count for April).

There were earliest ever arrival dates of Sandwich Tern and Sedge Warbler, which was followed by a record count of Sedge Warbler territories in May, whilst the arrival date for Reed Warbler equalled the earliest ever and the count of their territories also equalled the previous highest total. There were also notably early arrivals of Common Sandpiper, Sand Martin, House Martin and Lesser Whitethroat, with all three common hirundines being seen in March for only the second time. Spring also saw the latest ever record of Snipe and the departures date for Purple Sandpiper and Fieldfare were notably late too.

It is pleasing to be able to report on the continuing breeding success of Raven, whilst Lesser Black-backed Gull and Black Redstart also raised young. Hobbies probably bred again and a Nightingale appeared to be holding territory at Hythe Ranges for the second consecutive year. There were possible breeding records of Wheatear from three sites, but with no further evidence obtained, and there were two unusual summer records of Water Rail.

The summer saw a new record count of Little Egret and the first ever juvenile Yellow-legged Gull (in a record year for this species) in July and the second largest ever count of Mistle Thrushes (in August). There were record counts of Blackcap and Bearded Tit in autumn, with a notably early Red-throated Diver and rather late departures of Cuckoo and Sandwich Tern. The year ended with a record-equalling movement of Red-throated Divers and a new highest winter count of Great Skuas in December. There was a welcome return for Turtle Dove but some rather surprising omissions from the year list, with no records of Pochard, Manx Shearwater, Osprey, Crossbill or Snow Bunting.

The Chinese Pond Heron record from 2014 was formally published in the British Bird's annual rare bird report in October 2017 (Holt *et al*, 2017) and an account of the finding was published in their June 2017 issue (Roberts & Dawson, 2017), together with details of the BOURC's rationale for acceptance (McInerny & Stoddart, 2017). Two Migration Day Events were held again, on the 17<sup>th</sup> September and 15<sup>th</sup> October, coordinated by Paul Holt and the volunteers at Samphire Hoe, and proved extremely popular and successful with a Greenish Warbler being the highlight of the first event and a Short-toed Treecreeper the highlight of the second.

If there are any local records which have not been included within this report I would be very thankful to receive them. The boundaries of the local area can be found on page 98 and my contact details are given below.

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19<sup>th</sup> January 2018

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Front cover: Short-toed Treecreeper at Samphire Hoe in October 2017 (Martin Collins)

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## List of contributors

I have endeavoured to include all observers known to have contributed records or photographs for the year and their input has been very much appreciated. It is of course possible that there have been accidental omissions from the list below. It is hoped that should this be the case my apologies will be accepted for the oversight.

B Adams	M D Kennett	B L J Woolhouse
C Apps		D Wrathall
P Apps	D Lawie	
S Arthur	S Lea	
	O Leyshon	
D E Balmer		
J Barnard	A Mackay	
S Beard	A Maguire	
R Blackman	D Mansfield	
S Boreham	M Marshall	
D Brown	S McMinn	
N Burt	B Minter	
G J A Burton		
	R K Norman	
M Casemore	C Nuttman	
P Coleman		
L Collins	W Peacock	
M Collins	K C Privett	
M Cox		
S Cutt	D Richards	
	I A Roberts	
K Daniells	K E Roberts	
S Dixon		
S Dove	D Sephton	
	P J Sharp	
G Eddis	D E Smith	
N Ewbank	P R Smith	
	T Swandale	
D Featherbe		
B Findlay	M Taylor	
N C Frampton	R Thorogood	
	J Tilby	
A Gay	J Tomlinson	
D A Gibson	S Tomlinson	
C Gillard	J Tomsett	
J Gomm	P Trodd	
D Gower	G Tutton	
T Greaves		
B Green	M Vandoen	
A J Greenland	J Varley	
	M Varley	
K Harding		
B Harper	M Walford	
L Holman	S Warry	
P Holt	N Webster	
P Howe	D Weller	
	M Whybrow	
N Jarman	J Wood	

## Review of the year

### January

After a rather wet first day the next ten were mostly dry and cool, with daytime temperatures in single figures and some overnight frosts. The 12<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> were particularly cold and windy, with a couple of bands of rain turning to wintry showers, with a reasonable covering of snow on the higher ground. This was followed by a spell of ten days or so of dry weather as high pressure became established and clear skies led to some severe overnight frosts, leading to the canal and parts of Nickolls Quarry freezing over, and observations were hampered on a couple of days by freezing fog. The end of the month was milder, with more cloud and some significant rainfall on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

Up to 58 Mute Swans remained at Botolph's Bridge from 2016 into early January, with at least 45 still present at the month's end and many of these continued to use Nickolls Quarry as an overnight roost. A Greylag Goose was seen at Samphire Hoe on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, with seven at Nickolls Quarry the next day and one at Botolph's Bridge towards the end of the month. Around 220 Brent Geese were noted moving east during January, with a peak of 150 passing Samphire Hoe on the 6<sup>th</sup>. A flock of 20 Shelduck flew over Nickolls Quarry on the 5<sup>th</sup>, Mandarin Ducks were present at Chesterfield Wood (6) and Folks' Wood (8) and a female Wigeon was at Nickolls Quarry on the 5<sup>th</sup>, with eight on the sea off the Willop Outfall on the 25<sup>th</sup>.



Iceland Gull at Nickolls Quarry (Ian Roberts)

Up to three Gadwall were seen at Nickolls Quarry on three dates and 13 were wintering on the lake at Folkestone Racecourse, whilst Teal were wintering at the Willop Basin (up to 43) and Chesterfield Wood (130), with small numbers in the Botolph's Bridge/Nickolls Quarry area and seven on the sea off the Hythe Redoubt on the 8<sup>th</sup>. Three Shoveler were seen at Nickolls Quarry on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, with a female there on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. A Tufted Duck arrived at Nickolls Quarry on the 14<sup>th</sup>, with 13 there on the 18<sup>th</sup> and up to two until the 24<sup>th</sup>, whilst one was at the Willop Basin on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

A flock of ten **Scaup** were reported on the sea off the Hythe Redoubt on the 10<sup>th</sup> and there was a peak of 75 Common Scoter there on the 8<sup>th</sup>. A 'red-head' Goosander remained at Botolph's Bridge from 2016 until at least the 2<sup>nd</sup>, whilst three (one drake) flew south-west there on the 1<sup>st</sup> and two drakes flew over on the 21<sup>st</sup>. Six Grey Partridges near the Willop Sewage Works from the 1<sup>st</sup> to at least the 8<sup>th</sup> were the first record on the local section of the Romney Marsh since 2005.

Red-throated Diver movements included 70 flying west at the Willop Outfall on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 302 east past Mill Point on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Fulmars had returned to the cliffs in December and at least six were present at Samphire Hoe throughout, whilst four flew east past Mill Point on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

Following a record count of 225 in late December 2016, Cormorants were noted in exceptional numbers, presumably originating from the roost at Dungeness (where record numbers were also recorded) and heading out into the English Channel to feed. At least 100 were seen off Sandgate on the 4<sup>th</sup>, 191 flew east past Samphire Hoe on the 9<sup>th</sup>, 305 flew east past Mill Point on the 10<sup>th</sup>, 395 flew east there on the 17<sup>th</sup>, an incredible 1,230 flew east there on the 26<sup>th</sup> and 910 (including a flock of 610) flew east past Samphire Hoe on the 30<sup>th</sup>. Smaller numbers were seen heading back west towards the roosting site on some afternoons, including 250 past Mill Point on the 29<sup>th</sup>. Up to two Shags were seen regularly in the Mill Point/Sandgate area throughout, whilst one was seen off Hythe on the 13<sup>th</sup> and there were five at Samphire Hoe on the 24<sup>th</sup>, with four there on the 30<sup>th</sup>.



Up to five Little Egrets were wintering in the Botolph's Bridge/Nickolls Quarry area, with up to two in the Saltwood Castle/Mill Stream area and singles at Copt Point, Samphire Hoe and West Hythe. Little Grebes were seen at the Willop Basin, Princes Parade (2) and Botolph's Bridge (4) and Great Crested Grebe counts included 50 off Fisherman's Beach (Hythe) on the 30<sup>th</sup>, 65 off Hythe on the 7<sup>th</sup>, 190 off the Willop Outfall on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 238 off the Hythe Redoubt on the 8<sup>th</sup>.

Single Marsh Harriers were seen at Nickolls Quarry on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Donkey Street on the 25<sup>th</sup> and the Willop Basin on the 28<sup>th</sup> and a 'ring-tail' **Hen Harrier** flew over the A20 near Capel-le-Ferne on the 29<sup>th</sup>. A Merlin and a Peregrine were at the Willop Basin on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, whilst Peregrines were also noted at Botolph's Bridge, Folkestone and along the cliffs between Capel-le-Ferne and Samphire Hoe. Water Rails were wintering at West Hythe dam, Nickolls Quarry (3+) and Princes Parade (4), whilst a single Coot remained at the latter site and numbers at Nickolls Quarry increased to 22 on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, whilst 20 Moorhens were counted at West Hythe on the 2<sup>nd</sup>.



Barn Owl at Nickolls Quarry (Brian Harper)

Oystercatchers were seen regularly between the Hythe Redoubt and the Willop Outfall, with a good count of 36 there on the 30<sup>th</sup>, whilst the Ringed Plover roost at Folkestone Beach peaked at 24 on the 10<sup>th</sup> and a single Grey Plover was at the Willop Outfall on the 15<sup>th</sup>. Wintering Golden Plovers were present in the highest numbers since 2010, with a flock at Tumble Tye Farm (Capel-le-Ferne) peaking at 64 on the 21<sup>st</sup> and a flock in the Postling Wents area peaking at 66 on the 18<sup>th</sup>, and Lapwing flocks were counted at Hillhurst Farm (100), Tumble Tye Farm (110), Willop Basin (119), Botolph's Bridge (130) and Postling Wents (169).

Sanderling were seen regularly at the Willop Outfall, with a peak of five mid-month, and singles were at the Hythe Redoubt and Folkestone Harbour, whilst Purple Sandpipers were present at Battery Point (Seabrook) (2), the Hythe Redoubt (3) and Hythe seafront (4). Good numbers of Snipe were recorded, with flocks of 50 in a stubble field near Folks' Wood and at the Willop Basin, and others at Saltwood Castle, Abbotscliffe (6) and near the Hythe Redoubt (9), but the only Jack Snipe seen were at Nickolls Quarry on the 8<sup>th</sup> and at the Willop Basin on the 16<sup>th</sup>. Woodcock were widely noted with singles at Perry Wood, Cowtye Wood, Saltwood Castle, Oak Banks, near Summerhouse Hill and Bargrove Wood, with at least two at Folks' Wood.

A single Curlew was seen on two dates at the Willop Basin and at least one Green Sandpiper was wintering in the Botolph's Bridge/Nickolls Quarry area, whilst Redshank were noted at the Willop Outfall, Hythe seafront, Willop Basin (2), Nickolls Quarry (2) and Folkestone Harbour (6). A Great Skua was seen off Mill Point on the 1<sup>st</sup> and Kittiwake counts included 20 at Samphire Hoe, 30 at Hythe and 31 off Folkestone Pier, whilst an immature **Iceland Gull** was seen at Nickolls Quarry on the 6<sup>th</sup>. Numbers of auks were low, with a peak of just 37 Guillemots/Razorbills flying east past Mill Point on the 27<sup>th</sup> and single Razorbills were identified at the Hythe Redoubt, Sandgate, Mill Point and Samphire Hoe, with six off Folkestone Pier on the 7<sup>th</sup>.

A Barn Owl remained at Nickolls Quarry from December and was seen on several dates during the month, whilst another was reported at Sandling mid-month, and Little Owls were seen near the Willop Sewage Works and at Church Hougham, with Tawny Owls noted at Lypne Park Wood, Lypne, Palmarsh and Paraker Wood. Kingfishers were recorded at the Willop Outfall, Botolph's Bridge, Palmarsh, Princes Parade and Folkestone Harbour.

A pair of Ravens were displaying at last year's breeding site at Samphire Hoe, with others at Abbotscliffe and Church Hougham (2). The only wintering Firecrests were two at West Hythe, whilst Marsh Tits were noted at Bargrove Wood, Brockhill Country Park (2) and Paraker Wood, and four **Bearded Tits** remained at Nickolls Quarry from December. Sky Lark counts included 50 at Abbotscliffe. Cetti's Warblers were recorded from the Willop Sewage Works, Nickolls Quarry (2) and Princes Parade (2) but the only Chiffchaffs noted were singles at the Willop Sewage Works, Botolph's Bridge and Mill Point, whilst Blackcaps were wintering at Folkestone (2) and Hythe (3).

There was an arrival of Waxwings from the 8<sup>th</sup>, when 20 were reported at Hythe, but none lingered long. Three were at Hythe again on the 9<sup>th</sup>, with seven there on the 13<sup>th</sup>, six at Folkestone Leas on the 15<sup>th</sup> and at least 23 at Nickolls Quarry on 16<sup>th</sup>. A roost of Starlings had begun to accumulate in Folkestone during December and numbers swelled to around 6,000 during January. The birds were seen to engage in some spectacular pre-roost murmurations before settling into two Holm Oaks in Pleydell Gardens.



Waxwing at Hythe (Nigel Webster)

Winter thrush numbers were generally low apart from a flock of around 100 Fieldfares and 300 Redwings at Blackhouse Shaw, smaller counts elsewhere included 12 Fieldfares at the Willop Basin, 15 at Botolph's Bridge and 26 at Tumble Tye Farm (Capel-le-Ferne), and 40 Redwings at Saltwood. Stonechats were noted at Abbotscliffe, Willop Sewage Works (2), Nickolls Quarry (2) and Samphire Hoe (3). Willop Sewage Works held up to 65 Pied Wagtails with 30 Meadow Pipits at the Willop Basin, whilst Rock Pipits were logged at the Willop Outfall, Hythe Redoubt, Battery Point, Samphire Hoe and Folkestone Harbour/Pier (2).

The only Siskins noted were two near Saltwood Castle on the 31<sup>st</sup>, whilst Linnets were wintering at the Willop Basin (6) and near Pedlinge (16), with Yellowhammer flocks at West Hythe (8), Willop Sewage Works (15), Botolph's Bridge (16) and near Pedlinge (25).

## February

Mild weather continued from January until the 4<sup>th</sup> before easterly winds brought cooler, cloudy but mostly dry weather for the following week, culminating in a few wintry showers on the 11<sup>th</sup>. From the 13<sup>th</sup> it was generally mild in a southerly airflow, and temperatures exceeded 15°C on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Storm Doris brought some blustery conditions on the 23<sup>rd</sup> but there was no significant rainfall until the arrival of Storm Ewan on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

Up to 46 Mute Swans remained at Botolph's Bridge from January, whilst seven Canada Geese arrived at the breeding site of Nickolls Quarry towards the end of the first week of the month. Around 70 Brent Geese were logged moving east during February with peaks of 35 past Hythe Ranges/Sandgate on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 25 past the Willop Outfall on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. A flock of seven **Egyptian Geese** were seen at the Willop Basin on the morning of the 21<sup>st</sup>.

Small numbers of Shelduck were noted at coastal sites with a peak of eight at the Willop Outfall on the 11<sup>th</sup> and at least nine Mandarin Ducks remained at Chesterfield Wood.

The lake at Folkestone Racecourse held 2 Teal, 3 Tufted Ducks and 18 Gadwall, whilst there were also Teal at the Willop Basin (10), on flooded ground near Stutfall Castle (12) and at Chesterfield Wood (180), whilst three were seen on the sea off Hythe on the 18<sup>th</sup>. Two Tufted Ducks remained at Nickolls Quarry and a female Red-breasted Merganser was seen there on the 10<sup>th</sup>. Two Grey Partridges remained near the Willop Sewage Works. Red-throated Diver movements included 64 east past Samphire Hoe on the 6<sup>th</sup>, 100 west past Hythe on the 18<sup>th</sup> (when 140 were also counted on the sea between Sandgate and the Willop Outfall) and 90 west past the Willop Outfall on the 24<sup>th</sup>.



Red-breasted Merganser at Nickolls Quarry (Brian Harper)

Up to nine Fulmars were at nesting sites at Samphire Hoe throughout, whilst there were smaller numbers noted passing coastal sites, including seven off Mill Point on the 25<sup>th</sup> and six there on the 27<sup>th</sup>, and counts of Gannets included 50 off Folkestone Pier on the 20<sup>th</sup>.

Following the record counts of Cormorants in January even more spectacular numbers were witnessed in February, no doubt originating from the roost at Dungeness (which peaked at an incredible total of 1,860 on the evening of the 2<sup>nd</sup>). The highest count locally of 1,471 heading east past Mill Point on the morning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> represented a significant proportion of this roost, whilst a total of around 1,290 east past Samphire Hoe on the morning of the 6<sup>th</sup> included a flock of over 800. There were also some large counts as birds headed back west towards the roost site, including 750 over Folkestone on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 1,000 past Samphire Hoe on the 7<sup>th</sup>. Single Shags were seen off Sandgate on two dates and Samphire Hoe on three dates, whilst one flew west past Folkestone Pier on the 20<sup>th</sup>.

Great Crested Grebe counts included 60 off Hythe on the 11<sup>th</sup>, at least 100 off the Willop Outfall on the 17<sup>th</sup> and a total of 169 between there and Folkestone Harbour the next day. A Little Grebe was at Samphire Hoe from the 5<sup>th</sup> and a Marsh Harrier flew in off the sea at Seabrook on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Water Rails remained at Nickolls Quarry and Princes Parade (5).

An Avocet was seen off the Hythe Redoubt on the 18<sup>th</sup>, whilst Lapwings flocks were present at Tumble Tye Farm (55), Botolph's Bridge (172) and the Willop Basin (200). At least three Purple Sandpipers remained at Hythe. Up to 17 Snipe were seen at the Willop Basin, whilst 62 were flushed from a stubble field near Folks' Wood and Curlews increased to a peak of seven at the Willop Basin on the 21<sup>st</sup>. Six Redshank remained at Folkestone Harbour and a peak of 11 were noted at the Willop Basin on the 8<sup>th</sup>.

Kittiwake counts included 30 flying west past Mill Point on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 38 on the sea off Samphire Hoe on the 8<sup>th</sup>, whilst Lesser Black-backed Gull numbers increased from around mid-month. An exceptionally early Sandwich Tern was seen off Hythe on the 18<sup>th</sup>. Auk numbers remained low with peak counts of 16 Razorbills off Hythe on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 25 Guillemots off Folkestone Pier on the 20<sup>th</sup>.

A **Ring-necked Parakeet** was seen in the Willop Basin/Sewage Works area on the 6<sup>th</sup>. The pair of Ravens remained at last year's nest site at Samphire Hoe and others were noted near Folks' Wood, Botolph's Bridge (2) and Lympe Park Wood (2).

A Firecrest was found in Enbrook Park on the 19<sup>th</sup> and a pair of Marsh Tits were noted at Casebourne Wood on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Cetti's Warblers were recorded from Nickolls Quarry, Princes Parade and the Willop Sewage Works. Up to four Chiffchaffs at the Willop Sewage Works included one showing characteristics of the form *tristis*, whilst one at Princes Parade on the 24<sup>th</sup> and two at Enbrook Park on the 28<sup>th</sup> were evidently new arrivals, as they were the first of the year at these sites. Wintering Blackcaps remained at Hythe (at least two) and Folkestone (3).



The Starling roost at Pleydell Gardens, Folkestone continued to hold an estimated 5,000 birds in the early part of the month. Winter thrush counts included 70 Fieldfares at Botolph's Bridge and near Stanford, and 140 Fieldfares and 400 Redwings at Blackhouse Shaw. A small arrival of Black Redstarts was evident during the first week, with one at Samphire Hoe on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and singles at Folkestone Harbour and the Willop Sewage Works on the 6<sup>th</sup>. Stonechats were noted at the Willop Sewage Works, Folkestone Racecourse (2) and Samphire Hoe (7), whilst the Willop Sewage Works also held up to 70 Pied Wagtails. A small flock of Siskins were heard in Casebourne Wood on the 17<sup>th</sup>, whilst a group of eight **Twite** were reported near the Shearway Business Park (Cheriton) on the 6<sup>th</sup> and between 20 and 30 were reported at Broadmead Village on the 9<sup>th</sup>.



*tristis* Chiffchaff at Willop Sewage Works (Ian Roberts)

Yellowhammer counts included 14 at the Willop Sewage Works and 20 near Folks' Wood and near Stanford.

## March

March began mild and changeable with mainly south-westerly winds. A Merlin flew west at the Willop Outfall on the 1<sup>st</sup>, where 4 Curlew, 7 Sanderling and 19 Oystercatchers were also noted, whilst two Firecrests were at Mill Point, a Little Egret, 3 Tufted Ducks and 10 Great Crested Grebes were at Nickolls Quarry, a Green Sandpiper and 3 Little Grebes were at Botolph's Bridge and up to four Purple Sandpipers remained at Hythe. A Red Kite was reported flying over Samphire Hoe the next day, whilst the first nocturnal movement of Redwings was noted that evening. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> a Great Skua, a Sandwich Tern, 14 Pintail and 85 Brent Geese flew east past Mill Point and two Chiffchaffs were seen at Enbrook Park.

A **Wood Lark** flew in off the sea at Samphire Hoe on the 4<sup>th</sup>, when a Chiffchaff was seen at Seabrook and 130 Brent Geese flew east past Mill Point. On the 6<sup>th</sup> a Red Kite flew south-west over Samphire Hoe, with presumably the same bird later passing south-west over Hythe, whilst 5 Goldcrests were at Abbotscliffe, where 2 Reed Buntings, 5 Greylag Geese, 20 Goldfinches, 29 Siskins and 54 Chaffinches flew over. Another Red Kite flew west over Seabrook on the 9<sup>th</sup>, when a Chiffchaff, a Blackcap and 4 Water Rails were at Princes Parade and 2 Buzzards arrived in off the sea there. A Greylag Goose flew east at Nickolls Quarry, where two Chiffchaffs were present, and 181 Mediterranean Gulls and 296 Common Gulls were counted at Saltwood Castle. A Green Sandpiper and a Little Egret were at Nickolls Quarry on the 10<sup>th</sup>, with a further Little Egret at Abbotscliffe.

A Red Kite and a Chiffchaff were at West Hythe on the 11<sup>th</sup>, when a Firecrest was seen at Mill Point, a Little Egret at Copt Point and 38 Red-throated Divers and 340 Brent Geese flew east Samphire Hoe. The following day produced a Water Rail, 2 Brambling, 2 Shoveler and 2 Chiffchaffs at Nickolls Quarry, 6 Velvet Scoter, 55 Common Scoter and 98 Great Crested Grebes on the sea off the Willop Outfall, a Wigeon, 2 Lapwing, 2 Curlew and 8 Teal at the Willop Basin, two Chiffchaffs at Enbrook Park and a singing Blackcap and a Chiffchaff in gardens at Folkestone. Large numbers of Redwings were heard migrating after dark.

A cool north-westerly breeze on the 13<sup>th</sup> produced a Short-eared Owl flying in off the sea at Seabrook, a Grey Wagtail, 2 *alba* wagtails, 62 Siskins, 430 Starlings and 4,655 Chaffinches flying east at Abbotscliffe and a White Wagtail at Beachborough Lakes. A **Goshawk** was reported flying west over Paraker Wood the next day, when two Chiffchaffs were singing in Asholt Wood and two White Wagtails were at Beachborough Lakes. A Firecrest was seen at Shorncliffe Camp on the 15<sup>th</sup>, when 7 Siskins and 320 Chaffinches flew east at Abbotscliffe and 2 Reed Buntings and 3 *alba* wagtails flew over Samphire Hoe.

A Red Kite flew south-west over Lympe on the 16<sup>th</sup>. Further Red Kites flew over Abbotscliffe and Hythe (2) the following day, making a total of eight for the month, whilst a Black Redstart and 3 Chiffchaffs were at the former site, where 14 Siskins flew east. Three Chiffchaffs were seen at Folkestone Downs, with a Water Rail and 8 Chiffchaffs at Nickolls Quarry and 3 Water Rails, 4 Blackcaps and 15 Chiffchaffs at Princes Parade. The 18<sup>th</sup> produced the first Wheatear at Samphire Hoe, where 800 Brent Geese flew east, a Peregrine flew in off the sea at the Hythe Redoubt, 24 Snipe were flushed from a stubble field near Folks' Wood and 14 Sanderling and 45 Turnstone were counted at the Willop Outfall. A Marsh Harrier flew south-west over Lympe the next day.



Red Kite at Samphire Hoe (Paul Holt)

On the 20<sup>th</sup> a Firecrest was seen at Samphire Hoe and 20 Fulmars flew west past Mill Point, where 71 Meadow Pipits flew in off the sea and 275 Brent Geese flew east. A Black Redstart was at Samphire Hoe on the 21<sup>st</sup>, when a Green Sandpiper was at Botolph's Bridge, two Sandwich Terns were seen off Princes Parade and a Great Crested Grebe, a Tufted Duck and 2 Gadwall were on the lake at Folkestone Racecourse.

A shift to easterly winds on the 22<sup>nd</sup> induced some movement at sea, with an adult Little Gull, a Great Skua, a Black-throated Diver, 27 Pintail, 48 Sandwich Terns and 500 Brent Geese flying past Mill Point and 90 Cormorants flying east past Hythe, whilst two Firecrests were seen at Samphire Hoe. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> two Bar-tailed Godwits, 2 Pintail, 3 Dunlin, 6 Shoveler, 24 Fulmars, 27 Red-throated Divers, 30 Common Scoter and 138 Sandwich Terns flew east past Mill Point/Hythe, a Shag was seen off Samphire Hoe and a Firecrest was at Nickolls Quarry. A Great Skua, 2 Bar-tailed Godwits, 3 Shelduck, 4 **Black-tailed Godwits**, 5 Knot, 5 Pintail, 6 Shoveler, 12 Dunlin, 25 Kittiwakes, 31 Common Scoter, 73 Gannets, 86 Common Gulls, 111 Fulmar and 142 Sandwich Terns flew east past Mill Point on the 24<sup>th</sup>, with a Shag offshore there and a Black Redstart seen in a garden in Hythe.

A Greenshank flew west over Princes Parade on the 25<sup>th</sup>, when 3 Red-breasted Mergansers, 6 Sandwich Terns, 16 Siskins, 25 Fulmars and 50 Common Gulls flew east at Mill Point and single Firecrests were noted there and at Shorncliffe Camp. The first House Martin was at Nickolls Quarry the following day, when a Bar-tailed Godwit and 6 Siskins flew east at Mill Point, Firecrests were seen at Abbotscliffe, Folkestone Warren and Hythe, and Chiffchaffs and Blackcaps continued to arrive. On the 27<sup>th</sup> a Firecrest and a Black Redstart were at Abbotscliffe, where a Brambling, 12 Goldfinch, 18 Meadow Pipits, 45 Siskins and 588 Chaffinches flew east and 42 Brent Geese flew east past Samphire Hoe, where a Shag was present offshore.

An Eider and 3 White Wagtails were seen at Samphire Hoe on the 28<sup>th</sup>, when a Mandarin flew along the canal at Princes Parade and three Canada Geese were present offshore. The first three Sand Martins flew through Nickolls Quarry on the 29<sup>th</sup>, when an Eider, 9 Pintail and 30 Red-throated Divers flew east past Mill Point. The next day saw the first Swallow and Willow Warbler at Nickolls Quarry, where a pair of Shoveler were also seen, whilst a Wheatear was seen on the beach at Hythe. The month ended with a Marsh Harrier, a Water Rail, 4 Swallows and 9 Sand Martins at Nickolls Quarry and two Swallows at Lympe.

A pair of Ravens were nesting again at Samphire Hoe, with possibly another pair at Capel-le-Ferne. The pair of Oystercatchers had returned to Nickolls Quarry in late March, with a pair of Canada Geese also looking likely to breed there.

## April

April was generally settled and very dry, with no significant rainfall. The first half of the month was dominated by a southerly airflow and it was rather mild, with the temperature exceeding 20°C on 9<sup>th</sup>.

Summer migrants continued to arrive, including the earliest ever Sedge Warblers at Nickolls Quarry (two) and Princes Parade (two) on the 1<sup>st</sup>, a Wheatear at Hythe Ranges and single Willow Warblers at Abbotscliffe and Princes Parade on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and a Reed Warbler at Nickolls Quarry on the 3<sup>rd</sup> (which equalled the earliest arrival date), when a Willow Warbler and 2 Redwings were also noted there, whilst Sedge Warblers increased to three singing males.

A male Marsh Harrier and a female Merlin were seen at Botolph's Bridge on the 1<sup>st</sup>, with presumably the same Merlin at Donkey Street on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Two Purple Sandpipers were present at Hythe Redoubt on the 1<sup>st</sup>, with up to four remaining at Hythe/Seabrook all month.



Common Redstart at Samphire Hoe (Paul Holt)

A Red Kite flew east at Seabrook on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, when two were noted over Folkestone, a Barn Owl was seen at Nickolls Quarry, four Siskins, 15 Goldfinches, 58 Linnets and 113 Chaffinches flew in/east at Abbotscliffe and 60 Sandwich Terns were noted off Hythe Ranges. Four Swallows flew over Lympe Church on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. A Red Kite flew west at Samphire Hoe on the 4<sup>th</sup>, when a Wheatear, a Black Redstart and 4 Chiffchaffs was also seen there, the first two Yellow Wagtails were at Donkey Street, a Willow Warbler, 7 Chiffchaffs and 40+ hirundines (of 3 species) were at Nickolls Quarry and a Swallow flew over Folkestone Downs. Another Red Kite flew over Hythe the next day, when a Firecrest was at Abbotscliffe, where 12 Linnets and 46 Chaffinches flew east and another Swallow flew over Folkestone Downs.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> a Marsh Harrier, 2 Swallows and 4 Sand Martins flew in off the sea at Abbotscliffe, whilst 10 Linnets, 15 Goldfinches and 35 Chaffinches flew east and a Willow Warbler was present. A male Black Redstart was singing at Hythe seafront (where it remained until at least the 8<sup>th</sup>), whilst three Greylag Geese flew east at Seabrook. The following day further Red Kites were seen over Saltwood and Abbotscliffe, where two Siskins flew east, and four Jays flew in off the sea at Hythe.

The 8<sup>th</sup> saw the first signs of offshore passage in April, with a Pintail, the first 3 Common Terns, 5 Shoveler, 15 Bar-tailed Godwits and 94 Sandwich Terns heading up-channel past Mill Point/ Samphire Hoe. The first Whitethroat was at Copt Point, a Wheatear was at Princes Parade and small numbers of Swallows continued to arrive. A Dunlin, 2 Sanderling, 2 Shoveler, 16 Brent Geese and 117 Sandwich Terns flew east past Mill Point the next day, when a Whitethroat and two Siskins were at Samphire Hoe.

Two Ring Ouzels, the first Lesser Whitethroat, a Willow Warbler, 2 Sand Martins and 4 Wheatears were at Abbotscliffe on the 10<sup>th</sup>, with a Ring Ouzel, 3 Wheatears and 3 Willow Warblers at Samphire Hoe and a Whitethroat, a Redwing, 2 Willow Warblers, 2 House Martins, 3 Sand Martins and 4 Sedge Warblers at Nickolls Quarry. The first Common Sandpiper was at Nickolls Quarry the next day, whilst the Ring Ouzels remained at Abbotscliffe (to 14<sup>th</sup>) and Samphire Hoe, and 3 Willow Warblers, 5 Whitethroats and 8 Blackcaps were at Princes Parade. Ring Ouzels increased to two at Samphire Hoe on the 12<sup>th</sup> (to 14<sup>th</sup>), when Willow Warblers were at Shorncliffe Camp and Abbotscliffe (3).



A Greenshank flew over Nickolls Quarry on the 13<sup>th</sup>, when 3 Willow Warblers and 3 Whitethroats were present there, a Shoveler, a Reed Warbler and 2 Willow Warblers were at Princes Parade and four Shags were on the sea off Abbotscliffe. On the 14<sup>th</sup> a Marsh Harrier flew in off the sea at Abbotscliffe, six Sand Martins flew in off the sea at Capel-le-Ferne, two Shovelers were on the canal between Palmarsh and West Hythe and a Ringed Plover, 5 Sanderling and 14 Turnstone were at the Hythe Redoubt.

A Lesser Whitethroat was at Hythe Roughs on the 15<sup>th</sup>, when a Willow Warbler was at Samphire Hoe, where 9 Swallows flew west and two House Martins flew in off the sea at Hythe.



Pomarine Skuas at Mill Point (Brian Harper)

Three Shovelers and five Whimbrels were at Nickolls Quarry on the 16<sup>th</sup>, where Reed Warblers had increased to four singing males and Sedge Warblers to 14. There were also four Reed Warblers and 7 Whitethroats at Princes Parade, whilst small numbers of Wheatears, Willow Warblers and Swallows continued to arrive. On the 17<sup>th</sup> a Velvet Scoter flew east past Samphire Hoe whilst 16 Whimbrels flew east past Hythe.

A change to a northerly wind, combined with a few showers, appeared to induce a small arrival on the 18<sup>th</sup>, with a singing Nightingale at Mill Point, 2 Common Redstarts, 2 Black Redstarts, 5 Wheatears and 9 Willow Warblers at Samphire Hoe, 2 Wheatears, 6 Reed Warblers, 8 Whitethroats and 14 Willow Warblers at Princes Parade and a Sand Martin, 8 Whimbrel, 10 Swallows and 18 House Martins at Nickolls Quarry, whilst 15 Whimbrels flew east past Hythe. The following day produced a Ring Ouzel at Samphire Hoe and 5 Grey Plover, 9 Bar-tailed Godwits, 21 Sandwich Terns, 44 Whimbrels and 55 Gannets headed east at sea.

A Corn Bunting, 5 Yellow Wagtails and 10 Whimbrels were seen along at Donkey Street on the 20<sup>th</sup>, when a pair of Shovelers were on the sea off the Hythe Redoubt and four Shags were noted off Samphire Hoe. The first two Swifts were seen flying east over Palmarsh on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, when two Ring Ouzels and 8 Willow Warblers were at Samphire Hoe and 13 Whimbrels flew east at Hythe. The following day saw a **Spoonbill** fly east past Seabrook, whilst a Great Skua passed Samphire Hoe, two Ring Ouzels were at Abbotscliffe, a Common Sandpiper and four Teal were at Nickolls Quarry and 8 Corn Buntings were seen along Donkey Street.

A spell of north-westerly winds grounded a few migrants from the 25<sup>th</sup>, when there were a male Whinchat and 3 Wheatears at Church Hougham, a Tree Pipit at Abbotscliffe and four Wheatears at Samphire Hoe. On the 26<sup>th</sup> the first Hobby was at Princes Parade, a Marsh Harrier arrived in off the sea at Seabrook and a Common Sandpiper, a Sand Martin, 30 House Martins and 60 Swallows were at Nickolls Quarry. A Common Redstart was seen in a garden in Folkestone on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

A couple of days of south-easterly winds led to an exciting end to the month, with a **Hoopoe** in Folkestone on the 29<sup>th</sup>, when the first Cuckoo was at Nickolls Quarry, a Common Redstart and 10 Wheatears were at Samphire Hoe and eight Wheatears were at Peene Quarry, whilst at sea a Black-throated Diver, 2 Arctic Skuas, 2 Great Skuas, 2 Bar-tailed Godwits, 53 Arctic Terns and 385 Common Scoters flew east and 2 Yellow Wagtails, 2 Swifts and 26 Swallows arrived in off.

On the 30<sup>th</sup> a **Black Kite** flew in off the sea at Mill Point and was later seen heading west at Seabrook, whilst seawatching produced an excellent total of 37 Pomarine Skuas (a record count for April), a Black-throated Diver, 2 Gadwall, 6 Great Skuas, 7 Ringed Plovers, 8 Pintail, 8 Shoveler, 8 Dunlin, 9 Arctic Skuas, 15 Bar-tailed Godwits, 16 Whimbrel, 16 Shelduck, 22 Brent Geese, 59 Grey Plover and 325 Common Scoters. Elsewhere a Hobby flew over Lympne Churchyard and a Common Sandpiper was seen along the canal at Seabrook.



## May

The south-easterly winds continued to the 1<sup>st</sup> and produced further skua passage offshore, with a Great, 2 Arctic and 5 Pomarine passing east, whilst an adult **Yellow-legged Gull** was noted at Hythe. A Cuckoo, a Green Sandpiper, a Common Tern, a Swift, 2 Sand Martins, 2 Willow Warblers and 28 Swallows at Nickolls Quarry, two Whimbrel on the Hythe Imperial golf course and a late Fieldfare at Abbotscliffe completed an interesting start to the month.

The wind then shifted to the north which made for a quieter couple of days, with just 2 Whimbrel, 2 Wheatears and 3 Yellow Wagtails at Samphire Hoe and a Common Sandpiper at Hythe being of note on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, and singles of Great Skua, Grey Plover and Whimbrel flying east past Mill Point on the 3<sup>rd</sup>.



Whimbrel at Princes Parade (Brian Harper)

The 4<sup>th</sup> saw a small arrival of Swifts, with one at Folkestone, two at Cheriton, three at Abbotscliffe and four at Hythe, whilst three Wheatears were at Samphire Hoe, where 2 Yellow Wagtails and 5 Swallows flew in off the sea and a Shoveler and 11 Whimbrel flew east.

A change to a north-easterly wind on the 5<sup>th</sup> led to an excellent movement at sea, with an Arctic Skua, a Redshank, 3 Ringed Plovers, 5 Pomarine Skuas, 6 Turnstone, 9 Whimbrel, 10 Sanderling, 11 Dunlin, 32 Bar-tailed Godwits and record counts of 104 Knot and 109 Grey Plover flying east past Mill Point, whilst 2 Sand Martins, 3 Swifts and 36 Swallows arrived in off the sea there. The first Garden Warbler and 12 Swifts were seen at Beachborough Lakes, 2 Swifts, 4 Sand Martins, 20 Sedge Warblers, 25 House Martins and 45 Swallows were at Nickolls Quarry, two Hobbies were at the Willop Basin and 11 Swifts flew in off the sea at Seabrook. The following day produced 2 Red-breasted Mergansers, 2 Bar-tailed Godwits, 3 Pintails, 5 Grey Plover and 8 Knot flying east past Mill Point, whilst Swifts continued to arrive, including 41 flying east at Seabrook and good numbers seen over Hythe.

Despite an unpromising north-westerly wind on the 7<sup>th</sup> there was a surprisingly good sea passage, with an Arctic Skua, 3 Black Terns, 3 Pomarine Skuas, 18 Bar-tailed Godwits, 68 Whimbrel and 683 Common/Arctic Terns flying east past Samphire Hoe, 2 Black Terns and 10 Little Terns flying east past the Hythe Redoubt, and 2 Eider, 2 Shoveler and 4 Little Terns flying east past Mill Point. Three Shags and 6 Wheatears were also seen at Samphire Hoe, where 18 Swallows flew in off the sea, a Marsh Harrier was seen off Princes Parade and a Common Sandpiper was seen along the canal at Hythe.

The 8<sup>th</sup> saw 12 Swifts and 17 Swallows arriving in off the sea at Hythe, whilst the last 10 Brent Geese flew east there and two Purple Sandpipers remained, but decreased to one the following day and there were no further sightings. A further 11 Swifts and 57 Swallows flew in off the sea at Hythe the next day, whilst a very good count of 35 Reed Warblers were along the canal at Princes Parade. Two Yellow Wagtails flew in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 10<sup>th</sup> and Swifts, Swallows and House Martins continue to arrive. A Red Kite flew east over Horn Street on the 11<sup>th</sup>, whilst a Common Sandpiper was seen at Nickolls Quarry.

The first Spotted Flycatcher and a Sedge Warbler were at Samphire Hoe on the 12<sup>th</sup>, whilst a Tree Pipit was noted at Church Hougham and a Yellow Wagtail flew over Seabrook, and a Nightingale was singing at Hythe Ranges the following day. On the 14<sup>th</sup> at least one **Bee-eater** and a Lapwing flew over Hythe and a female Marsh Harrier flew west over Brockhill Country Park, whilst a Common Sandpiper was at Fisherman's Beach (Hythe) on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

Temperatures climbed to 25°C on the 17<sup>th</sup> and a male Honey Buzzard flew over Abbotscliffe, but a cooler and quieter spell followed until a Common Sandpiper and a Hobby were seen at Princes Parade on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Further warm conditions made for an excellent last week of the month, with another Honey Buzzard over Abbotscliffe on the 24<sup>th</sup>, when a record movement of at least 18 Red Kites was noted (3 over Lympne, at least 7 over Cheriton and 8 over Abbotscliffe), and another Red Kite flew east at Samphire Hoe the next day. A party of six **Bee-eaters** were seen in a garden near the Willop Basin on the 26<sup>th</sup>, whilst a further Honey Buzzard flew north over Folkestone and a Little Tern was seen off Princes Parade.



Bee-eaters near the Willop Basin (Paul Apps)

At least one **Crane** was heard calling over Cheriton on the 28<sup>th</sup> when an Eider was seen off Princes Parade. Three more Red Kites were seen on the 29<sup>th</sup> (one at Cheriton and two at Folkestone), whilst at least 400 Common Scoter were seen off Hythe, and a Shoveler flew over Beachborough Lakes on the 31<sup>st</sup>.

## June

June was mostly settled and dry, becoming increasingly warm from mid-month with daytime temperatures exceeding 30°C on the 21<sup>st</sup>, before a somewhat cooler and cloudier final week.

Raptor passage continued into June, with Honey Buzzards seen over Folkestone on the 1<sup>st</sup> and Folkestone Downs on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, and Red Kites over Bargrove Wood on the 4<sup>th</sup> and Beachborough Lakes on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Hobbies seen on several dates in the Abbotscliffe and Seabrook areas were probably locally breeding birds. A Water Rail at Beachborough Lakes on the 1<sup>st</sup> was an unusual mid-summer record, as were three Siskins flying over Seabrook on the 8<sup>th</sup>.

An Eider seen off Princes Parade on the 8<sup>th</sup> was probably the one seen in late May, with perhaps the same bird at Sandgate on the 28<sup>th</sup>, whilst also in Hythe Bay a first-summer Little Gull was seen on two dates (12<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>), a Little Tern was noted on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18 Mediterranean Gulls were counted on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

A **Turtle Dove** was seen at West Hythe on the 16<sup>th</sup> (with one, probably two, present on the 18<sup>th</sup>), whilst a Corn Bunting was again along Donkey Street mid-month and at least one pair of Yellow Wagtails appeared to be breeding there. A Wheatear at Samphire Hoe on the 18<sup>th</sup> may have been a locally breeding bird, whilst a pair of Black Redstarts bred successfully there and one was seen briefly in a garden in Lympne on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

## July

The first three weeks of July were settled and it was generally sunny and rather warm, with a few showers which were occasionally thundery. The last ten days of the month though were cooler with frequent rain.

Following the sightings in June, a Water Rail was noted at Beachborough Lakes on the 6<sup>th</sup> and a Wheatear was seen at Samphire Hoe on three dates in the first half of the month, raising suspicions of local breeding of these species. The Black Redstarts at Samphire Hoe continued to attend to their three chicks whilst a male was singing at Folkestone Harbour on the 9<sup>th</sup>. At least 21 occupied House Martin nests (possibly as many as 30) were counted at Samphire Hoe in July.

Single Red Kites flew over Beachborough Lakes on the 6<sup>th</sup> and Hythe on the 8<sup>th</sup>, whilst a Honey Buzzard flew west over Samphire Hoe on the 9<sup>th</sup>. A Little Egret was seen at Princes Parade on the 1<sup>st</sup>, with three flying west at Samphire Hoe on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and a record count of 12 flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 5<sup>th</sup>.

A juvenile **Yellow-legged Gull** was seen in Folkestone Harbour on the 13<sup>th</sup> and Mediterranean Gulls began to increase, with at least 40 at Princes Parade on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. Returning waders are typically a feature of July and included single Whimbrel at Samphire Hoe on the 6<sup>th</sup> and Seabrook on the 8<sup>th</sup>, with three at the former site on the 10<sup>th</sup> and one at Folkestone Warren on the 17<sup>th</sup>. Common Sandpipers were seen at Samphire Hoe on the 24<sup>th</sup> and Hythe Redoubt on the 28<sup>th</sup> (three), whilst a Green Sandpiper flew over Cheriton on the night of the 29<sup>th</sup>.



Yellow-legged Gull at Folkestone Harbour (Ian Roberts)

Migrant Cuckoos involved singles at Seabrook on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and Samphire Hoe on the 24<sup>th</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup>.

Swift movements included 112 west at Seabrook on the 16<sup>th</sup> and a larger passage of around 2,000 per hour noted over Folkestone, Hythe and Palmarsh on the 24<sup>th</sup>. A total of 170 Sand Martins were seen flying out to sea from Hythe on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Three Yellow Wagtails flew over Samphire Hoe on the 11<sup>th</sup>, whilst the following day the first returning Willow Warbler was noted in a garden in Folkestone. Singles of Reed Warbler and Willow Warbler were at Abbotscliffe on the 25<sup>th</sup> and a juvenile Wheatear at Samphire Hoe on the 26<sup>th</sup> had been ringed on Skokholm Island (Wales) on the 3<sup>rd</sup>.

## August

There was an unsettled start to the month with rain or showers and mainly westerly or south-westerly winds, and this pattern continued until the 18<sup>th</sup>. It turned warmer from the 19<sup>th</sup>, and it was often warm and sunny between the 25<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, but the month ended cooler and showery.

August began with a Green Sandpiper, 4 Oystercatchers and 11 Sand Martins flying west at Princes Parade and a Willow Warbler and 7 Whitethroats at Samphire Hoe, whilst on the 2<sup>nd</sup> a Red Kite was seen near Westenhanger and at least 67 Mediterranean Gulls were feeding along the shore line at Princes Parade.

The wind increased from the south on the 4<sup>th</sup> and induced some movement at sea, with 6 Black Terns, 60+ Common Terns, 94 Gannets and 182 Sandwich Terns flying west past Seabrook, whilst an Arctic Skua, 4 Black Terns, 22 Kittiwakes, 73 Common Terns, 111 Gannets and 198 Sandwich Terns flew west there the next day. A Marsh Harrier and a Corn Bunting were seen along Donkey Street on the 6<sup>th</sup>, when a Common Sandpiper was at the Hythe Redoubt outfall, a Little Egret flew over the canal at Seabrook, around 300 Common Scoters were on the sea off the Willop Outfall and 2 Lesser Whitethroats, 13 Willow Warblers and 13 Whitethroats were counted at Abbotscliffe.

A Common Redstart was seen at Crete Road West on the 7<sup>th</sup>, whilst five Wheatears were at Samphire Hoe, 70 Swifts flew west there and a Greenshank flew over Nickolls Quarry the following day. A Tree Pipit was noted at Abbotscliffe on the 9<sup>th</sup> when 2 Reed Warblers, 2 Willow Warblers, 3 Sedge Warblers, 4 Lesser Whitethroats, 5 Blackcaps and 6 Whitethroats were logged at Nickolls Quarry.

The 11<sup>th</sup> produced two Garden Warblers at Nickolls Quarry, a Whimbrel at the Hythe Redoubt, a Hobby along Donkey Street, a Redshank, a Sedge Warbler, 8 Blackcaps and 23 Willow Warblers at Princes Parade, a Common Sandpiper at Folkestone Warren, a Shelduck, a Reed Warbler, 2 Lesser Whitethroats, 3 Wheatears, 4 Willow Warblers and 10 Whitethroats at Samphire Hoe and 6 Whitethroats and 8 Willow Warblers at Abbotscliffe. Small numbers of warblers and Wheatears were noted at many sites during the rest of the month, whilst a Green Sandpiper flew over Abbotscliffe on the 14<sup>th</sup> and an Arctic Skua was seen close inshore off Hythe on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

On the 19<sup>th</sup> eight Yellow Wagtails and 15 Swallows flew west over Hythe/Princes Parade, whilst two Yellow Wagtails and 6 Tree Pipits flew over Abbotscliffe the next day, whilst a Red Kite and a Shoveler and 34 Mistle Thrushes were noted at Beachborough Lakes on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. A Tree Pipit flew over Hythe on the 24<sup>th</sup>, when a Common Redstart, a Black Redstart, 4 Yellow Wagtails and 10 Wheatears were at Church Hougham, two Whinchats, 15 Willow Warblers and 25 Whitethroats were at Abbotscliffe and a Corn Bunting was at Beachborough Lakes.

Mediterranean Gulls continued to increase, with counts of at least 265 at Copt Point and 500 at Palmarsh on the 25<sup>th</sup>.



Turtle Doves at Botolph's Bridge (Brian Harper)

A Marsh Harrier flew over Hythe seafront on the 27<sup>th</sup>, when a Tree Pipit and 6 Swifts were at Creteway Down and five **Turtle Doves** were seen at Botolph's Bridge on the 28<sup>th</sup>. A Pied Flycatcher, a Reed Warbler, 12 Blackcaps and 200 House Martins were at Samphire Hoe on the 30<sup>th</sup> and August ended with a Garden Warbler, 2 Whinchats and 400 Mediterranean Gulls at Creteway Down, a Spotted Flycatcher at Samphire Hoe, a Sedge Warbler in a garden in Hythe and 3 Yellow Wagtails and 8 Wheatears at Church Hougham.

## September

The first fortnight of September was dominated by a southerly airflow and most days saw at least some rain. There was a fairly quiet start to the month though small numbers of Wheatears, Whitethroats, Lesser Whitethroats, Willow Warblers and Blackcaps were passing through and more uncommon migrants included a Common Redstart and a Spotted Flycatcher at Creteway Down and a Whinchat at Beachborough Lakes on the 1<sup>st</sup>, two Turtle Doves at Botolph's Bridge on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, a Whinchat at Botolph's Bridge on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, a Grasshopper Warbler and a Whinchat at Samphire Hoe on the 4<sup>th</sup>, a Common Redstart at Creteway Down on the 5<sup>th</sup> and a Grasshopper Warbler at Abbotscliffe on the 6<sup>th</sup>, when a Cuckoo flew west at Seabrook and Whinchats were at Folkestone Downs, Samphire Hoe and Botolph's Bridge (2). A Marsh Harrier along Donkey Street and an Arctic Skua off Hythe Redoubt on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and two Shags at Samphire Hoe on the 4<sup>th</sup> were also of note.

A Spotted Flycatcher was at Abbotscliffe on the 7<sup>th</sup>, whilst good numbers of hirundines were noted at several sites, and Meadow Pipits were moving south-west, with 26 over Hythe and 33 over Beachborough Lakes. A quieter few days ensued, with just a Common Redstart, a Reed Bunting and 5 Whinchats at Abbotscliffe and a count of 40 Chiffchaffs at Samphire Hoe on the 10<sup>th</sup> being noteworthy.

The 14<sup>th</sup> saw a shift to north-westerly winds and this induced some movement, including single ring-tail **Hen Harriers** flying in off the sea at Abbotscliffe and Hythe, whilst the former site also produced a Whinchat, a Reed Warbler, 4 Swifts, 100 Swallows, 200 Meadow Pipits and 1,000+ House Martins. A Spotted Flycatcher was at Samphire Hoe the next day, whilst the first Red-throated Diver was seen off Fisherman's Beach (Hythe). A Bar-tailed Godwit was on the beach at Sunny Sands (Folkestone) on the 16<sup>th</sup>, whilst a Yellow Wagtail was at Samphire Hoe, large numbers of hirundines were noted at Abbotscliffe and there was a good scattering of Chiffchaffs across the area.

A **Greenish Warbler** at Seabrook was the highlight of the first Wildlife Migration Day of the autumn on the 17<sup>th</sup> and the pick of a noticeable arrival of warblers, particularly Chiffchaffs (including 19 at Hythe, 30 at Samphire Hoe, 61 at Folkestone Warren and 97 at Princes Parade) and Blackcaps (including 14 at Princes Parade, 20 at Samphire Hoe and 48 at Folkestone Warren). A Swift and 5 Whitethroats at Samphire Hoe, 4 Sedge Warblers, 9 Whitethroats, 11 Goldcrests at Princes Parade and 3 Lesser Whitethroats and 3 Goldcrests at Folkestone Warren were also of note, whilst two Rock Pipits and 40 Meadow Pipits flew west at Hythe Ranges and hirundines were steadily moving west, with totals probably exceeding 1,000 Swallows and 1,500 House Martins, with a few Sand Martins mixed in.



A quieter day followed on the 18<sup>th</sup> but was enlivened by a **Wood Warbler** at Seabrook, whilst a Hobby flew over Folkestone and an Arctic Skua flew west past Hythe.

A Common Redstart, a Whinchat, a Teal, 12 Chiffchaffs and 50 Blackcaps were at Samphire Hoe on the 19<sup>th</sup>, when a Whinchat, a Stonechat, 12 Goldcrests and 45 Chiffchaffs were at Princes Parade, 20 Chiffchaffs were at Copt Point, six Goldcrests were at Mill Point and large numbers of hirundines, mainly Swallows (with an estimated 1,000+), were seen along the coast in the late afternoon and evening.



Bar-tailed Godwit at Folkestone (David Featherbe)

The winds returned to the southerly quadrant from the 20<sup>th</sup> but migrants continued to pass through, including single Great Spotted Woodpeckers at Abbotscliffe and Hythe, whilst a Yellow Wagtail, 3 Siskins and 35 Meadow Pipits flew west at the former site, 1,200 Swallows and 1,500 House Martins flew south over Beachborough Lakes and a Merlin was noted at Nickolls Quarry. A further 780 Swallows and 1,000 House Martins flew south over Beachborough Lakes on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

A **Yellow-browed Warbler** at Hythe was the highlight of the 22<sup>nd</sup>, with a Whinchat at Abbotscliffe and singles of Merlin and a Marsh Harrier at Botolph's Bridge also of note. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> an Arctic Skua and 11 Brent Geese flew past Hythe Redoubt, whilst the following day produced a Firecrest and 6 Goldcrests at Mill Point and 3 Goldcrests and 18 Chiffchaffs at Nickolls Quarry. A Ring Ouzel and a Firecrest were at Abbotscliffe on the 25<sup>th</sup>, when 65 Meadow Pipits flew east there, and a Ring Ouzel, a Great Spotted Woodpecker and 3 Firecrests were at Samphire Hoe.

The first returning Water Rail was seen at Princes Parade on the 26<sup>th</sup>, when a Firecrest, 12 Goldcrests and 25 Chiffchaffs were logged and single Whinchats were at Abbotscliffe and Nickolls Quarry. The 27<sup>th</sup> produced a Common Redstart, a Kingfisher and 30 Chiffchaffs at Samphire Hoe, 20 Blackcaps at Nickolls Quarry and four Lapwings at Abbotscliffe, whilst 500 House Martins and 600 Swallows flew south over Beachborough Lakes, and a Grasshopper Warbler was seen at Folkestone Downs the next day.

A **Wryneck** at Shearway Business Park (Cheriton) on the 29<sup>th</sup> was an excellent find and the month ended with a Spotted Flycatcher, 12 Chiffchaffs and 12 Blackcaps at Nickolls Quarry, two Whinchats at Abbotscliffe and many hundreds of Swallows and House Martins flying west at Princes Parade.

## October

There was a settled start to October with winds from the westerly quadrant and near-average temperatures which made for a rather quiet first fortnight. A Hobby flew over Horn Street on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, whilst there were two Wheatears at Copt Point and three at Church Hougham the following day, when there was a good count of 12 Goldcrests at Horn Street, with smaller numbers at various sites throughout the month.

The last Whitethroat was noted at Abbotscliffe on the 4<sup>th</sup>, when 3 Reed Buntings, 11 Siskins, 25 Meadow Pipits and 31 Linnets flew over there, 7 Siskins and 9 Mistle Thrushes flew over Creteway Down and 15 Blackcaps and 23 Chiffchaffs were counted at Nickolls Quarry. At Beachborough Lakes a movement of 4 Sand Martins, 400 House Martins and 615 Swallows were seen heading south, with a further 4 Sand Martins, 700 House Martins and 815 Swallows the next day. On the 6<sup>th</sup> two Great Spotted Woodpeckers, 3 Siskins, 4 Reed Buntings and 11 Redpolls flew over Abbotscliffe, whilst the first 12 Redwings flew over Cheriton. At least 220 Brent Geese flew west past Hythe on the 7<sup>th</sup>.

A Short-eared Owl and 2 Redpolls were seen at Abbotscliffe on the 8<sup>th</sup>, when a Barn Owl and a Firecrest were at Nickolls Quarry and 20 Meadow Pipits and 80 House Martins flew over Hythe. The 9<sup>th</sup> produced two Redwings, 6 Reed Buntings, 9 Chiffchaffs and 22 Blackbirds at Nickolls Quarry and 2 Redwings, 2 Reed Buntings, 8 Song Thrushes and 140 House Martins at Abbotscliffe, 5 Water Rails at Princes Parade and a Hobby flying west at Seabrook. A Merlin, 2 Great Spotted Woodpeckers and 20 Chiffchaffs were at Nickolls Quarry on the 10<sup>th</sup>, when 2 Great Spotted Woodpeckers were at Princes Parade, 8 Goldcrests and 15 Chiffchaffs were at Mill Point and two Hobbies flew west at Seabrook. The 11<sup>th</sup> saw 82 Swallows and 300 House Martins flying south over Beachborough Lakes.



Great White Egret at the Willop Basin (Ian Roberts)

On the 12<sup>th</sup> a Merlin, a Coal Tit (possibly of the continental form), 2 Grey Wagtails and 4 Redpolls were at Folkestone Downs, a Green Sandpiper and 2 Dunlin were at Beachborough Lakes, four Wheatears were at Samphire Hoe and four Firecrests, 11 Chiffchaffs and 12 Goldcrests were at Mill Point, where 50 Siskins flew west. Three Rock Pipits and 7 Little Egrets flew over Hythe on the 13<sup>th</sup>, when at least 450 Gannets were feeding close inshore and a **Great White Egret** was found at the Willop Basin. It was still present the next day (after having appeared to roost overnight at Nickolls Quarry), when a Redpoll, 2 Stonechats, 2 Lapwings, 3 Corn Buntings, 3 Snipe, 8 Grey Herons, 31 Mute Swans and 45 Linnets were also in the Willop area, two continental Coal Tits were seen in a garden in Hythe and two Little Egrets flew east at Samphire Hoe. The first of several nocturnal movements of thrushes, mainly Redwings and Blackbirds, was noted that night.

Temperatures increased to unseasonal levels (over 20°C) around mid-month as ex-hurricane Ophelia brought in warm air from the south. The second Wildlife Migration Day of the autumn was therefore held in very pleasant weather on the 15<sup>th</sup> and the standout highlight was the trapping of a **Short-toed Treecreeper** at Samphire Hoe (the second site and area record). A Firecrest was also trapped there, a Whinchat, 3 Grey Wagtails, 5 Siskins and 7 Redwings were at Creteway Down, a Little Grebe, 2 Stonechats and a very good count of at least 60 Dunnocks were at Princes Parade, where 2 Bramblings, 4 Sky Larks, 15 Siskins, 30 House Martins, 45 Swallows, 60 Goldfinches and 80 Chaffinches flew over and a Reed Bunting, a Siskin, 2 Redpolls, 2 Grey Wagtails, 3 Greenfinches, 10 Swallows, 30 Goldfinches, 50 House Martins, 70 Starlings and 125 Linnets flew over Abbotscliffe.

The 16<sup>th</sup> produced just a single Reed Bunting and 12 Siskins at Samphire Hoe, whilst an Arctic Skua and 2 Little Egrets flew west there next day when 2 Redpolls, 6 Siskins, 12 Swallows, 30 House Martins and 135 Goldfinches flew west at Abbotscliffe and four Redpolls and 11 Siskins were seen at Princes Parade. A further two Arctic Skuas, 20 Kittiwakes, 75 Gannets and 250 Mediterranean Gulls were seen off Samphire Hoe on the 18<sup>th</sup>, whilst 25 Siskins flew west and there were two Little Egrets at Copt Point.

A Ring Ouzel, 10 Redwings at 50 Blackbirds were at Princes Parade on the 19<sup>th</sup>, with a Ring Ouzel, 3 Firecrests, 7 Chiffchaffs and 8 Goldcrests at Mill Point and a Firecrest, 5 Chiffchaffs and 6 Song Thrushes at Nickolls Quarry, whilst 100 each of Swallows and House Martins flew west at Beachborough Lakes. The winds increased from the south-west over the next few days and it was very quiet, with just 35 Gannets and 40 Common Scoter off Hythe on the 21<sup>st</sup> and a Rock Pipit, 2 Swallows and 11 Redpolls flying over there on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Calmer conditions on the 23<sup>rd</sup> enabled a **Dartford Warbler**, a Short-eared Owl, a Wheatear, a Brambling, a Great Spotted Woodpecker, 4 Blackcaps, 8 Swallows and 10 Ring Ouzels to be found at Abbotscliffe, where 200 Starlings flew in off the sea. Nearby in Folkestone Warren a Ring Ouzel, 2 continental Coal Tits, 2 Blackcaps, 3 Chiffchaffs, 10 Firecrests, 14 Swallows and 42 Goldcrests were logged and a Great Spotted Woodpecker flew in off the sea.

A **Rough-legged Buzzard** was reported near Saltwood on the 25<sup>th</sup> and the first returning Purple Sandpiper was at Hythe, with a Merlin, a Ring Ouzel, a Great Spotted Woodpecker and 2 Redwings at Nickolls Quarry and a Ring Ouzel at Abbotscliffe.

A **Goshawk** and a **Bearded Tit** flew over Beachborough Lakes the following day, when there were ten Ring Ouzels at Abbotscliffe and a Great Spotted Woodpecker, a Reed Bunting, a Brambling, 7 Redpolls, 41 Siskins, 325 Starlings and 910 Chaffinches flew over.

It became significantly cooler from the 27<sup>th</sup> as the wind switched round to the north-west and overnight lows dipped to 6°C.



Short-toed Treecreeper at Samphire Hoe (Martin Collins)

A Brambling, 2 Ring Ouzels, 3 **Hawfinches**, 4 Redpolls, 17 Fieldfares and 123 Redwings were seen at Creteway Down, whilst six Ring Ouzels were at Abbotscliffe, where a Reed Bunting, 2 Fieldfares, 4 Redpolls, 15 Siskins, 29 Redwings and 170 Starlings flew over and a Ring Ouzel was at Nickolls Quarry. The 28<sup>th</sup> produced 2 Green Sandpipers and a record count of 12 **Bearded Tits** at Nickolls Quarry, where 5 Redpolls and 30 Siskins flew over and 16 Brent Geese flew east at the Willop Outfall.

The 29<sup>th</sup> produced the best seawatching of the month, with an Eider, 33 Brent Geese and 200 Gannets seen from Hythe Ranges and a Little Gull, a Mute Swan, 31 Brent Geese, 70 Kittiwakes, 200 Gannets and 312 auks (of which at least 196 were identified as Razorbills) seen from Mill Point. Visual migration included 2 Redpolls, 7 Siskins and 80 Goldfinches flying over Mill Point and 2,500 Starlings in off the sea at Hythe Ranges, whilst at least 336 Mediterranean Gulls were counted along the coast between these two sites. Also of note were four Fieldfares at Samphire Hoe and seven Swallows flying east at Abbotscliffe, whilst six Swallows flew east at Palmarsh the next day.

The month ended on a high note when a **Yellow-browed Warbler** was seen at Samphire Hoe and a **Sooty Shearwater** and 2 Sandwich Terns flew past Mill Point on the 31<sup>st</sup>.

## November

The month began with three days of south to south-easterly winds and a few migrants continued to arrive. The same, or possibly another, **Yellow-browed Warbler** was present at the eastern end Samphire Hoe on the 1<sup>st</sup>, another **Bearded Tit** was seen briefly at Beachborough Lakes and a Fieldfare, 2 Water Rails, 2 Chiffchaffs, 3 Stonechats, 6 Brent Geese and 7 Redpolls were at Nickolls Quarry. Two late Ring Ouzels were at Abbotscliffe on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, when four Redpolls were at Beachborough Lakes and ten Bramblings flew in off the sea at Capel-le-Ferne, whilst on the 3<sup>rd</sup> a continental Coal Tit and 6 Long-tailed Tits were at Samphire Hoe, where 3 Lapwings flew out to sea, and two Gadwall were at Nickolls Quarry, where up to 12 **Bearded Tits** remained all month.

Two Green Sandpipers continued to frequent the Donkey Street/Nickolls Quarry and at least two Purple Sandpipers remained at Hythe throughout. Little Egrets continue to be a feature with two at Capel-le-Ferne, Copt Point and in the Botolph's Bridge/Nickolls Quarry area, and singles at Horn Street and Samphire Hoe.

The wind switched to the west on the 4<sup>th</sup> with overcast conditions and some light rain. A **Red-necked Grebe** was seen on the sea off Mill Point/Sandgate, a **Long-tailed Duck** was reported in Folkestone Harbour and a Little Gull, 20 Common Scoter and 51 Gannets flew west past Hythe. A very elusive **Water Pipit** was found at Donkey Street on the 5<sup>th</sup> (where it was seen intermittently until at least the 17<sup>th</sup>), and the first Tree Sparrow of the year, a Stonechat, 2 Gadwall and 45 Lapwings were also present.



South-easterly winds on the 7<sup>th</sup> produced a small movement at sea, with a **Great White Egret**, a Red-breasted Merganser, 2 Teal, 7 Shelduck, 10 Wigeon and 35 Common Scoter flying west past Mill Point, and 30 Brent Geese flying east past Samphire Hoe, whilst a Firecrest was present at the former site.

The rest of the month was dominated by the westerly quadrant and migration slowed, though there were still plenty of interesting sightings. A Red Kite and a Redpoll were at Abbotscliffe on the 8<sup>th</sup>, when a Black Redstart and a Swallow were seen at Hythe and a Curlew and a Dunlin flew past Mill Point.



Red-necked Grebe at Seabrook (Ian Roberts)

A Chiffchaff, 2 Goldcrests and 25 Blackbirds were at Nickolls Quarry on the 9<sup>th</sup> and a Swallow, a House Martin and 2 Redpolls flew west over Hythe the next day, when a Fieldfare was at Folkestone Leas and 200 Cormorants were seen off Hythe/Seabrook. A Merlin was seen at the Willop Sewage Works on the 11<sup>th</sup>, when a Black Redstart was in a garden at Ingles Manor (Folkestone), four Long-tailed Tits were at Samphire Hoe, four Gadwall were on the sea off Princes Parade and additional Purple Sandpipers were noted at Battery Point and the Hythe Redoubt (3). Nine Mandarin were counted in Folks' Wood on the 12<sup>th</sup>, when 16 Guillemots, 100+ Kittiwakes, 100+ Gannets and 200+ Mediterranean Gulls were seen off Samphire Hoe.

The second **Red-necked Grebe** of the month was seen off Samphire Hoe on the 13<sup>th</sup>, when a Shelduck, 2 Razorbills and 30 Kittiwakes were also offshore and three Fieldfares and 15 Redwings were noted, whilst a where a Redwing, 3 Fieldfares and 3 Redpolls flew over Nickolls Quarry. The following day produced a **Great Northern Diver** on the sea off Princes Parade, where 2 Ravens flew east, whilst on the 16<sup>th</sup> three Gadwall flew east past the Hythe Redoubt. A Lapland Bunting, a Marsh Harrier, a Chiffchaff, 2 Kingfishers, 2 Stonechats, 2 Redpolls, 2 Corn Buntings and 150 Linnets were seen in the Donkey Street area on the 17<sup>th</sup>, whilst 25 Blackbirds and 40 Sky Larks were at Samphire Hoe.

Three Ravens flew over Donkey Street on the 18<sup>th</sup>, when three Purple Sandpipers were seen at Battery Point and three Red Kites flew over Hythe on the 20<sup>th</sup>, whilst a pair of Blackcaps were seen in a garden there. A Lapland Bunting was seen at Abbotscliffe on the 24<sup>th</sup> and the next day saw a Black Redstart and three **Goosanders** at Hythe Redoubt, a Merlin at Hythe Ranges and two Redwings at Samphire Hoe, where 25 Siskins flew in off the sea. A Blackcap was seen at Crete Road West on the 27<sup>th</sup>, whilst a Purple Sandpiper was at the Willop Outfall on the 28<sup>th</sup> when the first Fulmars had returned to the cliffs at Samphire Hoe.

There was a chilly end to the month with a change to north-westerly winds and there were even some snow showers (on the 30<sup>th</sup>). An adult **Yellow-legged Gull** was noted at Folkestone Harbour on the 29<sup>th</sup>, when a Great Skua was seen offshore, a male Marsh Harrier was hunting at the Willop Basin and a Peregrine was seen at Donkey Street.

## December

After a mostly mild first week it then turned much cooler with overnight frosts lasting into the third week. It was milder, though often stormy, over the Christmas period and there was a cold end to the month with some showers.

The Mute Swan flock at Donkey Street increased to 42 in December and a flock of ten Canada Geese flew west over Botolph's Bridge on the 15<sup>th</sup>. A good movement of wildfowl on the 1<sup>st</sup> included 2 Shelduck, 4 Eider, 5 Gadwall, 9 Brent Geese, 9 Shoveler, 24 Teal and 81 Wigeon passing Mill Point, whilst 115 Brent Geese flew past there on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. A pair of Gadwall were seen at Nickolls Quarry on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, with a pair of Wigeon there on the 12<sup>th</sup> and a 'red-head' Goosander and 3 Tufted Ducks there on the 19<sup>th</sup>. A Tufted Duck and 4 Gadwall were noted at Folkestone Racecourse and 12 Mandarin and 80 Teal were counted at Chesterfield Wood, whilst a Shoveler was seen at Botolph's on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and two Wigeon flew west past Samphire Hoe on the 24<sup>th</sup>.



A **Great Northern Diver** was seen on the sea off Princes Parade on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, and there were some large movements of Red-throated Divers, including 57 flying past Mill Point on the 1<sup>st</sup> and an excellent total of 535 flying west (457 past Mill Point and 78 past Hythe) on the 13<sup>th</sup>, whilst 26 Great Crested Grebes, 250 Gannets and 1,250 Cormorants also flew past Mill Point on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Two Shags were seen off Sandgate on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, with two at Samphire Hoe on the 5<sup>th</sup> and one at the Hythe Redoubt on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

Up to four Little Egrets were present in the Botolph's Bridge/Nickolls Quarry area with others on the Seabrook Stream at Horn Street (2), Copt Point and Samphire Hoe, whilst a female Merlin and two Marsh Harriers were seen regularly in the Botolph's Bridge/Nickolls Quarry area throughout.



Bearded Tit at Nickolls Quarry (Brian Harper)

Two Oystercatchers, 4 Turnstone and 8 Dunlin flew east past Mill Point on the 1<sup>st</sup> and a Ringed Plover was seen at Hythe Ranges on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, whilst the roost at Folkestone Beach contained 21 Ringed Plovers the following day. At least three Purple Sandpipers remained at Hythe all month, with another flying past Mill Point on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, and up to two Green Sandpipers remained in the Botolph's Bridge/Nickolls Quarry area. Lapwing flocks included up to 54 at Donkey Street and 112 at the Willop Basin but Snipe numbers were very low. Up to five Redshank were noted in Folkestone Harbour, 14 Sanderling were at the Willop Outfall on the 4<sup>th</sup> and a flock of 13 Knot were seen there on the 9<sup>th</sup>.

Up to two Great Skuas were seen off Mill Point on the 1<sup>st</sup>, with two off Princes Parade on the 10<sup>th</sup>, six flying west past Mill Point on the 13<sup>th</sup> and one flying west past Samphire Hoe on the 24<sup>th</sup>. A Little Gull was seen off Princes Parade on the 10<sup>th</sup> and Folkestone Harbour produced an adult **Caspian Gull** on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and an adult **Yellow-legged Gull** on the 8<sup>th</sup>. Auk numbers were generally low with the exception of a count of 550 (which appeared to be primarily Guillemots) flying west past Hythe/Mill Point on the 13<sup>th</sup>.

A Barn Owl was seen at Newington on the 12<sup>th</sup>, single Firecrests were at Enbrook Park on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and St. Leonard's Road (Hythe) on the 24<sup>th</sup> and up to 12 **Bearded Tits** remained at Nickolls Quarry until at least the 6<sup>th</sup>. A **Wood Lark** was found at Hythe Ranges on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and a **Dartford Warbler** was seen there on the 26<sup>th</sup>, whilst Blackcaps were wintering in gardens at Seabrook, Folkestone (2) and Hythe (2). Winter thrush numbers were very low, with a peak of five Fieldfares at Botolph's Bridge on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

A Black Redstart remained at Samphire Hoe until at least the 6<sup>th</sup> and one was noted near the Stade Court Hotel (Hythe) on the 12<sup>th</sup>, whilst Stonechats were wintering at Copt Point, Abbotscliffe (2), Hythe Ranges (2), Nickolls Quarry (2), Hythe Roughs (6) and Samphire Hoe (10). At least 12 Rock Pipits were at Samphire Hoe, with singles at Folkestone Harbour on several dates and at the Stade Street groyne (Hythe) on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

Three Siskins were seen in a garden in Folkestone on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, whilst two flew west at Abbotscliffe on the 5<sup>th</sup> and a Redpoll flew west over Nickolls Quarry the following day. A stubble field along Donkey Street held 3 Corn Buntings, 6 Yellowhammers, 10 Reed Buntings and 45 Linnets.

## Systematic list

The systematic list is now based on the sequence and taxonomy followed by the International Ornithological Congress (Gill & Donsker, 2017) and uses the vernacular names that are common use in Britain. The status of each species is described with reference to its frequency of occurrence, as summarised in the table below, and the time of year when it usually occurs. Any significant changes in status over time are also highlighted.

Status	Frequency of occurrence
<b>Very rare</b>	Has occurred locally on between one and 15 occasions
<b>Rare</b>	Has occurred locally on between 16 and 50 occasions
<b>Scarce</b>	Has occurred locally on more than 50 occasions but on less than ten occasions per year on average

The category given in parentheses after the status is based on the British Ornithologist's Union (BOU) categorisation (BOU, no date), adopted to reflect the status of species locally, as follows:

Category	Description
<b>A</b>	Species recorded locally in an apparently natural state at least once since 1 January 1950
<b>B</b>	Species recorded locally in an apparently natural state at least once between 1800 and 1949, but have not been recorded subsequently
<b>C</b>	Species that, although introduced, now derive from the resulting self-sustaining populations
<b>D</b>	Species that would otherwise appear in Category A except that there is reasonable doubt that they have ever occurred in a natural state. The only species in this category that are on the local list are Falcated Duck and Great White Pelican
<b>E</b>	Species recorded locally as introductions, human-assisted transportations or escapees from captivity, and whose breeding populations (if any) are thought not to be self-sustaining

A species is usually placed in only one category, but some are placed in multiple categories, for example those species occurring in Category A which now have naturalised Category C populations (e.g. Red Kite).

The Folkestone and Hythe list comprises only those species in Categories A, B and C. Species placed in Category D and E are not included in the species total.

Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>
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Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A, C)

Up to 59 had been present in the Botolph's Bridge area in late December 2016 (which was the highest count since 2009) and most of these remained into 2017, with 58 counted on the 2<sup>nd</sup> January. Numbers dwindled slowly during January but 46 were still present in mid-February and 37 were counted on the 21<sup>st</sup> March before the flock dispersed. Nickolls Quarry continued to be used as an overnight roost site for many of these birds.

As last year, there were a few records of birds seen offshore in the spring, with one on the sea off the Willop Outfall on the 7<sup>th</sup> March, one on the sea off Hythe Ranges on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April and five flying west past Samphire Hoe on the 29<sup>th</sup> April. At least four pairs bred in the usual haunts along the canal and on the marsh.

Numbers began to increase again in the Botolph's Bridge/Donkey Street area in the autumn, with 31 being counted on the 14<sup>th</sup> October, rising to 42 by mid-December. Elsewhere a first-winter bird that flew east past Mill Point with a flock of four Brent Geese on the 29<sup>th</sup> October was later seen flying north past Sandwich Bay.

Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>
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A regular winter visitor and passage migrant, with most presumably relating to the increasing feral populations within the county. At least one early record, and possibly some others, relate to genuine wild birds. Having been recorded in recent summers in suitable habitat, breeding was confirmed for the first time in 2014. (A, C)

The only records from the early winter period were of one at Samphire Hoe on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January, seven at Nickolls Quarry the next day and one in the Donkey Street area on the 31<sup>st</sup> January. In March five flew west at Abbotscliffe on the 6<sup>th</sup>, one flew east over Nickolls Quarry on the 9<sup>th</sup> and one flew east at Hythe on the 29<sup>th</sup>, whilst three flew east at Sandgate on the 6<sup>th</sup> April. A pair were present at Nickolls Quarry on the 16<sup>th</sup> April, with a single there on the 1<sup>st</sup> May but there were no indications of breeding.

There were no records from the latter half of the year.



Mute Swans at Nickolls Quarry (Ian Roberts)



Greylag Goose at Nickolls Quarry (Ian Roberts)

#### Canada Goose

*Branta Canadensis*

Currently breeds almost annually but formerly more numerous. Otherwise can be a visitor at any time of year (C)

Up to seven were present in the Nickolls Quarry area from the 5<sup>th</sup> February until May and one pair bred successfully, fledging seven young. Elsewhere there were three on the sea off Princes Parade on the 28<sup>th</sup> March and 11 were seen along Donkey Street on the 17<sup>th</sup> May.

Up to seven were present again in the Nickolls Quarry area in November, though unfortunately two of these were shot. A flock of ten flew west over Botolph's Bridge on the 15<sup>th</sup> December.

#### Brent Goose

*Branta bernicla*

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

The trend for birds to be moving east along the coast from as early as January (or even late December) continued, with a total of around 220 logged in January, including a count of 150 passing Samphire Hoe on the 6<sup>th</sup>. Two were also seen at Nickolls Quarry on the 8<sup>th</sup> January. Fewer were noted in February, but did include a count of 35 east past Hythe Ranges/Sandgate on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 25 east past the Willop Outfall on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Spring passage gathered pace from early March, when 85 flew east past Mill Point on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 130 flew east there the next day and 340 flew east past Samphire Hoe on the 11<sup>th</sup>, and peaked in the third week of the month, when 800 flew east past Samphire Hoe on the 18<sup>th</sup>, 275 flew east past Mill Point on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 500 flew east there on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Numbers decreased significantly from late March, with no counts of note in April and the last record involved ten flying east past Hythe on the 8<sup>th</sup> May. The total for the spring (including the early movement in January) was about 2,600 which was slightly lower than the previous ten year average of 3,060.

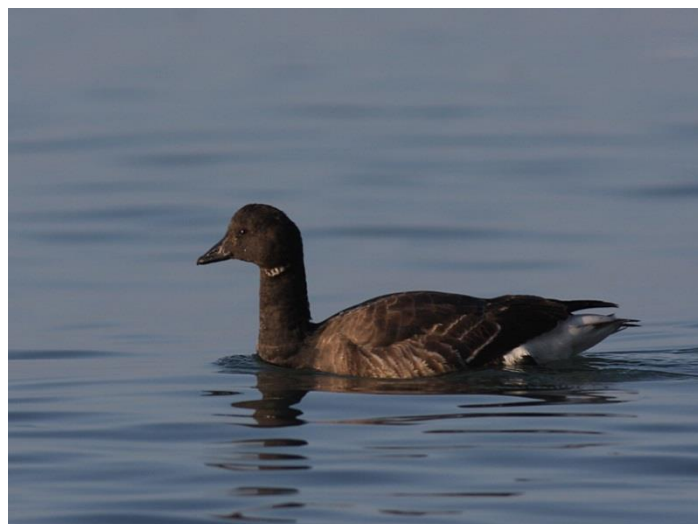
Departure/Arrival	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Latest/Earliest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Departure	8 <sup>th</sup> May	5 <sup>th</sup> May	+3	3 <sup>rd</sup> May	+5	26 <sup>th</sup> May 1997
Arrival	23 <sup>rd</sup> Sep	17 <sup>th</sup> Sep	+6	20 <sup>th</sup> Sep*	+3	11 <sup>th</sup> Sep 2014*

The first 11 of the autumn were seen off Hythe Redoubt on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September, followed by two off Samphire Hoe on the 25<sup>th</sup> September and 220 flying west past Hythe on the 7<sup>th</sup> October. There were several smaller movements through October and November including counts of 16 flying east past the Willop Outfall on the 28<sup>th</sup> October, 31 (10 west, 21 east) off Mill Point and 33 flying east past Hythe Ranges on the 29<sup>th</sup> October and 30 flying west past Samphire Hoe on the 7<sup>th</sup> November. Six at Nickolls Quarry on the 1<sup>st</sup> November were the only sighting away from the sea.

Few were noted in December but these did include a count of 115 flying past Mill Point on the 3<sup>rd</sup>.



Canada Geese at Nickolls Quarry (Brian Harper)



Brent Goose at Copt Point (Brian Harper)

#### Egyptian Goose

*Alopochen aegyptiaca*

Very rare vagrant (C)

A flock of seven were seen at the Willop Basin on the 21<sup>st</sup> February (I. A. Roberts). This was only the ninth area record, but there have now been seven in as many years as the species continues to become established in the county. All records have occurred between January and May.

#### Shelduck

*Tadorna tadorna*

Winter visitor and passage migrant, may have bred on at least one occasion prior to 2004 (A)

A flock of 20 flew over Nickolls Quarry on the 5<sup>th</sup> January, whilst in February there was a single off the Willop Outfall on the 8<sup>th</sup>, eight there on the 11<sup>th</sup> and one off Princes Parade on the 25<sup>th</sup>. In spring a total of 46 headed up-channel between the 24<sup>th</sup> March and 7<sup>th</sup> May, including counts of 8 off Seabrook and 16 off Mill Point on the 30<sup>th</sup> April. This total was slightly better than the mean for the previous decade of 39.

A juvenile took up residence on one of the ponds at Samphire Hoe between the 11<sup>th</sup> and at least the 20<sup>th</sup> August, whilst seven flew west there on the 7<sup>th</sup> November, one flew west there on the 13<sup>th</sup> November and a further seven flew west there on the 30<sup>th</sup> November, with two flying west past Mill Point the following day.

#### Mandarin Duck

*Aix galericulata*

Breeding resident (C)

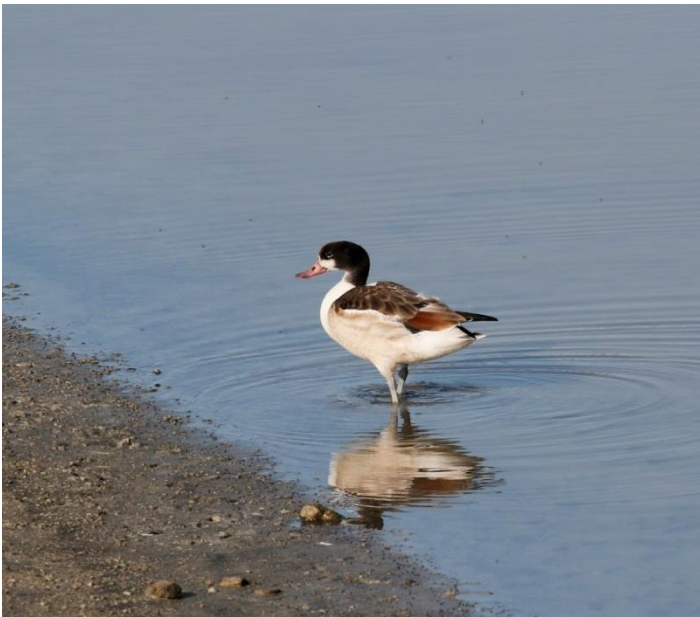
Most sightings again were from the woods in the Saltwood area with counts including eight at Folks' Wood in January, nine at Chesterfield Wood in February, nine at Folks' Wood in November and 12 at Chesterfield Wood in December. Elsewhere one was seen flying along the canal at Princes Parade on the 28<sup>th</sup> March.



Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Winter numbers were again very low with a female at Nickolls Quarry on the 5<sup>th</sup> January and eight on the sea off the Willop Outfall on the 25<sup>th</sup> January constituting the only records. A male at the Willop Basin on the 12<sup>th</sup> March was the only sign of any spring passage.

The latter part of the year produced ten flying west past Mill Point on the 7<sup>th</sup> November, a total of 81 (33 west, 48 east) passing there on the 1<sup>st</sup> December, a pair at Nickolls Quarry on the 12<sup>th</sup> December and two flying west past Samphire Hoe on the 24<sup>th</sup> December.



Shelduck at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)



Mandarin Ducks at Brockhill (Andy Maguire)

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Up to 18 were present on the lake at Folkestone Racecourse in the early winter period but the only other records came from Nickolls Quarry where there were three on the 3<sup>rd</sup> January, one on the 8<sup>th</sup> January and two on the 25<sup>th</sup> January.

In spring a pair flew east past Mill Point on the 30<sup>th</sup> April.

The latter winter period produced a pair at Nickolls Quarry on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November, with perhaps the same pair at Donkey Street on the 5<sup>th</sup> November, four on the sea off Princes Parade on the 11<sup>th</sup> November and three flying east past the Hythe Redoubt on the 16<sup>th</sup> November. A further five flew west past Mill Point on the 1<sup>st</sup> December, with a pair at Nickolls Quarry the next day and up to four were present on the lake at Folkestone Racecourse during December.

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

In the early winter period there were peak counts of 7 at Nickolls Quarry, 12 on flooded ground near Stutfall Castle, 43 at the Willop Basin and 180 at Chesterfield Wood, whilst offshore records involved seven off the Hythe Redoubt on the 8<sup>th</sup> January, one off the Willop Outfall on the 25<sup>th</sup> January and three in Hythe Bay on the 18<sup>th</sup> February.

The only signs of spring passage were late records of one at Chesterfield Wood and four at Nickolls Quarry on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April.

In autumn one was seen at Samphire Hoe on the 19<sup>th</sup> September and there were regular sightings in November and December. Offshore passage comprised two flying west past Mill Point on the 7<sup>th</sup> November, 24 (2 west, 22 east) passing Mill Point on the 1<sup>st</sup> December and several off the Hythe Redoubt the next day. Small numbers were wintering at several sites with the largest concentration again at Chesterfield Wood, where 80 were noted in December.

Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
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Breeding resident and winter visitor (A)

Counts from the early winter period suggested that at least 195 birds were present, including totals of 24 at the Willop Basin, 25 near Stutfall Castle, 30 at Chesterfield Wood and 35 at both Botolph's Bridge and on the canal at Hythe.

Larger numbers were noted in the latter winter period, with a total of around 300 present including 34 on the canal at Hythe, 60 at Chesterfield Wood, 81 at Botolph's Bridge and 92 in the Donkey Street/Willop Basin area.

Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>
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Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

There was an excellent spring passage involving the second ever highest total of 69 passing east between the 3<sup>rd</sup> March and the 6<sup>th</sup> May. This included counts of 14 past Mill Point on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 27 past the same site on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March (the fifth highest spring count), nine past there on the 29<sup>th</sup> March and eight past Copt Point on the 30<sup>th</sup> April.

Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>
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Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Three were seen at Nickolls Quarry on the 3<sup>rd</sup> January with a female there on 23<sup>rd</sup> January and a pair on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> March, whilst six flew east past Mill Point on both the 23<sup>rd</sup> and the 24<sup>th</sup> March.

In April five flew east past Mill Point on the 8<sup>th</sup>, with a pair east there the next day, a male on the canal at Seabrook on the 13<sup>th</sup>, a pair on the canal near Hythe Roughs on the 14<sup>th</sup>, three at Nickolls Quarry on the 16<sup>th</sup>, a pair on the sea off the Hythe Redoubt on the 20<sup>th</sup> and eight flew east past Mill Point on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

A male flying east past Samphire Hoe on the 4<sup>th</sup> May and two flying east past Mill Point on the 7<sup>th</sup> May completed a good spring passage, with the total of 42 being almost double the average for the previous ten years of 22.

A female flying west over Beachborough Lakes on the 31<sup>st</sup> May was an unusual record, as was a female there on the 23<sup>rd</sup> August. There were no further records until December, when nine flew west past Mill Point on the 1<sup>st</sup> and one was seen at Botolph's Bridge the following day.

Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>
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Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

A drake arrived at Nickolls Quarry on the 14<sup>th</sup> January, with 13 there on the 18<sup>th</sup> January and up to five remaining into May. Elsewhere up to three were wintering on the lake at Folkestone Racecourse, one was at the Willop Sewer on the 25<sup>th</sup> January and two were at Beachborough Lakes on the 24<sup>th</sup> to the 25<sup>th</sup> May.

A pair bred at Botolph's Bridge, with two young noted in August. Up to three, perhaps the same birds, were present in the Willop Basin area from October, one frequented the lake at Folkestone Racecourse during December and three arrived at Nickolls Quarry after a heavy overnight frost on the 19<sup>th</sup> December.



Teal at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)



Shoveler at Nickolls Quarry (Brian Harper)

#### Greater Scaup

*Aythya marila*

Rare migrant and winter visitor (A)

A flock of ten were reported on the sea off the Hythe Redoubt at mid-afternoon on the 10<sup>th</sup> January (per Rare Bird Alert). The 28<sup>th</sup> area record but only the second since 2010.

#### Common Eider

*Somateria mollissima*

Passage migrant and winter visitor, formerly summered but not since 2003 (A)

One was seen on the sea off Samphire Hoe on the 28<sup>th</sup> March, an immature male flew east past Mill Point the following day and a pair flew east past Mill Point on the 7<sup>th</sup> May.

There were three sightings of a female or immature bird, which may have related to the same individual, in the Princes Parade/Sandgate area between the 28<sup>th</sup> May and the 28<sup>th</sup> June.

A male flew west past Hythe Ranges on the 29<sup>th</sup> October and a flock of four (an adult male, an immature male and two females) flew east past Mill Point on the 1<sup>st</sup> December.

#### Long-tailed Duck

*Clangula hyemalis*

Very rare vagrant (A)

One seen in Folkestone Harbour on the 4<sup>th</sup> November (M. Walford) was only the 11<sup>th</sup> area record.

#### Common Scoter

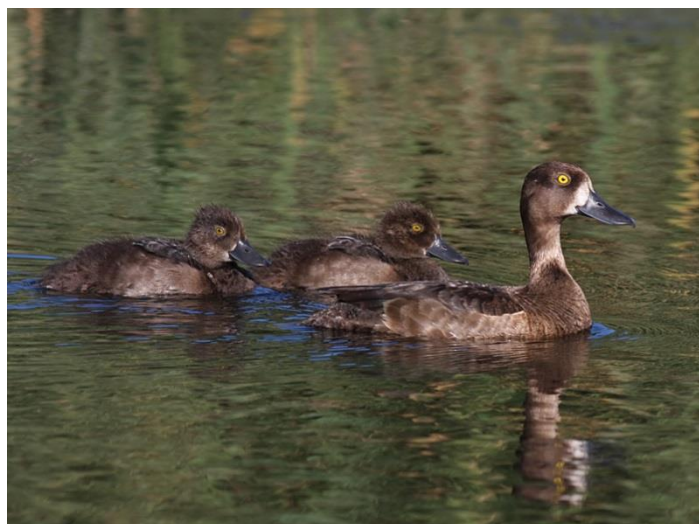
*Melanitta nigra*

Non-breeding summer visitor, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Small numbers were present in the bay between Mill Point and the Willop Outfall, with a peak count of 75 off the Hythe Redoubt on the 8<sup>th</sup> January.

Spring passage was noted between the 12<sup>th</sup> March and the 15<sup>th</sup> May, with a total of nearly 1,040 heading up-channel, which was slightly better than the mean for the previous decade of around 900. Counts included 385 east past Samphire Hoe on the 29<sup>th</sup> April and around 325 past Folkestone the next day.

A flock of between 400 to 500 was seen on the sea off Hythe on the 29<sup>th</sup> May but were not noted subsequently, with summer counts otherwise peaking at 150 flying east past Samphire Hoe on the 14<sup>th</sup> June and 40 there on the 18<sup>th</sup> June and the 10<sup>th</sup> July. Another large flock of 300 were noted off the Willop Outfall on the 6<sup>th</sup> August and up to 70 were seen regularly in the bay between Hythe and the Willop Outfall between September and December. The only movements of note involved 20 flying west past Hythe on the 4<sup>th</sup> November and 35 flying west past Mill Point on the 7<sup>th</sup> November.



Tufted Ducks at Botolph's Bridge (Brian Harper)



Eider at Sandgate (Ian Roberts)

#### Velvet Scoter

*Melanitta fusca*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

A flock of six were seen with 55 Common Scoter on the sea off the Willop Outfall on the 12<sup>th</sup> March and one flew east past Samphire Hoe on the 17<sup>th</sup> April.

None were noted in the latter half of the year and the total of seven was somewhat lower than the mean for the previous ten years of 10.5.

#### Red-breasted Merganser

*Mergus serrator*

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

A female was seen at Nickolls Quarry on the 10<sup>th</sup> February (see photograph on page 8). The only signs of spring passage were three flying east past Mill Point on the 25<sup>th</sup> March and two flying west and then back east there on the 6<sup>th</sup> May. The spring total of five was considerably less than the mean for the previous decade of 13.

The only sighting from the latter half of the year was a single flying west past Mill Point on the 7<sup>th</sup> November.

#### Goosander

*Mergus merganser*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

A 'red-head' remained at Botolph's Bridge from 2016 until at least the 2<sup>nd</sup> January, whilst three (one drake) flew south-west there on the 1<sup>st</sup> January and two drakes flew over on the 21<sup>st</sup> January.



Three 'red-heads' were seen on the sea off the Hythe Redoubt on the 25<sup>th</sup> November and a single 'red-head' arrived at Nickolls Quarry after a heavy overnight frost on the 19<sup>th</sup> December.

This was another good year for a species which appears to becoming more regular locally, as the graph below illustrates:

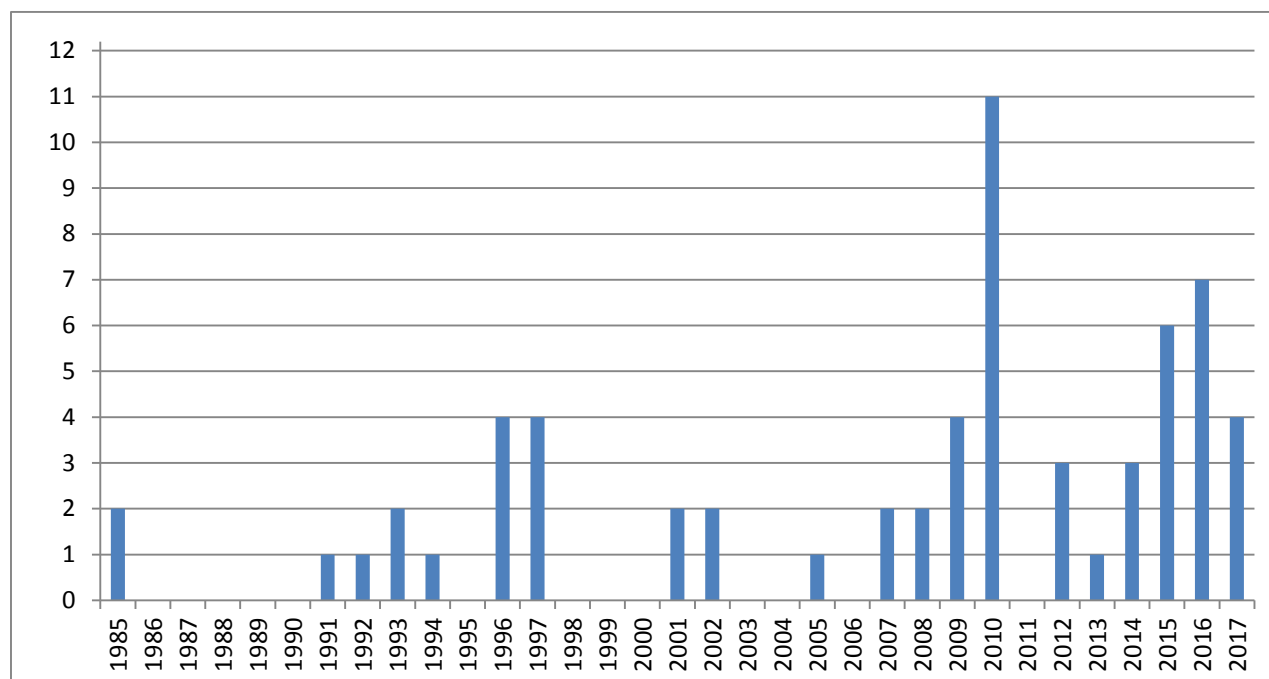


Figure 1: Goosander records at Folkestone and Hythe since 1985

#### Red-legged Partridge

*Alectoris rufa*

Breeding resident (C)

One was present at Hythe Roughs in March, with up to two at Samphire Hoe in March and April. Two were seen at Beachborough Lakes in July, whilst one at Princes Parade on the 26<sup>th</sup> September was the first record for the site.

#### Grey Partridge

*Perdix perdix*

Declining breeding resident (A)

A flock of six were present near the Willop Sewage Works from the 1<sup>st</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> January, with two there on the 6<sup>th</sup> February and two at Donkey Street on the 20<sup>th</sup> April. These were the first records on the local section of the Romney Marsh since 2005.

Elsewhere up to two were seen regularly at the usual haunt of Abbotscliffe between April and September.

#### Pheasant

*Phasianus colchicus*

Breeding resident (C)

As always very few counts of this species were received, with a peak of just 12 at Donkey Street in November. It tends to be scarce at Samphire Hoe but there were records in March, April and September.

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Numbers in the early winter period were much improved on last year, with counts including 70 flying west at the Willop Outfall on the 16<sup>th</sup> January, 302 east past Mill Point on the 27<sup>th</sup> January, 64 east past Samphire Hoe on the 6<sup>th</sup> February, 100 west past Hythe on the 18<sup>th</sup> February (when 140 were also counted on the sea between Sandgate and the Willop Outfall) and 90 west past the Willop Outfall on the 24<sup>th</sup> February.

Spring passage was noted between the 10<sup>th</sup> March and 10<sup>th</sup> May but numbers were generally low, with peak counts of 38 east Samphire Hoe on the 11<sup>th</sup> March, 27 east past Mill Point on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March and 30 east there on the 29<sup>th</sup> March.

Departure/Arrival	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Latest/Earliest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Departure	10 <sup>th</sup> May	6 <sup>th</sup> May	+4	1 <sup>st</sup> May	+9	6 <sup>th</sup> June 2006
Arrival	15 <sup>th</sup> Sep	11 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-26	7 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-22	7 <sup>th</sup> Sep 1997

A fine summer-plumaged bird off Fisherman's Beach (Hythe) on the 17<sup>th</sup> September (see photograph on page 86) was the fourth earliest ever arrival (with the earlier three having occurred on the 7<sup>th</sup> September 1997, 12<sup>th</sup> September 1993 and 13<sup>th</sup> September 2009). Numbers in autumn however were very low until December, when there were movements of 57 (9 east, 48 west) past Mill Point on the 1<sup>st</sup> and an excellent total of 535 west (457 past Mill Point and 78 past Hythe) on the 13<sup>th</sup>, which equalled the previous record count from Princes Parade on the 24<sup>th</sup> December 2016.



Red-legged Partridge at Princes Parade (Nigel Webster)



Grey Partridge at Donkey Street (Brian Harper)

Scarce passage migrant, mainly in spring, and occasional winter visitor (A)

Singles flew east past Mill Point on the 29<sup>th</sup> March, Samphire Hoe on the 29<sup>th</sup> April and Mill Point the following day. The total of three was less than half of the mean for the previous ten years of 6.9.

Rare migrant and winter visitor (A)

Singles seen on the sea off Princes Parade on the 14<sup>th</sup> November (B. Harper, I. A. Roberts) and the 2<sup>nd</sup> December (I. A. Roberts) were the 31<sup>st</sup> and 32<sup>nd</sup> area records.

Breeding visitor and passage migrant (A)

Birds had begun to arrive back at the cliffs from December 2016 and three or four pairs bred at both Capel-le-Ferne and Samphire Hoe. Elsewhere small numbers were noted at other coastal sites in January and February. There was some evidence of spring passage from late February into March with counts including 20 flying west past Mill Point on the 20<sup>th</sup> March, 24 flying east there on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March, a record-equalling 111 flying east there on the 24<sup>th</sup> March and 25 east there the following day. The previous count of 111 referred to birds passing east off Copt Point on the 20<sup>th</sup> April 2003.

The first breeding birds had returned to the cliffs at Samphire Hoe by the 28<sup>th</sup> November and seven flew east past Mill Point on the 11<sup>th</sup> December.



Pheasant at Princes Parade (Brian Harper)



Great Northern Diver at Princes Parade (Ian Roberts)

Rare passage migrant (A)

One flew east past Mill Point on the 31<sup>st</sup> October (I. A. Roberts). The 47<sup>th</sup> area record.

Passage migrant and non-breeding visitor at all times of year (A)

Counts in the early winter included 50 off Folkestone Pier on the 20<sup>th</sup> February, 30 off Mill Point on the 25<sup>th</sup> February and 35 flying west there on the 27<sup>th</sup> February. In spring 73 flew east past Mill Point on the 24<sup>th</sup> March, 55 flew east there on the 19<sup>th</sup> April and 39 flew east past Samphire Hoe on the 29<sup>th</sup> April.

The early autumn period produced counts of 37 east past Seabrook on the 20<sup>th</sup> July, 48 west past Samphire Hoe on the 26<sup>th</sup> July, 94 west past Seabrook on the 4<sup>th</sup> August and 111 flying west there the next day.

Large numbers were feeding offshore during October, with between 450 and 500 off Hythe on the 13<sup>th</sup> (the fifth highest ever count), 100 off Samphire Hoe on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 200 off both Hythe Ranges and Mill Point on the 29<sup>th</sup>. In November at least 100 were seen off Samphire Hoe on the 12<sup>th</sup> and in December 250 flew past Mill Point on the 13<sup>th</sup>.

Non-breeding visitor at all times of year (A)

Following a record count of 225 in late December 2016, remarkable numbers were noted in the early part of the year. In January at least 100 were seen off Sandgate on the 4<sup>th</sup>, 191 flew east past Samphire Hoe on the 9<sup>th</sup>, 305 flew east past Mill Point on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 395 flew east there on the 17<sup>th</sup>, before an exceptional count of 1,230 flew east there on the 26<sup>th</sup> and 910 (including a flock of 610) flew east past Samphire Hoe on the 30<sup>th</sup>. Smaller numbers were seen heading back west on some afternoons, including 250 past Mill Point on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

February saw an incredible count of 1,471 heading east past Mill Point on the morning of the 2<sup>nd</sup>, whilst a total of around 1,290 east past Samphire Hoe on the morning of the 6<sup>th</sup> included a flock of over 800. Afternoon counts included 750 west over Folkestone on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 1,000 west past Samphire Hoe on the 7<sup>th</sup>. The source of these was traced back to a roost site at Dungeness which held unprecedented numbers and peaked at a total of 1,860 on the evening of the 2<sup>nd</sup> February.

The last large count was 1,172 east past Samphire Hoe on the 14<sup>th</sup> February and numbers in March returned to a more normal level, with a peak of 90 flying east past Hythe on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Numbers began to build again in the latter winter period, with 200 off Hythe/Seabrook on the 10<sup>th</sup> November, 134 flying east past Seabrook on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December and 1,250 (300 west, 950 east) off Mill Point on the 13<sup>th</sup> December.

## Shag

*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Passage migrant and winter visitor, with occasional summer records (A)

Up to two were seen off Sandgate on several dates between the 2<sup>nd</sup> January and the 19<sup>th</sup> February, whilst these birds may have also accounted for sightings of singles off Hythe on the 13<sup>th</sup> January, Mill Point on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> January and Folkestone Pier on the 20<sup>th</sup> February. Elsewhere a flock of four flew west past Samphire Hoe on the 24<sup>th</sup> January, when an additional bird was feeding offshore, and presumably the same four were seen there again on the 30<sup>th</sup> January, with three subsequent singles there in February.

In March singles were seen off Samphire Hoe on three dates from the 23<sup>rd</sup>, whilst one was at Mill Point on the 24<sup>th</sup> and in April a flock of four were seen on the sea off Abbotscliffe on the 13<sup>th</sup> and Samphire Hoe on the 20<sup>th</sup>, with three off the latter site on the 7<sup>th</sup> May.

In the latter part of the year up to two were seen regularly at Samphire Hoe from the 4<sup>th</sup> September, two were on the sea off at Sandgate on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December and one was noted at the Hythe Redoubt on the 15<sup>th</sup> December.



Fulmar at the Hythe Redoubt (Brian Harper)



Shag at Hythe (Martin Casemore)



Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
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Non-breeding visitor at any time of year, now regular in winter and on passage (A)

In the early part of the year up to five were wintering in the Botolph's Bridge/Nickolls Quarry area, with up to two in the Saltwood Castle/Mill Stream area and singles at Abbotscliffe, Copt Point, Samphire Hoe and West Hythe.

Very few were noted after mid-March, with just singles at Abbotscliffe on the 27<sup>th</sup> March and Copt Point on the 21<sup>st</sup> April, until July when one was seen at Princes Parade on the 1<sup>st</sup>, three flew west at Samphire Hoe on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and a record count of 12 flew west at Abbotscliffe on the 5<sup>th</sup>. Ones and twos were widespread thereafter with another good count on the 13<sup>th</sup> October when seven flew west at Hythe.

At the latter end of the year birds were wintering in the Botolph's Bridge/Nickolls Quarry area (up to four), on the Seabrook Stream at Horn Street (two) and along the foreshore between Copt Point and Samphire Hoe (at least two).

Great White Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
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Very rare vagrant (A)

One seen at the Willop Basin on the 13<sup>th</sup> October was still present the next day (see photograph on page 18), having roosted at Nickolls Quarry overnight (I. A. Roberts, B. Harper), and one flew west past Mill Point on the 7<sup>th</sup> November (I. A. Roberts). These were the only the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> area records but the species has now been recorded in seven of the last eight years and 2017 was the second year to produce two records.

Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
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Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

At least 13 nests were occupied in Lympe Park Wood, where the population appears to be stable with 11 to 13 pairs noted in each of the last nine years.

Small numbers were seen at many sites across the area during the year, with a larger count of eight in the Willop area on the 14<sup>th</sup> October. There were few records suggestive of passage or dispersal but one was seen flying in off the sea at Seabrook on the 9<sup>th</sup> May, three flew in off the sea at the same site and then coasted west and a good count of 14 flew west at Samphire Hoe on the 24<sup>th</sup> September.

Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>
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Very rare vagrant (A)

One which flew east past Seabrook at 07:45 on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April (S. McMinn) was the 12<sup>th</sup> area record, but only the second since 2004.

Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
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Breeding resident and winter visitor (A)

In the early winter period there were up to two at Princes Parade and the Willop Basin, with up to four in the Botolph's Bridge area. At Samphire Hoe one was noted from the 5<sup>th</sup> February, with two intermittently from the 22<sup>nd</sup> March into June and breeding may have occurred but no young were seen.

In the latter winter period there was a single at Princes Parade on the 15<sup>th</sup> October, two in the Willop Basin area from mid-October and two at Nickolls Quarry and up to four at Botolph's Bridge in November and December.

Breeding resident and winter visitor (A)

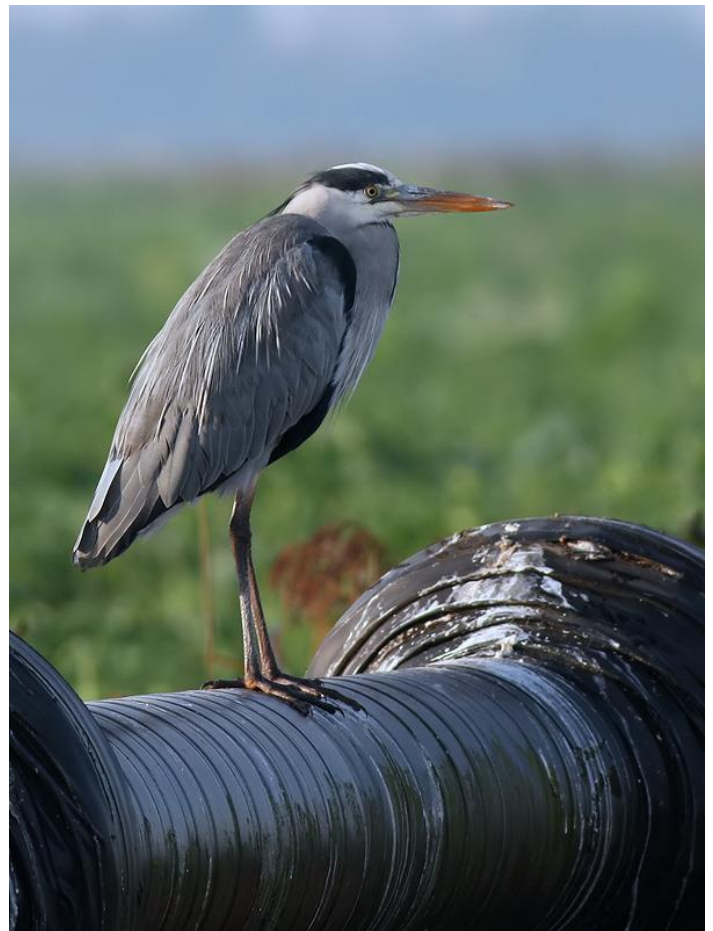
Good numbers were present in January, with counts including 65 off Hythe on the 7<sup>th</sup>, 238 off the Hythe Redoubt on the 8<sup>th</sup> (the fourth highest ever count), 190 off the Willop Outfall on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 50 off Fisherman's Beach, Hythe on the 30<sup>th</sup>, whilst in February there were 60 off Hythe on the 11<sup>th</sup>, at least 100 off the Willop Outfall on the 17<sup>th</sup> and a total of 169 between Folkestone Harbour and the Willop Outfall the following day. In March there was a peak of 98 off the Willop Outfall on the 12<sup>th</sup> whilst away from the coast there were up to ten at Nickolls Quarry and one on the lake at Folkestone Racecourse.

The only sign of spring passage were six heading east past Mill Point on the 19<sup>th</sup> April. Breeding probably occurred at Nickolls Quarry but no evidence was noted.

In the late winter period small numbers were noted offshore, with movements including six flying east past Mill Point on the 31<sup>st</sup> October, five flying east there on the 1<sup>st</sup> December and 26 flying west there on the 13<sup>th</sup> December.



Little Egret at Saltwood Castle (Nigel Webster)



Grey Heron at Botolph's Bridge (Brian Harper)

Rare migrant and winter visitor (A)

Singles off Mill Point/Sandgate on the 4<sup>th</sup> November (B. Harper, I. A. Roberts) (see photograph on page 20) and Samphire Hoe on the 13<sup>th</sup> November (P. Holt) were the 33<sup>rd</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup> area records but the first since 2011.

Scarce passage migrant (A)

Singles were seen flying over Abbotscliffe on the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 24<sup>th</sup> May, Folkestone on the 26<sup>th</sup> May and the 1<sup>st</sup> June, Folkestone Downs on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June and Samphire Hoe on the 9<sup>th</sup> July.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	17 <sup>th</sup> May	28 <sup>th</sup> May	-11	22 <sup>nd</sup> May	-5	3 <sup>rd</sup> May 2013
Departure	-	-	-	14 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-	15 <sup>th</sup> Oct 1995

A total of 131 have now been recorded in the area in the 28 years since 1990 (4.7 per year) so the six in 2017 were slightly better than the average.



Little Grebe at Samphire Hoe (Ian Roberts)



Red-necked Grebe at Sandgate (Brian Harper)

Very rare vagrant (A)

One which flew in off the sea at Mill Point at 11:07 on the 30<sup>th</sup> April (D. A. Gibson) was also seen heading west at Seabrook about ten minutes later (P. Howe). The 13<sup>th</sup> area record, with all but two being recorded since 2005.

Scarce but increasing migrant, mainly in spring, but recorded in all months of the year (A, C)

The first of the year was seen at Samphire Hoe on the 2<sup>nd</sup> March, whilst another flew south-west there on the 6<sup>th</sup> (see photograph on page 10), with presumably the same bird later heading south-west over Hythe. One flew west over Seabrook on the 9<sup>th</sup> March, with singles at West Hythe on the 11<sup>th</sup> March and flying south-west over Lympe on the 16<sup>th</sup>, before one flew north-west over Capel-le-Ferne and two flew north-west over Hythe on the 17<sup>th</sup> March.

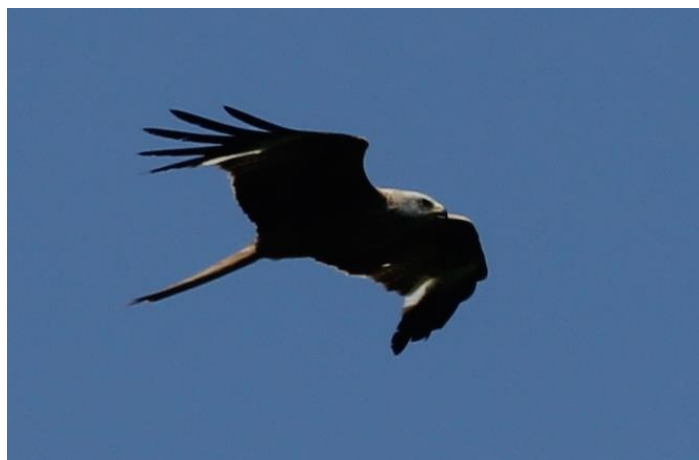
There was another series of records in early April, with one flying east over Seabrook and two seen over the west end of Folkestone on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, one flying west over Samphire Hoe on the 4<sup>th</sup>, one flying over Hythe on the 5<sup>th</sup> and singles over Abbotscliffe and Saltwood on the 7<sup>th</sup>. After one flew east over Horn Street on the 11<sup>th</sup> May there was a significant influx in the last week of the month, including a record movement of at least 18 (3 over Lympe, at least 7 over Cheriton and 8 over Abbotscliffe) on the 24<sup>th</sup>, one east at Samphire Hoe the next day, and one over Cheriton and two over Folkestone on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

One flew west over Bargrove Wood on the 4<sup>th</sup> June before singles were noted at Beachborough Lakes on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June and the 6<sup>th</sup> July, Hythe on the 8<sup>th</sup> July, near Westenhanger on the 2<sup>nd</sup> August and at Beachborough Lakes again on the 23<sup>rd</sup> August. Finally one was seen at Abbotscliffe on the 8<sup>th</sup> November and three flew over Hythe on the 20<sup>th</sup> November.

The total of 29 records involving at least 46 birds was another excellent tally.



Honey Buzzard at Samphire Hoe (Paul Holt)



Red Kite at Lympne (Ian Roberts)

#### Marsh Harrier

*Circus aeruginosus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

The pattern of more regular winter occurrences (as described in the 2013 report) continued with sightings of a female/immature at Nickolls Quarry on the 2<sup>nd</sup> January, Donkey Street on the 25<sup>th</sup> January and the Willop Basin on the 28<sup>th</sup> January.

One that flew in off the sea at Seabrook on the 19<sup>th</sup> February was presumably an early migrant and another flew south-west over Lympne on the 19<sup>th</sup> March, whilst a male was seen in the Nickolls Quarry/Donkey Street area on the 31<sup>st</sup> March and the 1<sup>st</sup> April. Singles were seen arriving in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 6<sup>th</sup> and the 14<sup>th</sup> April, and at Seabrook on the 26<sup>th</sup> April, whilst one was seen off Princes Parade on the 7<sup>th</sup> May and one flew west over Brockhill Country Park on the 14<sup>th</sup> May.

After an early record at Donkey Street on the 6<sup>th</sup> August, one was seen flying over Hythe seafront on the 27<sup>th</sup> August, another was seen at Donkey Street on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September and one was noted at Botolph's Bridge also on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September. In November a male was seen at Donkey Street and Nickolls Quarry on the 17<sup>th</sup> November, with perhaps the same bird hunting over the Willop Basin on the 29<sup>th</sup> November and in December two were frequenting the Botolph's Bridge/Nickolls Quarry area throughout, and appearing to be roosting at the latter site overnight.

The total of 19 records was significantly better than the mean for the previous ten years of 12.5.

#### Hen Harrier

*Circus cyaneus*

Rare migrant and winter visitor (A)

A 'ring-tail' was reported flying over the A20 near Capel-le-Ferne on the 29<sup>th</sup> January (D. Richards) whilst in September single 'ring-tails' were seen flying in off the sea at Abbotscliffe (M. Varley) and Hythe (S. McMinn) on the 14<sup>th</sup>. These were the 42<sup>nd</sup> to 44<sup>th</sup> areas record but the species has now been recorded in 14 of the last 16 years (with only 2008 and 2009 being blank).



Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>
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Very rare vagrant (A)

Singles were reported flying west over Paraker Wood on the 14<sup>th</sup> March (K. Harding) and south-west over Beachborough Lakes on the 26<sup>th</sup> October (S. Tomlinson). The 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> area records.

Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>
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Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Ones and twos were seen at many sites throughout the year. There was little evidence of any passage but a female which was seen flying in off the sea at Seabrook on the 9<sup>th</sup> May was possibly a migrant.

Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
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Formerly scarce, but has bred since 2001 and continues to increase, also a winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

There were widespread records throughout the year. Some indications of passage were evident between mid-February and mid-April and again in September to October but there were no counts of note.



Sparrowhawk at Hythe (Mike Cox)



Common Buzzard at Botolph's Bridge (Brian Harper)

Rough-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo lagopus</i>
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Very rare vagrant (A)

One was reported near Saltwood on the 25<sup>th</sup> October (B. Green). This was only the 14<sup>th</sup> area record but the seventh in the last seven years.

Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
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Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

Widespread in small numbers with no counts of note.

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant (A).

Singles were seen at the Willop Basin on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January and the 1<sup>st</sup> March and in the Botolph's Bridge/Donkey Street area on the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> April.

In the latter half of the year there were singles at Nickolls Quarry on the 20<sup>th</sup> September, Botolph's Bridge on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September, Nickolls Quarry on the 10<sup>th</sup> October, Folkestone Downs on the 12<sup>th</sup> October, Nickolls Quarry again on the 25<sup>th</sup> October and the Willop Sewage Works on the 11<sup>th</sup> November. A female was seen at Hythe Ranges on the 25<sup>th</sup> November with presumably the same bird being seen regularly in the Botolph's Bridge/Nickolls Quarry/Hythe Redoubt area until the end of the year.

The previous decade saw a mean of 4.9 records per year so the total of around 11 was well above average.

## Hobby

*Falco subbuteo*

A summer visitor with breeding suspected in many years but not proven until 2014, also a passage migrant (A)

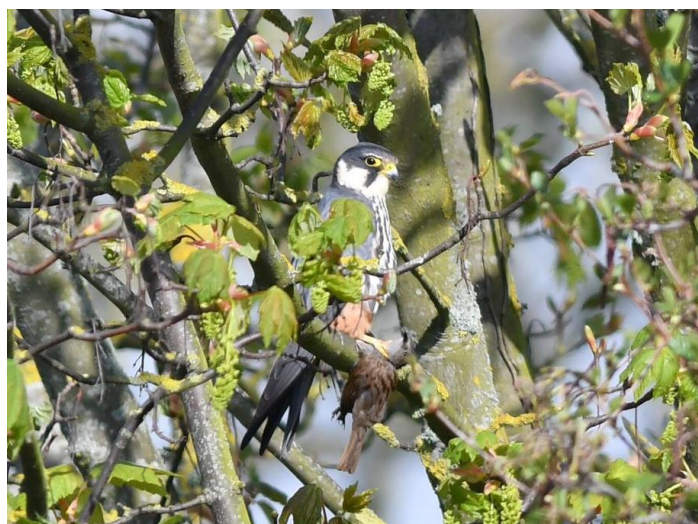
The first, one at Princes Parade on the 26<sup>th</sup> April, was just two days later than last year and the mean for the previous decade and there was one further sighting in April, when a single was seen over Lympne Churchyard on the 30<sup>th</sup>. A pair may have bred again in the nearby Lympne Park Wood and, whilst this was not confirmed, three birds were seen there on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September. A pair may also have bred in the Horn Street/Seabrook area as there were a series of sightings between June and October, following possible breeding in the same area last year.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016				
Arrival	26 <sup>th</sup> Apr	24 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+2	24 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+2	9 <sup>th</sup> Apr 1998
Departure	12 <sup>th</sup> Oct	22 <sup>nd</sup> Sep	+20	1 <sup>st</sup> Oct	+11	22 <sup>nd</sup> Oct 2001

Elsewhere two were seen at the Willop Basin on the 5<sup>th</sup> May and singles were at Prince Parade on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May, Abbotscliffe on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> June, Samphire Hoe on the 25<sup>th</sup> July, Donkey Street on the 11<sup>th</sup> August and Folkestone on the 18<sup>th</sup> September.



Kestrel at Nickolls Quarry (Brian Harper)



Hobby at Princes Parade (Nigel Webster)

Resident breeder until 1960 and again from the 1990s, also a winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

There were regular records from the cliffs between Folkestone and Dover throughout the year, with two or possibly three pairs present and these were presumably the source of birds seen hunting over Creteway Down and Folkestone on various dates.

Elsewhere one was seen regularly in the Donkey Street area between January and April with presumably the same bird wandering south to the Willop Basin and north to Lympne on occasion. One seen flying in off the sea at the Hythe Redoubt on the 18<sup>th</sup> March may have been a migrant whilst singles at Seabrook on the 24<sup>th</sup> April and carrying prey over Saltwood Castle on the 23<sup>rd</sup> May were perhaps local breeders.

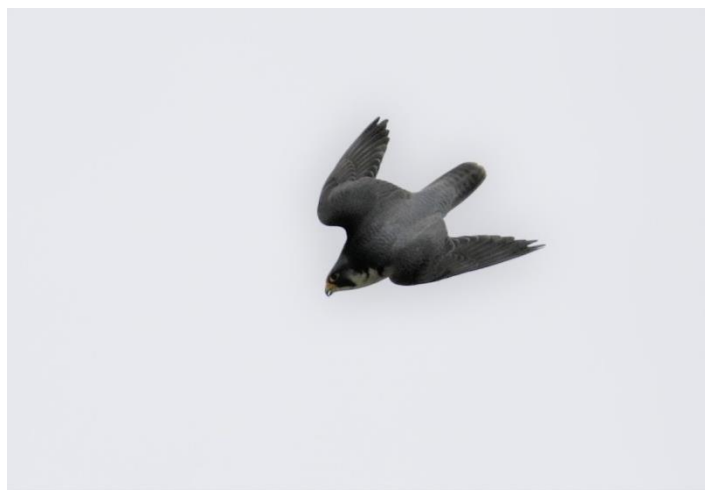
In the latter part of the year there were singles at Seabrook on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September, Donkey Street on the 6<sup>th</sup> September, Fisherman's Beach (Hythe) on the 10<sup>th</sup> November, Donkey Street on the 29<sup>th</sup> November, flying in off the sea at the Hythe Redoubt on the 15<sup>th</sup> December and at Hythe on the 16<sup>th</sup> December.

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

In the early winter period at least five were present along the canal between Hythe and Seabrook, at least three were present at Nickolls Quarry and singles were at West Hythe dam and Holy Well (Folkestone), with the last sightings in late March.

Singles at Beachborough Lakes on the 1<sup>st</sup> June and the 6<sup>th</sup> July were the first summer records for nearly 60 years and raised suspicions of local breeding.

The first returning bird was at Princes Parade on the 26<sup>th</sup> September and up to five were seen there from October, whilst at least two were wintering at Nickolls Quarry in the latter part of the year.



Peregrine at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)



Water Rail at Princes Parade (Nigel Webster)

Breeding resident (A)

There were widespread records but the only double-figure count came from West Hythe, where 20 were noted on the 2<sup>nd</sup> January.

Breeding resident and winter visitor (A)

Yet another mild winter meant that numbers in the early part of the year were low again, with peak counts of four at Folkestone Racecourse (Westenhanger) on the 8<sup>th</sup> February and 22 at Nickolls Quarry on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January. One or two were noted in the Willop Sewer area and the single on the canal at Princes Parade remained from last year until 24<sup>th</sup> January.

Up to two pairs were present at Nickolls Quarry and the Willop Basin in spring/summer and breeding may have occurred.

At the latter end of the year there were three at Botolph's Bridge and the Willop Basin, five at Folkestone Racecourse (Westenhanger) and up to 18 at Nickolls Quarry.

Very rare vagrant (A)

At least one was heard calling over Cheriton at 06:15 on the 28<sup>th</sup> May (R. Thorogood). The 11<sup>th</sup> area record.

Breeding species, passage migrant and winter visitor (A)

Oystercatchers were seen regularly between the Hythe Redoubt and the Willop Outfall between January and March, with a record count for the winter period of 36 there on the 30<sup>th</sup> January.

The pair of Oystercatchers had returned to Nickolls Quarry on the 26<sup>th</sup> March and remained at least into May. Whilst there appeared to be a nest on the island in the lake there were no young noted. A pair were also seen at an occasionally used breeding site at the Willop Basin on the 26<sup>th</sup> March but did not linger.

A light spring passage was noted between the 4<sup>th</sup> March and the 3<sup>rd</sup> May, with a total of just 27 logged, including counts of 11 passing Samphire Hoe on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April, six passing there on the 29<sup>th</sup> April and five passing Mill Point the following day.

Ones and twos were noted occasionally from the 18<sup>th</sup> June with the only larger counts being four flying west at Princes Parade on the 1<sup>st</sup> August and three at Hythe Ranges on the 17<sup>th</sup> September.

Scarce migrant (A)

One was seen flying around close inshore off the Hythe Redoubt on the 18<sup>th</sup> February (I. A. Roberts). The 66<sup>th</sup> area record.

Occasional breeding species, also a winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

The regular roost at Folkestone Beach held a peak of 24 birds on the 10<sup>th</sup> January.

Spring migrants involved one at the Hythe Redoubt on the 14<sup>th</sup> April, seven flying east past Mill Point on the 30<sup>th</sup> April, three flying east there on the 5<sup>th</sup> May and eight flying east there on the 7<sup>th</sup> May.



In the latter winter period the Folkestone Beach roost held 15 birds on the 29<sup>th</sup> October, increasing to 21 by early December. Elsewhere one was seen at Hythe Ranges on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December.

Golden Plover
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<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>
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Declining winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

January produced the highest wintering numbers since 2010, with a flock at Tumble Tye Farm (Capel-le-Ferne) peaking at 64 on the 21<sup>st</sup> and a flock in the Postling Wents area peaking at 66 on the 18<sup>th</sup>, but there were no further records after the month's end.

There were no records from the latter half of the year.

Grey Plover
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<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>
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Passage migrant and occasional winter visitor (A)

The only record from the early winter period involved one at the Willop Outfall on the 15<sup>th</sup> January.

An excellent spring passage began with five flying east past Mill Point on the 19<sup>th</sup> April, and 59 flew east there on the 30<sup>th</sup> April, with one east there on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May, a record count of 109 east there on the 5<sup>th</sup> May and five east there the next day. The total for the spring of 179 was also a record and far exceeded the mean for the previous decade of 15. The previous highest day count involved 98 flying east past Copt Point on the 9<sup>th</sup> May 2001.

There were no records from the latter half of the year.

Lapwing
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<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>
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Former breeding species (most recently in 2011), also a winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

The early winter period saw flocks of up to 100 at Hillhurst Farm (Westenhanger), 110 at Tumble Tye Farm (Capel-le-Ferne), 169 at Postling Wents, 172 at Botolph's Bridge and 200 at the Willop Basin in January/February. The only other records in the first half of the year were two at the Willop Basin on the 12<sup>th</sup> March and one heard calling over Hythe on the night of the 14<sup>th</sup> May.

The first autumn birds were four at Abbotscliffe on the 27<sup>th</sup> September and numbers were low during October with just two noted in the Willop area on several dates. In November three were seen flying out to sea from Samphire Hoe on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and flocks began to build up at Hillhurst Farm (peaking at 22 at on the 12<sup>th</sup>), the Willop Basin (peaking at 40 on the 25<sup>th</sup>) and Donkey Street (peaking at 45 on the 5<sup>th</sup>). Numbers increased further in December, with counts of 54 at Donkey Street on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 112 at the Willop Basin on the 5<sup>th</sup>.

Knot
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<i>Calidris canutus</i>
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Passage migrant (A)

Five flew east past Mill Point on the 24<sup>th</sup> March whilst in May a record count of 104 flew east there on the 5<sup>th</sup>, with a further eight the next day. The spring total of 117 was also a record and far exceeded the mean for the previous decade of 8. The previous highest day count involved 50 at the Willop Outfall on the 5<sup>th</sup> February 2006 and the previous highest spring movement was 26 east past Copt Point on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2011.

The only record from the late winter period was of a flock of 13 at the Willop Outfall on the 9<sup>th</sup> December.

## Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Up to five were seen regularly at the Willop Outfall in January and February, with singles on several dates at the Hythe Redoubt and Folkestone Harbour. An increase to seven at the Willop Outfall on the 1<sup>st</sup> March may have included some passage birds, as might a count of 14 there on the 18<sup>th</sup> March, whilst other migrants involved two flying east past Mill Point on the 9<sup>th</sup> April, five at the Hythe Redoubt on the 14<sup>th</sup> April and ten flying east past Mill Point on the 5<sup>th</sup> May.

In the late winter period there were three at the Hythe Redoubt on the 25<sup>th</sup> November and four at the Willop Outfall from the 21<sup>st</sup> November, with numbers at the latter site increasing to 14 in December.

A colour-ringed bird from Iceland was seen at the Willop Outfall in March and again in December (see page 92 for further details and page 97 for a photograph).

## Purple Sandpiper

*Calidris maritima*

## Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Four remained at Hythe from 2016 and mainly frequented the Stade Street and Twiss Road groynes, with presumably the same birds wandering to Battery Point on occasion. Sightings of up to three at the Hythe Redoubt were considered to relate to additional individuals. The departure date of 9<sup>th</sup> May was only one day short of equalling the latest ever.

Departure/Arrival	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Departure	9 <sup>th</sup> May	5 <sup>th</sup> May	+4	2 <sup>nd</sup> May	+7	10 <sup>th</sup> May 2009
Arrival	25 <sup>th</sup> Oct	3 <sup>rd</sup> Nov	-9	31 <sup>st</sup> Oct	-6	30 <sup>th</sup> Sep 1984

The first returning bird was seen at Hythe on the 25<sup>th</sup> October, increasing to two there from the 31<sup>st</sup> October and three from the 4<sup>th</sup> December. Another, or perhaps one of the Hythe birds, was noted at Battery Point on the 11<sup>th</sup> November, with three there on the 18<sup>th</sup> November. Three were also present at the Hythe Redoubt on the 11<sup>th</sup> November, with at least one remaining until at least the end of the month, and further singles were noted at the Willop Outfall on the 28<sup>th</sup> November and flying past Mill Point on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December.



Lapwing at the Willop Basin (Brian Harper)



Purple Sandpiper at Hythe (Nigel Webster)

Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>
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Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

There were no records in January or February but a light spring passage comprising a total of 38 birds was noted between the 23<sup>rd</sup> March and the 8<sup>th</sup> May. Counts included 12 flying east past Mill Point on the 24<sup>th</sup> March, 8 flying east there on the 30<sup>th</sup> April and 11 flying east there on the 5<sup>th</sup> May.

Two that were flushed from near the reed-bed at Beachborough Lakes on the 12<sup>th</sup> October were a good record for the site and the only other records from the latter half of the year were one flying west past Mill Point on the 8<sup>th</sup> November, eight flying east there on the 1<sup>st</sup> December and two flying east there on the 11<sup>th</sup> December.

Jack Snipe	<i>Lymnocyptes minimus</i>
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Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

The only sightings from the early winter period involved singles at Nickolls Quarry on the 8<sup>th</sup> January and at the Willop Basin on the 16<sup>th</sup> January.

There were no records from the latter half of the year.

Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>
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Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Good numbers were present in the early winter period with peak counts of six at Abbotscliffe, nine in a weedy field inland of the Hythe Redoubt, 50 at the Willop Basin (on the 21<sup>st</sup> January) and 62 in a stubble field near Folks' Wood (on the 18<sup>th</sup> February).

None were noted in April or May apart from an exceptionally late sighting at Beachborough Lakes on the 25<sup>th</sup> May. This was the latest ever record, the previous being one at Nickolls Quarry on the 18<sup>th</sup> May 2003.

Numbers in the late winter period were unremarkable, perhaps due to low water levels locally.

Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>
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Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Widely noted in the early winter period with singles at Perry Wood, Cowtye Wood, Saltwood Castle, Oak Banks, near Summerhouse Hill and Bargrove Wood, whilst at least two were at Folks Wood.

There were no records from the latter half of the year.

Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>
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Rare passage migrant (A)

A flock of four flew east past Mill Point on the 24<sup>th</sup> March (I. A. Roberts). The 30<sup>th</sup> area record.

Passage migrant, mainly in spring (A)

Spring passage involved a total of 98 moving up-channel between the 23<sup>rd</sup> March and the 7<sup>th</sup> May, including counts of 15 past Samphire Hoe on the 8<sup>th</sup> April, 15 past Mill Point/Princes Parade on the 30<sup>th</sup> April, 32 past Mill Point/Princes Parade on the 5<sup>th</sup> May and 18 past Samphire Hoe on the 7<sup>th</sup> May. This represented a significant improvement on last year but was still well below the average for the previous ten years of just over 230.

The only record from the latter half of the year was of one at Folkestone Sands on the 16<sup>th</sup> September (see photograph on page 17).

Passage migrant, mainly in spring (A)

Spring passage involved a total of about 228, mostly noted moving up-channel, between the 16<sup>th</sup> April and the 7<sup>th</sup> May, which was a significant improvement on the 104 recorded last spring and the average for the last ten years of 118. Counts included 16 east past Hythe on the 17<sup>th</sup> April, 15 east there the next day, a total of 44 east past coastal watch-points on the 19<sup>th</sup> April, 16 east past Folkestone/Hythe on the 30<sup>th</sup> April and a very good total of 68 east past Samphire Hoe on the 7<sup>th</sup> May (there have only been seven larger spring movements). See photograph on page 13.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	16 <sup>th</sup> Apr	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+5	12 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+4	25 <sup>th</sup> Mar 2011
Departure	11 <sup>th</sup> Aug	29 <sup>th</sup> Jul	+13	30 <sup>th</sup> Aug	-19	12 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2013

Autumn passage was typically light, with five records: singles at Samphire Hoe on the 6<sup>th</sup> July and Seabrook on the 8<sup>th</sup> July, three at Samphire Hoe on the 10<sup>th</sup> July, one at Folkestone Warren on the 17<sup>th</sup> July and one at the Hythe Redoubt on the 11<sup>th</sup> August.

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Only two singles were seen in January, at the Willop Basin on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, but there were more regular sightings there in February with up to seven seen on several dates. Four remained until the 10<sup>th</sup> March, decreasing to two on the 12<sup>th</sup> March and with the last seen there on the 26<sup>th</sup> March. There was no evidence this year of any spring passage.

The only record from the latter half of the year was one flying east past Mill Point on the 8<sup>th</sup> November.

Passage migrant, occasionally overwinters, most recently in 2008 (A)

The first, one at Nickolls Quarry on the 11<sup>th</sup> April, was the third earliest ever arrival, whilst the next, at the same site on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April was more typical. It or another was seen there on the 26<sup>th</sup> April, whilst one was along the canal at Princes Parade on the 30<sup>th</sup> April. Six further singles were noted in May: at Hythe on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Princes Parade on the 7<sup>th</sup>, Mill Point on the 10<sup>th</sup>, Nickolls Quarry on the 11<sup>th</sup>, Fisherman's Beach (Hythe) on the 15<sup>th</sup> and Princes Parade on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. The spring total of 11 bird/days was very close to the average for the previous ten years of 12.



Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr	24 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-13	22 <sup>nd</sup> Apr	-11	4 <sup>th</sup> Mar 2013*
Departure	11 <sup>th</sup> Aug	23 <sup>rd</sup> Sep	-43	24 <sup>th</sup> Sep*	-44	Several wintered

Autumn passage was very light with a total of just six recorded between the 24<sup>th</sup> July and the 11<sup>th</sup> August, including three at the Hythe Redoubt on the 28<sup>th</sup> July. This was significantly below the ten-year mean (17) and the lowest tally since 2009.

#### Green Sandpiper

*Tringa ochropus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

At least one was wintering in the Botolph's Bridge/Nickolls Quarry area from January until late March, whilst one that flew east over Nickolls Quarry on the 1<sup>st</sup> May was probably a spring passage migrant.

In autumn one was heard calling over Cheriton on the night of the 29<sup>th</sup> July, one flew west over Princes Parade on the 1<sup>st</sup> August, one flew over Abbotscliffe on the 14<sup>th</sup> August and one flew over Beachborough Lakes on the 12<sup>th</sup> October.

In the late winter period up to two were seen regularly in the Donkey Street/Nickolls Quarry from the 28<sup>th</sup> October until the end of the year.

#### Greenshank

*Tringa nebularia*

Scarce passage migrant (A)

Singles were seen flying over Princes Parade on the 25<sup>th</sup> March, Nickolls Quarry on the 13<sup>th</sup> April and Nickolls Quarry again on the 8<sup>th</sup> August. The three records are very much in line with the mean for the previous decade (3.2).

#### Redshank

*Tringa totanus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

In the early winter period there was one at Hythe seafront, up to two at Nickolls Quarry, six at Folkestone Harbour and a peak of 11 at the Willop Basin. The only indication of spring passage involved one flying east past Mill Point on the 5<sup>th</sup> May.

An autumn migrant was seen at Princes Parade on the 11<sup>th</sup> August and in the late winter period up to five were present in Folkestone Harbour from early November.

#### Turnstone

*Arenaria interpres*

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

In the early winter period there were up to eight at Hythe, 11 at Folkestone Harbour, 14 at the Hythe Redoubt and a very high peak of 45 (the fourth highest ever count) at the Willop Outfall on the 18<sup>th</sup> March, with numbers perhaps supplemented by migrants. Other signs of spring passage involved three flying east past Mill Point on the 29<sup>th</sup> March and six flying east there on the 5<sup>th</sup> May.

At the latter end of the year up to five were wintering in Folkestone Harbour and up to 12 were at the Willop Outfall, whilst four flew east past Mill Point on the 1<sup>st</sup> December.

Scarce passage migrant, mainly in spring (A)

There was an excellent movement of 37 flying east past Mill Point on the 30<sup>th</sup> April (a record count for this month, see photograph on page 12), with further counts in May of five east past Mill Point/Samphire on the 1<sup>st</sup>, five east past Mill Point on the 5<sup>th</sup> and three east past Samphire on the 7<sup>th</sup>.

The total of 50 represents an increase on the mean for the previous decade of 11 and constitutes the best passage since 2005.



Redshank at Folkestone Harbour (Ian Roberts)



Turnstone at Princes Parade (Brian Harper)

Passage migrant (A)

Spring passage comprised two flying east past Copt Point on the 29<sup>th</sup> April, nine east past Mill Point the following day, two east there on the 1<sup>st</sup> May and singles east past there on the 5<sup>th</sup> May and Samphire Hoe on the 7<sup>th</sup> May. The total of 15 was very close to the annual mean for the previous ten springs of around 14.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016				
Arrival	29 <sup>th</sup> Apr	14 <sup>th</sup> Mar*	+46	14 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+15	14 <sup>th</sup> Mar 2016*
Departure	18 <sup>th</sup> Oct	16 <sup>th</sup> Oct	+2	19 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-1	21 <sup>st</sup> Nov 2002

Return passage was very light with just eight birds logged: singles at Seabrook on the 5<sup>th</sup> August, Hythe on the 16<sup>th</sup> August, Hythe Redoubt on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September, Hythe on the 18<sup>th</sup> September, Hythe Redoubt on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September and Samphire Hoe on the 17<sup>th</sup> October, and two at the latter site on the 18<sup>th</sup> October. This total was significantly less than the annual mean for the previous ten years of 18.

Passage migrant (A)

The only record from the early winter period involved one off Mill Point on the 1<sup>st</sup> January.

Spring produced a total of 14 heading up-channel between the 3<sup>rd</sup> March and the 3<sup>rd</sup> May, all singles apart from two past Samphire Hoe on the 29<sup>th</sup> April and six past Copt Point/Mill Point on the 30<sup>th</sup> April.

None were noted in the autumn but the late winter period produced a good sequence of records, with one off Folkestone Harbour on the 29<sup>th</sup> November, two off Mill Point on the 1<sup>st</sup> December, two off Princes Parade on the 10<sup>th</sup> December, a record winter count of six flying west past Mill Point on the 13<sup>th</sup> December and one flying west past Samphire Hoe on the 24<sup>th</sup> December.

The annual total of 28 birds was a slight improvement on the average for the previous decade of 22.

Kittiwake
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<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>
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Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Small numbers were present offshore in the early winter period with double-figure counts of 31 off Folkestone Pier on the 4<sup>th</sup> January, 20 off Samphire Hoe on the 7<sup>th</sup> January, 30 off Hythe on the 21<sup>st</sup> January, 38 off Samphire Hoe on the 8<sup>th</sup> February and 30 off Mill Point on the 25<sup>th</sup> February.

Spring passage was noted between early March and early May, including counts of 25 flying east past Mill Point on the 24<sup>th</sup> March and 12 flying east there the next day.

Autumn counts included 22 flying west past Seabrook on the 5<sup>th</sup> August, 20 off Samphire Hoe on the 18<sup>th</sup> October, 70 off Mill Point on the 29<sup>th</sup> October, 100 off Samphire Hoe on the 12<sup>th</sup> November and 30 there the next day.

Black-headed Gull
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<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>
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Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Large numbers were present in the early winter period but the highest count received was of 120 at Samphire Hoe on the 7<sup>th</sup> February. Spring passage was noted between early March and early May, including counts of 16 east past Mill Point on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 36 east past Samphire Hoe on the 7<sup>th</sup> May and 19 east over Nickolls Quarry the following day.

There were no notable counts from the latter half of the year.

Little Gull
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<i>Hydrocoloeus minutus</i>
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Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

There were no records in the early winter period and just one in spring, an adult which flew east past Mill Point on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March. However there was an unusual series of records, presumably relating to the same individual, involving a first-summer bird seen off Princes Parade on the 26<sup>th</sup> May, 12<sup>th</sup> June and 23<sup>rd</sup> June. This was only the fourth to be recorded in June but quickly follows the third last year.

In the latter part of the year a first-winter flew east past Mill Point on the 29<sup>th</sup> October, an adult flew west past Hythe on the 4<sup>th</sup> November and one was seen off Princes Parade on the 10<sup>th</sup> December.

The total of just 7 was significantly less than last year's 65 and well below the mean for the previous decade of 25.

Mediterranean Gull
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<i>Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus</i>
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Increasing winter visitor and passage migrant, scarce in summer (A)

There were widespread records in the early winter period but the only notable count received was of 181 at Saltwood Castle on the 9<sup>th</sup> March, which may have included some migrant birds. There was some evidence of a small easterly passage in spring, between early March and early May with peak counts of six past Princes Parade on the 21<sup>st</sup> April and nine past Mill Point on the 1<sup>st</sup> May.

As usual very few were noted between mid-May and mid-June before numbers began to build again. There were 18 at Sandgate on the 19<sup>th</sup> June, between 40 and 50 at Princes Parade on the 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 35 flying east at Hythe on the 21<sup>st</sup> July and at least 67 feeding along the shore line at Princes Parade on the 2<sup>nd</sup> August. In recent years the peak numbers have occurred in August or September, and this was the case again, with at least 265 (but probably nearer 300) at Copt Point and 500 at Palmarsh on the 25<sup>th</sup> August, and 400 at Creteway Down on the 31<sup>st</sup> August.

There were subsequent counts of 250 off Samphire Hoe on the 18<sup>th</sup> October, at least 336 along the coast between Mill Point and Hythe Ranges on 29<sup>th</sup> October, 270 at Samphire Hoe on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November and at least 200 at the latter site on the 12<sup>th</sup> November.

Colour-ringed birds from France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Hungary were noted during the year, see page 92 for further information.



Great Skua at Mill Point (Ian Roberts)



Little Gull at Princes Parade (Nigel Webster)

Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>
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Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

There were widespread records in the early winter period but the only notable counts received were of 54 at Saltwood Castle on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January and 296 there on the 9<sup>th</sup> March, with the latter probably including some migrant birds.

Spring passage was noted from early March until late April, with counts of 30 east past Mill Point on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 86 east there the next day, 50 east there on the 25<sup>th</sup> March, 25 east there on the 29<sup>th</sup> March and 23 east there on the 19<sup>th</sup> April.

There were no notable counts from the latter half of the year.

Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>
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Breeding species, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Only ones and twos were noted in January and early February but there was a slow increase from mid-February, however no notable counts were received.

Two pairs were seen with nests at a roof-top site in Hythe in May, whilst up to eight were present in the Samphire Hoe area in June and "possible nesting" was recorded there. There were no notable counts from the latter half of the year.



Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Large numbers were present across the area throughout the year, but the only three-figure count received was of 300 in Folkestone Harbour on the 11<sup>th</sup> November.

The only colour-ringed bird noted had been trapped in Essex, see page 97 for further information.



Mediterranean Gull at Princes Parade (Nigel Webster)



Common Gull at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)

Rare migrant (A)

An adult was noted at Hythe on the 1<sup>st</sup> May (C. Nutmann), a juvenile was identified in Folkestone Harbour on the 13<sup>th</sup> July (I. A. Roberts), see photograph on page 15, and single adults, possibly the same bird, were seen at the latter site on the 29<sup>th</sup> November and 8<sup>th</sup> December (I. A. Roberts). These were the 23<sup>rd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> area records but this was the first juvenile. The total of four makes this the best year to date.



Herring Gulls at Samphire Hoe (Martin Collins)



Yellow-legged Gull at Folkestone Harbour (Ian Roberts)

Very rare vagrant (A)

An adult was roosting on the inner arm of Folkestone Harbour on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December (I. A. Roberts). This was only the tenth area record but the species is now proving to be almost annual in occurrence, with seven in the last seven years.

Very rare vagrant (A)

A first or second winter bird was seen at Nickolls Quarry on the 6<sup>th</sup> January (I. A. Roberts), see photograph on page 5. The 12<sup>th</sup> area record and the first since the individual of the *kumleini* form in 2012.

Winter visitor and passage migrant, with small numbers over-summering (A)

Counts included 45 in Folkestone Harbour on the 11<sup>th</sup> January, 55 at Princes Parade on the 15<sup>th</sup> October, 41 in Folkestone Harbour on the 8<sup>th</sup> November, 52 at Folkestone Harbour on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December and 50 at Samphire Hoe on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> December.

A colour-ringed individual from Normandy was noted – see page 97 for further information.

Passage migrant mainly in spring, formerly bred (but not since 1968) (A)

Spring passage involved four flying east past Mill Point, ten flying east past the Hythe Redoubt on the 7<sup>th</sup> May and singles off Princes Parade on the 26<sup>th</sup> May and the 17<sup>th</sup> June. The total of 16 was slightly below the mean for the previous decade of 23 but the June record was the first in this month since 1992.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016				
Arrival	7 <sup>th</sup> May	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+26	26 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+11	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr 2016
Departure	-	-	-	-	-	16 <sup>th</sup> Sep 1999



Caspian Gull at Folkestone Harbour (Ian Roberts)



Little Tern at Princes Parade (Nigel Webster)

## Scarce passage migrant (A)

Two flew east past the Hythe Redoubt and three (possibly including the same two) flew east past Samphire Hoe on the 7<sup>th</sup> May, whilst in autumn six flew west past Seabrook on the 4<sup>th</sup> August, with four going west there the next day.

The total of at least 13 was the highest since 2005.

## Sandwich Tern

*Thalasseus sandvicensis*

## Non-breeding summer visitor and passage migrant, rare in winter (last record in 2000) (A)

One seen off Hythe on the 18<sup>th</sup> February was the earliest ever spring arrival (bettering the only other February record at Copt Point on the 26<sup>th</sup> February 1986). The next, one flying east past Mill Point on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March, was also notably early but then there were no others until two were seen off Princes Parade on the 21<sup>st</sup> March. Late March saw a strong passage, with 48 flying east past Mill Point on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, 138 flying east past Mill Point/Seabrook on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 142 flying east past Mill Point on the 24<sup>th</sup> (the third largest ever movement in March).

Passage in April though was unremarkable, with peak counts of 60 off Hythe Ranges on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 94 east past Mill Point on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 177 east there the following day. Small numbers were noted offshore throughout the summer, whilst counts in autumn included 182 west past Seabrook on the 4<sup>th</sup> August, 198 west there the next day and 60 on the beach at the Hythe Redoubt on the 6<sup>th</sup> September.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	18 <sup>th</sup> Feb	23 <sup>rd</sup> Mar	-33	23 <sup>rd</sup> Mar	-33	18 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2017*
Departure	31 <sup>st</sup> Oct	19 <sup>th</sup> Oct	+12	3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct	+28	9 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2010*

The last, two flying west past Mill Point on the 31<sup>st</sup> October, were notably late. There have only ever been two later records (on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> November 2010).

## Common Tern

*Sterna hirundo*

## Passage migrant, formerly bred (but not since 1998) (A)

The first, three flying east past Mill Point on the 8<sup>th</sup> April, were six days later than last year but still almost a week earlier than the mean for the previous ten years. Spring passage was very light with the notable exception of an excellent count of 683 flying east past Samphire Hoe on the 7<sup>th</sup> May (the fourth largest ever spring movement). One at Nickolls Quarry on the 1<sup>st</sup> May was of note as this species is now scarce at this former breeding site.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	8 <sup>th</sup> Apr	2 <sup>nd</sup> Apr	+6	14 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-6	2 <sup>nd</sup> Apr 2016
Departure	31 <sup>st</sup> Aug	29 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-29	2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct	-32	30 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2007

Numbers in autumn were low as is the recent norm, with peak counts of 60 flying west past Seabrook on the 4<sup>th</sup> August and 73 flying west there the next day.

## Passage migrant (A)

From a total of 102 terns which flew east past Copt Point on the 29<sup>th</sup> April, 53 were identified as Arctic, with 4 identified as Common and the remaining 45 indeterminate Common/Arctic. This was the second largest ever count (following 54+ which flew past Mill Point/Samphire Hoe on the 19<sup>th</sup> April 2005).



Sandwich Tern at Princes Parade (Brian Harper)



Common Tern at Nickolls Quarry (Brian Harper)

## Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Numbers in the early winter period were low with the peak counts being 37 Guillemots/Razorbills flying east past Mill Point on the 27<sup>th</sup> January and 25 Guillemots off Folkestone Pier on the 20<sup>th</sup> February.

There was some evidence of spring passage between late March and mid-May, including 28 Guillemots/Razorbills flying east past Mill Point on the 24<sup>th</sup> March and 43 Guillemots/Razorbills flying east Samphire Hoe on the 7<sup>th</sup> May.

The late winter period also produced low numbers with the exception of a count of 550 large auks (which appeared to be primarily Guillemots) flying west past Hythe/Mill Point on the 13<sup>th</sup> December.

An individual of the bridled form was seen in Folkestone Harbour on the 4<sup>th</sup> November (see photograph below). This form is an example of dimorphism rather than a subspecies and their proportion in British colonies increases northwards.

## Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Ones and twos were widely noted in the early winter period, with larger counts of six off Folkestone Pier on the 7<sup>th</sup> January and 16 off Hythe on the 18<sup>th</sup> February.

As mentioned above the larger spring movement were not identified to species, though the majority were likely to be Guillemots. A single Razorbill was identified flying east past Mill Point on the 24<sup>th</sup> March.

There was a notable movement on the 29<sup>th</sup> October when from 312 large auks that flew east past Mill Point, 196 were identified as Razorbills and only 27 as Guillemots, with the rest indeterminate. A further five were seen on the sea there on the 31<sup>st</sup> October and two were seen off Samphire Hoe on the 13<sup>th</sup> November.



Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>
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Breeding resident (C)

A common and widespread species but as always few records were received, however these did include counts of 75 in St. Eanswythe's churchyard (Folkestone) on the 14<sup>th</sup> January, 60 near the Hythe Redoubt on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 120 at Hythe Ranges on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May and 49 near the Hythe Redoubt on the 16<sup>th</sup> November.



Guillemot at Princes Parade (Nigel Webster)



'Bridled' Guillemot at Folkestone Harbour (Ian Roberts)

Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>
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Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

The only noteworthy counts were in November, when 25 were at the Willop Basin on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 35 were at Botolph's Bridge on the 25<sup>th</sup>. There was no evidence of any spring or autumn migration this year.

Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
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Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

The only count of note involved approximately 500 near Blackhouse Hill, Hythe on the 29<sup>th</sup> January.

Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
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Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

There were no counts of note of resident birds. Possible migrants involved one at Samphire Hoe on the 17<sup>th</sup> September and one flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 15<sup>th</sup> October.

Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>
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Rare summer visitor and passage migrant, very rare in winter (A)

One was seen at West Hythe on the 16<sup>th</sup> June with at least one (probably two) present there on the 18<sup>th</sup> June (B. Harper, R. K. Norman). A flock of five were at Botolph's Bridge on the 28<sup>th</sup> August (see photograph on page 16), with two there on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September (B. Harper). A welcome return after a blank year in 2016 but the overall trend remains worryingly downward: the species is now regarded as being globally threatened and is likely to become close to extinction in the UK within the next two decades unless current trends can be halted or reversed (BTO, no date).

# Ring-necked Parakeet

*Psittacula krameri*

Very rare vagrant (A)

One was present in the Willop Basin and Willop Sewage Works area on the 6<sup>th</sup> February (I. A. Roberts). This was only the 22<sup>nd</sup> area record but the sixth in the last six years.

# Cuckoo

*Cuculus canorus*

Declining breeding summer visitor and passage migrant (A)

The first, one at Nickolls Quarry on the 29<sup>th</sup> April, was the latest arrival since 2012. Singles were seen there on several dates in May and breeding may have occurred.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	29 <sup>th</sup> Apr	19 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+10	21 <sup>st</sup> Apr	+8	27 <sup>th</sup> Mar 2001
Departure	6 <sup>th</sup> Sep	29 <sup>th</sup> Jun	+69	28 <sup>th</sup> Jul	+40	28 <sup>th</sup> Sep 1969

Autumn migrants involved singles at Seabrook on the 22<sup>nd</sup> July, Samphire Hoe on the 24<sup>th</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup> July and flying west at Seabrook on the notably late date of 6<sup>th</sup> September (there have been September records in only five previous years).

# Barn Owl

*Tyto alba*

Scarce breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor (A)

One remained at Nickolls Quarry from December 2016 and was seen on several dates between January and April (see photograph on page 6), and one was seen again there on the 8<sup>th</sup> October. Elsewhere one was reported at Sandling in mid-January and one was seen near Newington on the 12<sup>th</sup> December.

# Little Owl

*Athene noctua*

Resident breeding species, possibly declining (C)

There were records from the Willop Sewage Works, Botolph's Bridge area and Church Hougham.

# Tawny Owl

*Strix aluco*

Breeding resident (A)

There were records from Lympne Park Wood, Lympne village, Palmarsh, Folks' Wood, Heane Wood, Paraker Wood and Folkestone Warren. This species is known to be widely-distributed and tends to be under-recorded due to its nocturnal habits.

# Short-eared Owl

*Asio flammeus*

Passage migrant (A)

One flew in off sea at Seabrook on the 13<sup>th</sup> March and in autumn singles were seen at Abbotscliffe on the 8<sup>th</sup> October and the 23<sup>rd</sup> October. The total of three was somewhat below the mean for the previous ten years of 6.5 (though this average is increased from 4.7 by the record influx of 2015).

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant (A)

The first arrival, two flying east over Palmarsh on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April, was very close to the ten year mean, but it was a week until the next were seen, when two flew west over Princes Parade on the 29<sup>th</sup> April. The following day however produced two at Hythe and three flying east at Princes Parade, with one at Nickolls Quarry on the 1<sup>st</sup> May and a small but widespread arrival on the 4<sup>th</sup> May, with one at Folkestone, two at Cheriton, three at Abbotscliffe and four at Hythe. Numbers then increased quickly, including 11 flying in off the sea at Seabrook and 12 at Beachborough Lakes on the 5<sup>th</sup> May, 41 flying east at Seabrook on the 6<sup>th</sup> May, 20 over Hythe on the 7<sup>th</sup> May, 12 in off the sea at Princes Parade on the 8<sup>th</sup> May and 11 in off there the following day.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	22 <sup>nd</sup> Apr	18 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+4	23 <sup>rd</sup> Apr	-1	18 <sup>th</sup> Apr 2015
Departure	17 <sup>th</sup> Sep	19 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-2	14 <sup>th</sup> Sep	+3	16 <sup>th</sup> Nov 1957

Autumn passage was generally light however 112 flew west at Seabrook on the 16<sup>th</sup> July and on the 24<sup>th</sup> July a much larger passage of around 2,000 per hour noted over Folkestone, Hythe and Palmarsh, whilst 70 flew west at Samphire Hoe on the 7<sup>th</sup> August. Small numbers persisted into September, with the last sightings being four at Abbotscliffe on the 14<sup>th</sup> and one at Samphire Hoe on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

## Kingfisher

*Alcedo atthis*

Breeding resident, with dispersal to coasts and non-breeding areas in autumn and winter (A)

In the early part of the year there were records from the Willop Outfall, Botolph's Bridge, Palmarsh, Princes Parade and Folkestone Harbour, whilst birds were present at Botolph's Bridge, Princes Parade, Beachborough Lakes and on the Seabrook Stream near Casebourne Farm during the breeding season.

One at Samphire Hoe on the 27<sup>th</sup> September was a good record for the site and at the latter end of the year there were sightings from Botolph's Bridge, Donkey Street and Nickolls Quarry.



Barn Owl at Newington (Jamie Tomsett)



Kingfisher at Donkey Street (Ian Roberts)

European Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>
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Very rare vagrant (A)

At least one was heard calling over Hythe on the 14<sup>th</sup> May (I. A. Roberts) and a group of six were seen in a garden near the Willop Basin on the 26<sup>th</sup> May (P. Apps), see photograph on page 14. The 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> area records, including the second largest flock (following ten at Saltwood on the 14<sup>th</sup> May 2013).

Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>
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Formerly regular, bred on one occasion. Now a very rare vagrant (A)

One was seen in the Dixwell Road/Turketel Road area of Folkestone on the 29<sup>th</sup> April (per B. Harper). The 11<sup>th</sup> recent record.

Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>
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Formerly bred (until 1964), now a rare passage migrant (A)

One was seen at Shearway Business Park in Cheriton on the 29<sup>th</sup> September (J. Varley). This was only the 24<sup>th</sup> area record since 1980 but there have now been records in 12 of the last 14 years.

Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>
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Breeding resident (A)

Widely recorded but there were no notable counts received.

Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
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Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

Widely recorded but there were no notable counts received of resident birds. Up to 14 possible migrants were noted between mid-September and late October, with five at Abbotscliffe, three at Nickolls Quarry, two at Princes Parade and singles at Samphire Hoe, Folkestone Warren, Hythe seafront and the Willop Sewage Works.

Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>
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Breeding resident (A)

The largest counts received were 15 at Nickolls Quarry on the 13<sup>th</sup> January, 16 at the Willop Basin on the 1<sup>st</sup> March and 18 at Samphire Hoe on the 24<sup>th</sup> September.

Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>
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Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

Resident birds were widely recorded. The only signs of migration were four that flew in off the sea at Hythe on the 7<sup>th</sup> April and two that flew west at Princes Parade on the 15<sup>th</sup> October



Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

The only noteworthy counts received were of 1,000 flying west from roost over Nickolls Quarry on the morning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> January and 1,750 going to roost at Brockhill Country Park on the evening of the 21<sup>st</sup> December.

Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

The only noteworthy count received was of 950 going to roost at Brockhill Country Park on the evening of the 21<sup>st</sup> December.

Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

The largest counts received were of 51 at Samphire Hoe on the 30<sup>th</sup> March, 40 there on the 10<sup>th</sup> September, 40 at Abbotscliffe on the 15<sup>th</sup> October and 40 at Samphire Hoe the following day.

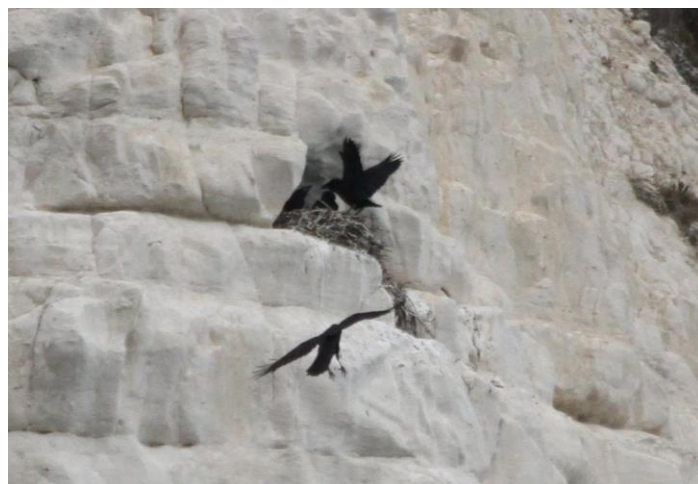
Bred until about 1890 but then not recorded until 1997 (when there were two records), with no further sightings until 2006. Since then it has become established and continues to increase and spread, with breeding first suspected in 2015 and then proven in 2016. Now recorded in all months of the year (A)

The breeding pair at Samphire Hoe were seen displaying in late January, occupying the nesting site in February and March, and feeding three young in April (which fledged towards the end of the month). A second pair may have been nesting at Capel-le-Ferne but this was not proven. These pairs were source of sightings of up to four seen along the cliffs between Capel-le-Ferne and Samphire throughout the year, and probably also accounted for records from Church Hougham and eastern Folkestone.

Elsewhere two flew west over Lympe on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February, two were seen at Botolph's Bridge on the 10<sup>th</sup> February, one was seen along the Aldington Road on the 18<sup>th</sup> February and two flew east over Lympe on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April. There was a series of sightings from Beachborough Lakes in May and June, with a peak of six there on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June. At the end of the year two flew east over Princes Parade on the 14<sup>th</sup> November, three flew east over Donkey Street on the 18<sup>th</sup> November, one was seen at Botolph's Bridge on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December and two were noted there on the 4<sup>th</sup> December.



Raven at Samphire Hoe (Nigel Webster)



Raven nest at Samphire Hoe (Paul Holt)

Goldcrest
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<i>Regulus regulus</i>
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Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

Resident birds were widely recorded throughout the year. It can be difficult to detect the small spring passage, however five at Abbotscliffe on the 6<sup>th</sup> March were certainly new arrivals and one in a garden at Ingles Manor in Folkestone on the 8<sup>th</sup> March was the first there since mid-November. Other potential migrants included two at Mill Point on the 10<sup>th</sup> March, two at Enbrook Park on the 11<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> March and one at Nickolls Quarry on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March.

Autumn passage was more evident, with double-figure counts of 11 at Princes Parade on the 17<sup>th</sup> September, 12 there on the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 26<sup>th</sup> September, 12 at Horn Street on the 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 12 at Mill Point on the 12<sup>th</sup> October, a peak of 42 at Folkestone Warren on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October and ten at Abbotscliffe on the 26<sup>th</sup> October. The total of 233 bird/days was slightly higher than the mean for the previous decade of 197.

Firecrest
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<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>
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Passage migrant and winter visitor, bred in 2012 (A)

There were early winter records from Mill Point (2), West Hythe (2) and Enbrook Park. Spring passage comprised a total of about 13 bird/days between the 11<sup>th</sup> March and 5<sup>th</sup> April, all singles apart from two at Samphire Hoe on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March.

Autumn produced a total of around 31 bird/days between the 24<sup>th</sup> September and 7<sup>th</sup> November, including three at Samphire Hoe on the 25<sup>th</sup> September, four at Mill Point on the 12<sup>th</sup> October and ten at Folkestone Warren on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October. One was ringed at Samphire Hoe during the Wildlife Migration Day on the 15<sup>th</sup> October.

The spring total was slightly less than the mean for the previous decade of 17 but the autumn total was slightly more than the average of 26. The only records from the late winter period were of singles at Enbrook Park and in a garden in St. Leonard's Road (Hythe) in December.

Blue Tit
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<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
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Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

There were no counts of note and no evidence of migration.

Great Tit
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<i>Parus major</i>
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Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

There were no counts of note and no evidence of migration.

Coal Tit
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<i>Periparus ater</i>
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Breeding resident and passage migrant. The continental form *P. a. ater* is a scarce passage migrant in spring and autumn (A)

There were no counts of note of resident birds but there was a small arrival of the nominate continental form in the autumn. One at Folkestone Downs on the 12<sup>th</sup> October was not identified to race but was probably a continental bird as it was the first record for the observer at this site and there were sightings elsewhere in the county on the same day. This was followed by two definite continental birds in a garden in Ormonde Road (Hythe) on the 14<sup>th</sup> October and two further continental individuals in Folkestone Warren on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October, whilst one in a garden in St. Hilda's Road (Hythe) on the 30<sup>th</sup> October was seen too briefly to be assigned to form but was likely also to be of continental origin.

A final definite continental bird was seen at Samphire Hoe on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November. There has been an average of around three records per year of this subspecies over the last decade.

Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>
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Breeding resident (A)

There were records from the usual haunts of Brockhill Country Park, Casebourne Wood, Bargrove Wood and Paraker Wood during the year, whilst one at Beachborough Lakes on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November was only the second record for the site.

Bearded Tit	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>
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Rare migrant and winter visitor, recently more regular, having over-wintered for the last five years (A)

Four remained at Nickolls Quarry from December 2016 into January but were not noted after the 18<sup>th</sup> (B. Harper, I. A. Roberts).

One flew west over Beachborough Ponds on the 26<sup>th</sup> October (S. Tomlinson), with another seen briefly there on the 1<sup>st</sup> November (S. Tomlinson) and a record flock of 12 were present from Nickolls Quarry from the 28<sup>th</sup> October until at least the 6<sup>th</sup> December, see photograph on page 21 (B. Harper, I. A. Roberts). This is the fifth consecutive winter that birds have been present at this site but it could be the last if construction works continue as planned.



Firecrest at Samphire Hoe (East Kent Wildlife Group)



Bearded Tit at Nickolls Quarry (Brian Harper)

Wood Lark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>
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Rare passage migrant (A)

Singles were seen flying in off the sea at Samphire Hoe on the 4<sup>th</sup> March (P. Holt) and at Hythe Ranges on the 22<sup>nd</sup> December (I. A. Roberts). These were the 32<sup>nd</sup> and 33<sup>rd</sup> area records but they included only the second sighting in winter, the previous one also being at Hythe Ranges (three on the 28<sup>th</sup> December 2014), which suggests that the species might perhaps occasionally over-winter undetected at this under-watched site.

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

In the early winter period there were up to ten at the Willop Sewage Works, 12 in a stubble field near Folks' Wood and 50 at Abbotscliffe.

A very light passage in October involved four flying over Princes Parade on the 15<sup>th</sup>, three arriving in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 26<sup>th</sup>, three in off the sea there on the 27<sup>th</sup> and a further two in off the sea there the following day.

In the late winter period a flock of 40 were seen flying over Samphire Hoe on the 17<sup>th</sup> November, 20 were frequenting a stubble field at Donkey Street in late November and 15 were present at Abbotscliffe during December.

## Sand Martin

*Riparia riparia*

Passage migrant, has bred but not since 2003 (A)

The first, three which flew through Nickolls Quarry on the 29<sup>th</sup> March, were the earliest arrival since 2005. Spring passage involved at least 40 birds, which was more than double the mean for the previous ten years of 19. Counts included 9 at Nickolls Quarry on the 31<sup>st</sup> March, four in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 6<sup>th</sup> April, six in off the sea at Capel-le-Ferne on the 14<sup>th</sup> April and four at Nickolls Quarry on the 5<sup>th</sup> May, whilst the last was seen at the latter site the following day.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	29 <sup>th</sup> Mar	7 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-9	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-13	5 <sup>th</sup> Mar 1995
Departure	5 <sup>th</sup> Oct	3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct	+2	6 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-1	4 <sup>th</sup> Nov 1963

In autumn there was a very good count (the highest since 2014) of 170 seen flying out to sea from Hythe on the 14<sup>th</sup> July, with 11 flying west at Princes Parade on the 1<sup>st</sup> August and small numbers noted regularly until early October.

## Swallow

*Hirundo rustica*

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant (A)

The first, one at Nickolls Quarry on the 30<sup>th</sup> March, was the latest arrival since 2009 but was quickly followed by four there and two at Lympne Church the following day. A further four were seen over Lympne Church on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April and there were almost daily sightings thereafter. Numbers remained low until mid-April when nine flew west at Samphire Hoe on the 15<sup>th</sup>, a total of 28 were seen across the area on the 16<sup>th</sup> (including 12 at Abbotscliffe), ten were at Nickolls Quarry on the 18<sup>th</sup>, at least 60 were at Nickolls Quarry on the 26<sup>th</sup> and a total of 27 were seen arriving in off the sea (including 14 at Princes Parade) on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

Arrival continued until mid-May, including counts of 28 at Nickolls Quarry on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 36 in off the sea at Mill Point and 45 at Nickolls Quarry on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 16 in off the sea at Samphire Hoe on the 7<sup>th</sup>, 17 in off the sea at Princes Parade on the 8<sup>th</sup> and a total of 72 in off the sea (including 57 at Princes Parade) on the 9<sup>th</sup>.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	30 <sup>th</sup> Mar	23 <sup>rd</sup> Mar	+7	24 <sup>th</sup> Mar	+6	10 <sup>th</sup> Mar 1952
Departure	10 <sup>th</sup> Nov	8 <sup>th</sup> Nov	+2	14 <sup>th</sup> Nov	-4	8 <sup>th</sup> Dec 1955



The first signs of autumn passage were noted from mid-August with the largest numbers in September, including 213 flying south over Beachborough Lakes and “many” at Abbotscliffe on the 7<sup>th</sup>, 196 flying south over Beachborough Lakes on the 15<sup>th</sup>, around 1,000 moving west along the coast on the 17<sup>th</sup>, 220 west over Seabrook on the 18<sup>th</sup>, around 1,000 over Hythe on the evening of the 19<sup>th</sup>, 1,200 south over Beachborough Lakes on the 20<sup>th</sup>, 780 south there on the 21<sup>st</sup>, 600 south there on the 27<sup>th</sup>, 312 south there on the 28<sup>th</sup> and “many hundreds” flying west at Princes Parade on the 30<sup>th</sup>. After 615 flew south over Beachborough Lakes on the 4<sup>th</sup> October and 815 flew south there the next day numbers dwindled slowly in October, with the last three figure count being 100 flying west at Beachborough Lakes on the 19<sup>th</sup> and the last double-figure count being 14 at Folkestone Warren on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. Very few were noted in November, with the last at Hythe on the 10<sup>th</sup>.

## House Martin

*Delichon urbicum*

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant (A)

The first, one at Nickolls Quarry on the 26<sup>th</sup> March, was the earliest arrival since 2004 and only the sixth ever March record. The next was seen at the same site on the 4<sup>th</sup> April, with two there on the 10<sup>th</sup> April, one at Abbotscliffe on the 14<sup>th</sup> April, two in off the sea at Hythe on the 15<sup>th</sup> April and two at Samphire Hoe on the 17<sup>th</sup> April. Sightings were almost daily thereafter and counts included 18 at Nickolls Quarry on the 18<sup>th</sup> April, 12 at Samphire Hoe on the 25<sup>th</sup> April, at least 30 at Nickolls Quarry on the 26<sup>th</sup> April and 20 at Samphire Hoe on the 28<sup>th</sup> April.

Arrival continued into May, with numbers at Samphire Hoe increasing to 100 by the 7<sup>th</sup> and at least 21 pairs (possibly as many as 30) bred there

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016				
Arrival	26 <sup>th</sup> Mar	31 <sup>st</sup> Mar	-5	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-15	7 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2004
Departure	10 <sup>th</sup> Nov	19 <sup>th</sup> Oct	+22	1 <sup>st</sup> Nov	+9	2 <sup>nd</sup> Dec 1974

An increase in autumn was noted from late August, when 200 were noted at Samphire Hoe on the 30<sup>th</sup>, but the largest movements occurred in September. These included at least 1,000 flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 14<sup>th</sup>, around 1,500 heading west across the area on the 17<sup>th</sup>, 1,500 flying south over Beachborough Lakes on the 20<sup>th</sup>, with 1,000 going south there the next day, 500 south there on the 27<sup>th</sup> and “many hundreds” flying west at Princes Parade on the 30<sup>th</sup>. Early October produced counts of 400 south over Beachborough Lakes on the 4<sup>th</sup>, 700 south there the next day, 140 at Abbotscliffe on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 300 south over Beachborough Lakes on the 11<sup>th</sup>, but numbers dwindled thereafter with the last three-figure count being 100 flying west over Beachborough Lakes on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Few were noted in late October/early November, with the last at Hythe on the 10<sup>th</sup> November.



Swallow at Casebourne Farm (Ian Roberts)



House Martin at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)

Cetti's Warbler
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<i>Cettia cetti</i>
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Not recorded until 1981 but now well-established as a breeding resident though remains vulnerable to population decline in colder winters (A)

Up to three were wintering at the traditional sites of Nickolls Quarry and Princes Parade, whilst singles at the Willop Basin and Willop Sewage Works were the first records for the tetrad (2km square) TR13 A.

At least four were holding territory at Nickolls Quarry in the spring, with at least two along the canal at Princes Parade and one at the Willop Basin.

At the end of the year there were up to six at Nickolls Quarry, at least two at Princes Parade, one at Botolph's Bridge and single males again at the Willop Basin and Willop Sewage Works.

Long-tailed Tit
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<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>
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Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

The largest count of resident birds received related to just ten at Nickolls Quarry on the 30<sup>th</sup> September.

The species is unusual at Samphire Hoe so a single bird there on the 5<sup>th</sup> March was at least a local migrant, as were five there on the 28<sup>th</sup> October, three there on the 31<sup>st</sup> October, six on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November and four on the 11<sup>th</sup> November. Elsewhere away from the normal habitats a flock of 14 were seen flying along Hythe seafront on the 31<sup>st</sup> October.

Greenish Warbler
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<i>Phylloscopus trochiloides</i>
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Very rare vagrant (A)

One seen and heard calling at Seabrook on the morning of the 17<sup>th</sup> September was the highlight of the first Wildlife Migration Day of the autumn (P. Howe).

This was the third area record following two singing males that summered in Folkestone Warren in 1993 and another autumn migrant at Samphire Hoe in 2007.

Yellow-browed Warbler
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<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>
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Rare migrant (A)

One was seen in the garden of the Bell Inn (Hythe) on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September (P. Howe) and one was seen in woody gully at the western end of Samphire Hoe on the 31<sup>st</sup> October (P. Smith), with the same or possibly another at the eastern end of the site the following day (D. E. Smith).

These were the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> area records. This species had only been recorded four times prior to 2003 but has occurred in 13 of the 15 years since.

Wood Warbler
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<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>
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Formerly regular, probably bred but not since 1973. Now a rare passage migrant (A)

One was seen in Naildown Road (Seabrook) on the 17<sup>th</sup> September (D. A. Gibson). The 22<sup>nd</sup> modern area record (since 1980).

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant, with small numbers wintering. The Siberian form *P. c. tristis* is a very rare vagrant in late autumn and winter (A).

Very few were noted in January, with just singles at Botolph's Bridge, Mill Point and the Willop Sewage Works, but at the latter site numbers increased to four in February, including an individual exhibiting vocal and plumage characteristics of the form *tristis* (see photograph on page 9). This is the eighth area record of birds thought possibly to be of this subspecies since the first in 1997.

One at Princes Parade on the 24<sup>th</sup> February and two at Enbrook Park on the 28<sup>th</sup> February were evidently new arrivals, as they were the first of the year at these sites. Arrival continued in March with the first records at Nickolls Quarry on the 9<sup>th</sup>, West Hythe on the 11<sup>th</sup>, Ingles Manor (Folkestone) on the 12<sup>th</sup>, Abbotscliffe on the 13<sup>th</sup> and Asholt Wood on the 14<sup>th</sup>. The 17<sup>th</sup> March saw a marked influx, with three at Abbotscliffe, three at Folkestone Downs, eight at Nickolls Quarry and 15 at Princes Parade, and sightings were frequent and widespread thereafter, with new birds continuing to be noted right through to early May.

Autumn migrants were noted from early September, with a count of 40 at Samphire Hoe on the 10<sup>th</sup> and a significant arrival on the 17<sup>th</sup> September, when at least 210 were noted across the area including 30 at Samphire Hoe, 61 at Folkestone Warren and 97 at Princes Parade. Subsequent counts of note included 20 at Copt Point and 45 at Princes Parade on the 19<sup>th</sup> September, 20 at Samphire Hoe and 25 at Princes Parade on the 26<sup>th</sup> September, 30 at Samphire Hoe on the 27<sup>th</sup> September, 23 at Nickolls Quarry on the 4<sup>th</sup> October and 20 at the latter site on the 10<sup>th</sup> October.

Numbers dwindled in early November with the last records of the year being singles at Nickolls Quarry on the 9<sup>th</sup> November and Donkey Street on the 17<sup>th</sup> November.

## Willow Warbler

*Phylloscopus trochilus*

Breeding summer visitor, but now scarce (having declined in recent years), and passage migrant (A)

The first, a male in song at Nickolls Quarry on the 30<sup>th</sup> March, matched the arrival date last year but was several days earlier than the mean for the previous decade. The next were singles at Abbotscliffe and Princes Parade on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April, with almost daily records thereafter. There were a total of six recorded across the area on the 10<sup>th</sup> April, including three at Samphire Hoe, with further counts of three in April at Princes Parade on the 11<sup>th</sup>, Abbotscliffe on the 12<sup>th</sup>, Nickolls Quarry on the 13<sup>th</sup> and Shorncliffe Camp on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

The 18<sup>th</sup> April saw a significant arrival (the largest in spring since 1998) with nine at Samphire Hoe and 14 at Princes Parade, and there were further notable counts of five at Abbotscliffe on the 21<sup>st</sup> April and eight at Samphire Hoe the next day. Passage continued into early May, with the last at Nickolls Quarry on the 1<sup>st</sup>.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016				
Arrival	30 <sup>th</sup> Mar	30 <sup>th</sup> Mar	-	5 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-6	26 <sup>th</sup> Mar 1960
Departure	14 <sup>th</sup> Sep	12 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-28	25 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-11	19 <sup>th</sup> Oct 1986

The first returning bird was seen in a garden in Folkestone on the 12<sup>th</sup> July. Autumn passage was rather light, with peak counts of 13 at Abbotscliffe on the 6<sup>th</sup> August, 35 across the area (including 8 at Abbotscliffe and 23 at Princes Parade) on the 11<sup>th</sup> August and 15 at Abbotscliffe on the 24<sup>th</sup> August. Few were noted in September, with the last on the relatively early date of 14<sup>th</sup> September.

The spring total of 86 bird/days was considerably better than the average for the last ten years of 23 but the autumn total of 83 bird/days was a little worse (compared to a mean of 94).

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant, with small but increasing numbers wintering (A)

In the early winter period up to three were frequenting gardens in the Lynton Road/Park Road/St. Hilda's Road area of Hythe, with another at Mill Road (Hythe), at least one at Princes Parade and at least three in gardens in Folkestone (one at Browning Place and two at East Cliff Gardens).

It is often difficult to determine the first arrival in spring but a count of four at Princes Parade on the 17<sup>th</sup> March certainly included migrants and singing males at Mill Point on the 25<sup>th</sup>, West Hythe on the 29<sup>th</sup> and Nickolls Quarry on the 31<sup>st</sup> appeared to be new in. Records were widespread from early April but counts were low, with eight at Princes Parade on the 11<sup>th</sup> April and five at Nickolls Quarry on the 13<sup>th</sup> April being the highest received.

Autumn migrants were noted from late August, when there were 12 at Samphire Hoe on the 31<sup>st</sup>, and numbers increased in September when there were 20 at Samphire Hoe on the 1<sup>st</sup> and a significant arrival on the 17<sup>th</sup>, with 14 at Princes Parade, 20 at Samphire Hoe and a record count of 48 at Folkestone Warren. This was then exceeded by another record count of 50 at Samphire Hoe on the 19<sup>th</sup> September. Nickolls Quarry produced totals of 20 on the 27<sup>th</sup> September and 15 on the 4<sup>th</sup> October but there were only single figure counts thereafter, with very few seen in November and the last apparent migrant was at Crete Road West on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

In December birds were wintering in gardens at Seabrook, East Cliff Gardens (Folkestone) (2) and Lynton Road (Hythe) (2).



Chiffchaff at West Hythe (Brian Harper)



Willow Warbler at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)

Breeding summer visitor, but now scarce (having declined in recent years), and passage migrant (A)

The only spring record, one at Beachborough Lakes on the 5<sup>th</sup> May, was slightly later than the arrival date for last year and the previous ten year mean. For the second consecutive year there were no signs of breeding.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016				
Arrival	5 <sup>th</sup> May	1 <sup>st</sup> May	+4	29 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+6	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr 2001
Departure	31 <sup>st</sup> Aug	8 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-8	12 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-12	6 <sup>th</sup> Nov 1981



Autumn only produced two at Nickolls Quarry on the 11<sup>th</sup> August and one at Creteway Down on the 31<sup>st</sup> August. The annual total of just four birds was the lowest since 2013.

#### Lesser Whitethroat

*Sylvia curruca*

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant (A)

The first, one at Abbotscliffe on the 10<sup>th</sup> April, equalled the second earliest ever (at Nickolls Quarry in 2001), with the only earlier record being one in Folkestone Warren on the 8<sup>th</sup> April 2007. The next was at Hythe Roughts on the 15<sup>th</sup> April, with one at Samphire on the 18<sup>th</sup> and singles at Abbotscliffe, Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site and Princes Parade on the 21<sup>st</sup> April. Sightings were almost daily thereafter with ones and twos at widespread sites.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr	13 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-3	16 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-6	8 <sup>th</sup> Apr 2007
Departure	24 <sup>th</sup> Sep	26 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-2	24 <sup>th</sup> Sep	0	3 <sup>rd</sup> Nov 1994

Autumn passage was recorded from early August but numbers were low, with peak counts of four at Nickolls Quarry on the 9<sup>th</sup> August and 3 at Folkestone Warren on the 17<sup>th</sup> September. The final date of 24<sup>th</sup> September was very much in line with the mean for the previous decade,

#### Common Whitethroat

*Sylvia communis*

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant (A)

One at Copt Point on the 8<sup>th</sup> April was quickly followed by the first arrivals at Samphire Hoe (on the 9<sup>th</sup>), Nickolls Quarry (on the 10<sup>th</sup>), Princes Parade (five on the 11<sup>th</sup>) and Abbotscliffe (on the 13<sup>th</sup>). There were widespread records from mid-month, with counts including seven at Princes Parade on the 16<sup>th</sup> April, eight there on the 18<sup>th</sup> April, four at Samphire Hoe on the 25<sup>th</sup> April, five at Abbotscliffe on the 27<sup>th</sup> April and 16 at Princes Parade on the 9<sup>th</sup> May.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	8 <sup>th</sup> Apr	7 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+1	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-2	30 <sup>th</sup> Mar 2002
Departure	4 <sup>th</sup> Oct	19 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-15	3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct	+1	19 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2016

Autumn migration was noted from early August when there were seven at Samphire Hoe on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 13 at Abbotscliffe on the 6<sup>th</sup>, with subsequent counts of note including six at Abbotscliffe and ten at Samphire Hoe on the 11<sup>th</sup> August and 25 at Abbotscliffe on the 24<sup>th</sup> August. There were only single figure counts in September but five at Samphire Hoe and nine at Princes Parade on the 17<sup>th</sup> were noteworthy. The last was seen at Abbotscliffe on the 4<sup>th</sup> October.

#### Dartford Warbler

*Sylvia undata*

Rare migrant and winter visitor (A)

Singles were seen at Abbotscliffe on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October (M. D. Kennett) and Hythe Ranges on the 26<sup>th</sup> December (I. A. Roberts). These were the 35<sup>th</sup> and 36<sup>th</sup> area records but this is the only the fourth occasion when the species has been seen later in the winter period than November.

Scarce passage migrant, mainly in autumn, bred until about the mid-1980s but now rare in spring (A)

In autumn singles were recorded from Samphire Hoe on the 4<sup>th</sup>, Abbotscliffe on the 6<sup>th</sup> and Folkestone Downs on the 28<sup>th</sup>. The total of three was only slightly less than the mean for the previous ten years of 3.9.



Blackcap at West Hythe (Brian Harper)



Whitethroat at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant (A)

The first, two singing males at both Nickolls Quarry and at Princes Parade on the 1<sup>st</sup> April, were the earliest ever (the previous record was the 5<sup>th</sup> April 2014). Numbers of territorial males at Nickolls Quarry steadily increased to three on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April, four on the 10<sup>th</sup> April, 14 on the 16<sup>th</sup> April, 15 on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April and peaked at about 20 in early May – a new record total. Elsewhere there were single singing males at Botolph's Bridge on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April, Samphire Hoe on the 12<sup>th</sup> May, Donkey Street on the 17<sup>th</sup> May and Princes Parade on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	1 <sup>st</sup> Apr	7 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-6	15 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-14	1 <sup>st</sup> Apr 2017
Departure	17 <sup>th</sup> Sep	14 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-27	24 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-7	15 <sup>th</sup> Oct 1996

Breeding birds continued to be seen at Nickolls Quarry in August and September, whilst elsewhere returning migrants involved one at Princes Parade on the 11<sup>th</sup> August, one found dead in a garden in St. Hilda's Road (Hythe) on the 31<sup>st</sup> August, presumably having been killed by a cat, and four at Princes Parade on the 17<sup>th</sup> September.

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant (A)

The first, a singing male at Nickolls Quarry on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April, equalled the earliest ever (at the same site last year). Princes Parade recorded its first on the 13<sup>th</sup> April and numbers at both sites increased to four singing males on the 16<sup>th</sup> April, with six at Princes Parade on the 18<sup>th</sup> April and a record count for the site of 35 there on the 9<sup>th</sup> May (this equals the area record of 35 at Nickolls Quarry in May 2003). At least 20 singing males were at Nickolls Quarry in May, whilst elsewhere six were holding territory at Beachborough Lakes and an out of habitat migrant was noted at Mill Point on the 29<sup>th</sup> April.

The first returning migrant was Abbotscliffe on the 25<sup>th</sup> July and other records away from the breeding sites involved singles at Samphire Hoe on three dates in August and one at Abbotscliffe on the 14<sup>th</sup> September.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference +/-	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016				
Arrival	3 <sup>rd</sup> Apr	3 <sup>rd</sup> Apr	-	14 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-11	3 <sup>rd</sup> Apr 2016
Departure	14 <sup>th</sup> Sep	27 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-13	27 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-13	4 <sup>th</sup> Nov 1984



Sedge Warbler at Nickolls Quarry (Brian Harper)



Reed Warbler at Botolph's Bridge (Brian Harper)

#### Waxwing

*Bombycilla garrulus*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, with occasional large influxes (A)

There was a small arrival in January from the 8<sup>th</sup>, when 20 were reported at Hythe, but none lingered long. Three were at Hythe again on the 9<sup>th</sup>, with seven there on the 13<sup>th</sup> (see photograph on page 7), six at Folkestone Leas on the 15<sup>th</sup> and at least 23 at Nickolls Quarry on 16<sup>th</sup>. These were the first sightings since 2013.

#### Nuthatch

*Sitta europaea*

Breeding resident (A)

There was a good spread of records this year, with sightings at Lympne Park Wood, Folk's Wood, Perry Wood, Chesterfield Wood, Brockhill Country Park, Cowtye Wood, Saltwood Castle, Oak Banks, Bargrove Wood, Asholt Wood, Scene Wood and Paraker Wood.

#### Eurasian Treecreeper

*Certhia familiaris*

Breeding resident (A)

Widely recorded. A count of nine in the Saltwood Castle in January was noteworthy.

#### Short-toed Treecreeper

*Certhia brachydactyla*

Very rare vagrant (A)

One trapped and ringed at Samphire Hoe on the 15<sup>th</sup> October (East Kent Wildlife Group per T. Greaves, M. Collins *et al*)) was the highlight of the second Wildlife Migration Day of the autumn (see photographs on front cover and page 19). This was the second area record, following one at the same site on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2012.

Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

Widely recorded but there no counts of note.

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

A roost had begun to accumulate in Folkestone during December 2016 and numbers swelled to around 6,000 during January. The birds were seen to engage in some spectacular pre-roost murmurations before settling into two Holm Oaks in Pleydell Gardens. Around 5,000 remained into February before the trees were unfortunately pollarded by the local council to disperse the roost. This was the second highest ever count (with the largest referring to at least 20,000 seen in two fields at Folkestone in November 1966). A smaller murmuration was also noted over Downs Road (Folkestone) in January and other early winter counts included 220 at the Willop Basin on the 16<sup>th</sup> January and 300 at Tumble Tye Farm (Capel-le-Ferne) the following day.

The only spring counts of note involved 350 flying east at Hythe and 430 flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 13<sup>th</sup> March. A post-breeding flock of around 150 was noted at Samphire Hoe in August and autumn passage included 100 in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 6<sup>th</sup> October, 200 in off there on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 325 in off there on the 26<sup>th</sup> and a very good count of 2,500 in off at Hythe Ranges on the 19<sup>th</sup> (there have only ever been five larger counts of migrants). A small murmuration was again seen over Downs Road (Folkestone) from November and around 200 were roosting in Holm Oaks near Cheriton Place (Folkestone) in December.



Wren at Nickolls Quarry (Brian Harper)



Starlings at Folkestone (Brian Harper)

Passage migrant, typically more numerous in autumn (A)

The first arrival was on the 10<sup>th</sup> April when a pair were at Abbotscliffe (where they remained until the 14<sup>th</sup> April) and a male was seen at Samphire Hoe, with two at the latter site from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> April. A further single was seen at Samphire Hoe on the 19<sup>th</sup> April, with two there on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and two at Abbotscliffe on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April. The total of 18 bird/days was considerably higher than previous ten springs of 5.8.

The first autumn records were singles at Abbotscliffe and Samphire Hoe on the 25<sup>th</sup> September but there were no further sightings until singles were at Mill Point and Princes Parade on the 19<sup>th</sup> October.



These preceded a small arrival with one at Folkestone Warren and ten at Abbotscliffe on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October, one at Abbotscliffe and one at Nickolls Quarry on the 25<sup>th</sup> October, ten at Abbotscliffe on the 26<sup>th</sup> October and one at Nickolls Quarry, two at Creteway Down and six at Abbotscliffe on the 27<sup>th</sup> October. The last of the year were two Abbotscliffe on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November. The autumn total of just 38 bird/days was the lowest since 2011 and significantly less than the mean for the previous ten autumns of 95.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-1	16 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-6	9 <sup>th</sup> Mar 1997
Departure	2 <sup>nd</sup> Nov	29 <sup>th</sup> Oct	+4	3 <sup>rd</sup> Nov	-1	26 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2005

#### Blackbird

*Turdus merula*

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

The only suggestion of spring passage was a peak at Samphire Hoe of 11 on the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 16<sup>th</sup> April. Autumn passage was more pronounced with counts including 22 at Nickolls Quarry on the 9<sup>th</sup> October (with 19 departing high to the north prior to 08:00) and about 50 at Princes Parade on the 19<sup>th</sup> October, whilst nocturnal movements were noted on several nights in October. In November there were further counts of 25 at Nickolls Quarry on the 9<sup>th</sup>, 25 at Samphire Hoe on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 20 at the latter site on the 28<sup>th</sup>, with 20 there again on the 5<sup>th</sup> December.

#### Fieldfare

*Turdus pilaris*

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Numbers in the early winter period were generally low apart from flocks of 26 at Tumble Tye Farm (Capel-le-Ferne) in January, up to 140 in the Blackhouse Shaw area in January and February and 70 at Botolph's Bridge and near Stanford in February. There was no sign of spring passage apart from a rather late individual at Abbotscliffe on the 1<sup>st</sup> May (there have been records in May in only three previous years, with one in June last year being the latest ever departure).

Departure/Arrival	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Departure	1 <sup>st</sup> May	5 <sup>th</sup> Jun	-35	6 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+25	5 <sup>th</sup> Jun 2016
Arrival	27 <sup>th</sup> Oct	4 <sup>th</sup> Oct	+23	13 <sup>th</sup> Oct	+14	29 <sup>th</sup> Sep 2007

The first returning birds, two at Abbotscliffe and 17 at Creteway Down on the 27<sup>th</sup> October were relatively late, and autumn passage was very light, with four at Samphire Hoe on the 29<sup>th</sup> October, one at Nickolls Quarry on the 1<sup>st</sup> November, one at Folkestone Leas on the 10<sup>th</sup> November and three at both Nickolls Quarry and Samphire Hoe on the 13<sup>th</sup> November. Numbers were also low in the late winter period, with a peak count of just five at Botolph's Bridge on the 15<sup>th</sup> December.

#### Song Thrush

*Turdus philomelos*

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

The only counts received for the early winter period referred to six near Summerhouse Hill and 15 at Folks' Wood in January.

There was no indication of any spring passage but in autumn one was seen flying in off the sea at Seabrook on the 18<sup>th</sup> September and there were counts of four at Abbotscliffe on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September, five at Nickolls Quarry on the 30<sup>th</sup> September, eight at Abbotscliffe on the 9<sup>th</sup> October, six at Nickolls Quarry on the 19<sup>th</sup> October and six at Abbotscliffe on the 27<sup>th</sup> October.

## Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Numbers in the early winter period were generally low with the notable exception of up to 400 in the Blackhouse Shaw area in January and February (this was the fourth largest ever wintering flock and the largest to be recorded since 1996). Counts elsewhere included 30 at Saltwood Castle on the 17<sup>th</sup> January, 40 at Saltwood on the 30<sup>th</sup> January, 25 at Barrowhill (Westenhanger) on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February and 40 at the Willop Basin on the 24<sup>th</sup> February.

Spring passage was mostly nocturnal, with movements noted on several nights in March and with a particularly heavy passage on the night of the 12<sup>th</sup>, when over 100 calls were heard. Diurnal numbers were limited to ones and twos with the last at Nickolls Quarry on the 10<sup>th</sup> April.

Departure/Arrival	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Departure	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr	16 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-6	1 <sup>st</sup> Apr	+9	4 <sup>th</sup> May 1981
Arrival	6 <sup>th</sup> Oct	7 <sup>th</sup> Sep	+29	1 <sup>st</sup> Oct	+5	7 <sup>th</sup> Sep 2016

As was the case with Fieldfare, the first returning birds (12 flying over Cheriton on the 6<sup>th</sup> October), were relatively late, and autumn passage was light. Two were seen at both Abbotscliffe and Nickolls Quarry on the 9<sup>th</sup> October and the first nocturnal movement was noted on the night of the 14<sup>th</sup> October, with further overnight migration on the 15<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> October and a few subsequent evenings. Diurnal records included seven at Creteway Down on the 15<sup>th</sup> October, ten at Princes Parade on the 19<sup>th</sup> October and a peak on the 27<sup>th</sup> October when 29 flew in off the sea at Abbotscliffe and 123 flew over Creteway Down.

Nocturnal passage continued until mid-November, with quite a large movement on the night of the 7<sup>th</sup>, whilst 15 were seen by day at Samphire Hoe on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Very few were logged in December.

## Mistle Thrush

*Turdus viscivorus*

## Breeding resident (A)

Widely recorded in small numbers. There were some particularly high counts at Beachborough Lakes in summer, with 29 there on the 14<sup>th</sup> July, 31 on the 26<sup>th</sup> July and a peak of 34 there on the 23<sup>rd</sup> August. This was the second highest ever count (with the largest being 40 at Botolph's Bridge in June 2000). In October nine flying over Creteway Down on the 4<sup>th</sup> were suggestive of some, at least local, migration.

## Spotted Flycatcher

*Muscicapa striata*

## Passage migrant, mainly in autumn, occasionally breeds (formerly more regular) (A)

The only record in spring was at Samphire Hoe on the 12<sup>th</sup> May.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	12 <sup>th</sup> May	6 <sup>th</sup> May	+6	13 <sup>th</sup> May	-1	19 <sup>th</sup> Apr 1961
Departure	30 <sup>th</sup> Sep	2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct	-2	21 <sup>st</sup> Sep	+9	11 <sup>th</sup> Oct 1999

There were singles in autumn at Samphire Hoe on the 31<sup>st</sup> August, Creteway Down on the 1<sup>st</sup> September, Abbotscliffe on the 7<sup>th</sup> September, Samphire Hoe on the 15<sup>th</sup> September and Nickolls Quarry on the 30<sup>th</sup> September.

The total for the year of just six bird/days was the lowest since 2009 and well below the mean for the previous decade of 14.

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Autumn migrants were noted from early September with counts including 12 at Samphire Hoe on the 10<sup>th</sup> September, ten at Abbotscliffe on the 20<sup>th</sup> September, 12 at Samphire Hoe on the 26<sup>th</sup> September, 15 there on the 15<sup>th</sup> October and 20 there on the 28<sup>th</sup> October.



Blackbird at West Hythe (Brian Harper)



Spotted Flycatcher at Creteway Down (Brian Harper)

Declining breeding summer visitor and passage migrant (A)

A singing male at Mill Point on the 18<sup>th</sup> April did not linger and was likely to have been a migrant, but another singing bird at Hythe Ranges on the 13<sup>th</sup> May (in the same area as last year) was probably holding territory (though access restrictions at this site prevented a further visit to seek confirmation).

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	18 <sup>th</sup> Apr	19 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-1	24 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-6	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr 1981

The Nightingale perhaps still persists as a breeding bird locally but its decline in the county and country continues.

Scarce passage migrant, mainly in autumn (A)

The only record involved a single bird at Samphire Hoe on the 30<sup>th</sup> August.

The mean for the previous decade was 4.4 bird/days but two other years (2009 and 2013) only produced a single sighting and none were recorded in 2011.

## Black Redstart

*Phoenicurus ochruros*

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

There were no records at Samphire Hoe in January 2017 (or November or December 2016), so one there on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February appeared to be a new arrival, as were singles at Folkestone Harbour and the Willop Sewage Works on the 6<sup>th</sup> February. There were further arrivals in March, with one at Abbotscliffe on the 17<sup>th</sup>, one at Samphire Hoe on the 21<sup>st</sup>, one in a garden in Ormonde Road (Hythe) on the 24<sup>th</sup>, one at Abbotscliffe on the 27<sup>th</sup>, one at Samphire Hoe on the 28<sup>th</sup> and a pair there on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

The pair then remained at Samphire Hoe and bred successfully, raising three young, whilst a third adult was present there on the 17<sup>th</sup> April. Elsewhere a male was singing at Hythe seafront between the 6<sup>th</sup> and the 8<sup>th</sup> April, one was seen at Lympe on the 28<sup>th</sup> June and a male was singing at Folkestone Harbour on the 9<sup>th</sup> July.

Up to five remained at Samphire Hoe until early September, decreasing to three by mid-month and two by the end of September, but these two remained until the end of November, though only singles were noted in December. Elsewhere singles were seen at Church Hougham on the 24<sup>th</sup> August, at Hythe on the 8<sup>th</sup> November, in a garden at Ingles Manor (Folkestone) on the 11<sup>th</sup> November, at the Hythe Redoubt on the 25<sup>th</sup> November and at Hythe again on the 12<sup>th</sup> December.

## Common Redstart

*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Passage migrant, mainly in autumn (A)

There was a decent spring passage, with two at Samphire Hoe on the 18<sup>th</sup> April (see photograph on page 11), one in a garden at Ingles Manor (Folkestone) on the 28<sup>th</sup> April and another at Samphire Hoe on the 29<sup>th</sup> April. These four compare favourably to the mean for the previous ten years of 1.4.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	18 <sup>th</sup> Apr	12 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+6	12 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+6	12 <sup>th</sup> Mar 1960
Departure	27 <sup>th</sup> Sep	6 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-9	1 <sup>st</sup> Oct	-4	27 <sup>th</sup> Oct 1999

Autumn passage however was lighter than the ten year average of around 11 bird/days. A total of seven were recorded as follows: singles at Crete Road West on the 7<sup>th</sup> August, Church Hougham on the 24<sup>th</sup> August, Creteway Down on the 1<sup>st</sup> September, Creteway Down on the 5<sup>th</sup> September, Abbotscliffe on the 10<sup>th</sup> September, Samphire Hoe on the 19<sup>th</sup> September and Samphire Hoe again on the 27<sup>th</sup> September.

## Whinchat

*Saxicola rubetra*

Passage migrant, mainly in autumn. Has bred in the past but not since 1997 (A)

Spring passage was typically light with just a single male at Church Hougham on the 25<sup>th</sup> April. The mean for the previous ten springs was 1.8 bird/days.



Autumn passage was very poor with the total of just 26 bird/days being the lowest since 1994 and considerably than the mean for the previous ten years of 56. The first was Church Hougham on the 9<sup>th</sup> August, followed by two at Abbotscliffe on the 24<sup>th</sup> August and two at Creteway Down on the 31<sup>st</sup> August. September produced 20 bird/days, all ones and twos apart from a peak of five at Abbotscliffe on the 10<sup>th</sup>. A single straggler was noted at Creteway Down in October, on the relatively late date of 15<sup>th</sup>.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	25 <sup>th</sup> Apr	26 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-1	1 <sup>st</sup> May	-6	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr 2011
Departure	15 <sup>th</sup> Oct	21 <sup>st</sup> Oct	-6	8 <sup>th</sup> Oct	+7	10 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2009



Black Redstart at the Willop Sewage Works (Ian Roberts)



Whinchat at Botolph's Bridge (Brian Harper)

Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>
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Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant. The continental form *S. r. rubicola* is probably a scarce passage migrant (A).

In the early winter period there were up to seven at Samphire Hoe, two at the Willop Sewage Works, two at Nickolls Quarry, two at Folkestone Racecourse and one at Abbotscliffe. Five males were present at Samphire Hoe in March, including one thought to be of the form *rubicola* on the 10<sup>th</sup>, and at least four of which appeared to be paired, with three pairs breeding successfully. Elsewhere a pair were at Abbotscliffe on the 17<sup>th</sup> March and males were in song there on the 13<sup>th</sup> April and 10<sup>th</sup> May but there were no signs of breeding, whilst up to two pairs were present at Hythe Ranges and may have bred.

The three broods of young swelled numbers at Samphire Hoe to a peak of 20 in early August and 17 were still present by early September but counts dwindled slowly thereafter, though ten were still present at the end of October. Up to eight were seen at Abbotscliffe from mid-September, with up to six at Hythe Ranges, one at Princes Parade on the 19<sup>th</sup> September, with a pair there for most of October and early November, a pair in the Botolph's Bridge/Willop Sewage Works area in October, one at Nickolls Quarry on the 27<sup>th</sup> October and two at Hythe Ranges on the 28<sup>th</sup> October.

In the late winter period there were up to ten at Samphire Hoe, six at Hythe Ranges, three at Nickolls Quarry, two in the Donkey Street area, two at Hythe Ranges, two at Abbotscliffe and one at Copt Point.

Several of the colour-ringed birds from 2015 remained at Samphire Hoe throughout and several more were ringed in 2017.

A rare breeding summer visitor but common passage migrant (A)

The first, a female at Samphire Hoe on the 18<sup>th</sup> March, matched the mean for the previous decade, but there were no further sightings until a male was seen at Hythe on the 30<sup>th</sup> March. Spring passage continued to be slow, with singles at Hythe Ranges on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April, Samphire Hoe on the 4<sup>th</sup> April and Princes Parade on the 8<sup>th</sup> April until the 10<sup>th</sup> April produced an arrival of three at Samphire Hoe and four at Abbotscliffe. There were more regular records thereafter and the overall spring total of 81 bird/days was well above the mean for the previous ten years of 55 and the best since 2012. Counts included five at Samphire Hoe on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> April, eight at Peene Quarry and ten at Samphire Hoe on the 29<sup>th</sup> April and six at Samphire Hoe on the 7<sup>th</sup> May.

There were some signs of possible breeding, with a pair in suitable habitat at Hythe Ranges on the 29<sup>th</sup> April and a pair which appeared to be defending a rabbit hole at Peene Quarry on the same date, though neither were noted subsequently, whilst at Samphire Hoe there was an intriguing series of summer sightings with singles on the 18<sup>th</sup> June and the 11<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> July but when a juvenile was seen there on the 26<sup>th</sup> July it turned out to be a colour-ringed bird which had been trapped at Skokholm Island, Wales on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July (see page 97 for further details).

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference +/-	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016				
Arrival	18 <sup>th</sup> Mar	22 <sup>nd</sup> Mar	-4	18 <sup>th</sup> Mar	-	8 <sup>th</sup> Mar 2015
Departure	23 <sup>rd</sup> Oct	4 <sup>th</sup> Dec	-42	30 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-7	4 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2016

Autumn passage produced a total of 181 bird/days, which was very similar to the mean for the previous decade of 175. Counts included ten at Church Hougham on the 24<sup>th</sup> August, eight there on the 31<sup>st</sup> August, ten at Samphire Hoe on the 4<sup>th</sup> September and 12 there the following day. After last year's exceptionally late bird, the departure date of 23<sup>rd</sup> October was far more typical.



Stonechat at Samphire Hoe (Ian Roberts)



Wheatear at Princes Parade (Nigel Webster)

Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

There was an increase at coastal sites in the autumn, suggestive of passage, with counts of ten at Nickolls Quarry on the 24<sup>th</sup> September, ten at Samphire Hoe on the 28<sup>th</sup> October and an excellent total of at least 60 at Princes Parade on the 15<sup>th</sup> October.

There has only ever been one larger count (when 80 were at Copt Point on the 13<sup>th</sup> October 1984), though the total of 60 has been matched twice: at Hythe Ranges on the 25<sup>th</sup> September 1957 and at Folkestone on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1981.

#### House Sparrow

*Passer domesticus*

Declining breeding resident (A)

A flock of around 200 seen in a stubble field adjacent to the Folkestone Road (B2011) near the junction with the A20 on the 10<sup>th</sup> September was the largest count since 1998. One at Samphire Hoe on the 4<sup>th</sup> July was of note as the species does not breed there, and it is also unusual on the cliff-top at Abbotscliffe so a displaying male there on the 10<sup>th</sup> March and two on the 9<sup>th</sup> October were noteworthy.

#### Tree Sparrow

*Passer montanus*

Declining passage migrant. No longer breeds and now scarce in winter (A)

A very poor year, with just a single record at Donkey Street on the 5<sup>th</sup> November.

#### Yellow Wagtail

*Motacilla flava*

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant (A)

The first, two along Donkey Street on the 4<sup>th</sup> April, were the earliest arrival since 2011 and a week earlier than the mean for the previous decade. Numbers increased to five there on the 20<sup>th</sup> April and at least two were seen regularly into June, with at least one pair probably breeding. Elsewhere spring passage was very light with a total of just nine: singles in off the sea at Hythe Ranges and Samphire Hoe on the 29<sup>th</sup> April, three in off the sea at the latter site on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May, two in off there on the 4<sup>th</sup> May, two in off at Abbotscliffe on the 10<sup>th</sup> May and one at Seabrook on the 12<sup>th</sup> May.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	4 <sup>th</sup> Apr	8 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-4	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-7	28 <sup>th</sup> Mar 1991
Departure	20 <sup>th</sup> Sep	7 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-17	29 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-9	20 <sup>th</sup> Oct 1984

Return passage was similarly poor, with a total of just 23 bird/days, which was considerably less than the ten year mean of 67 and the lowest since 2008. The first three flew west over Samphire Hoe on the 11<sup>th</sup> July, with subsequent counts of eight west over Hythe/Princes Parade on the 19<sup>th</sup> August, six at Abbotscliffe on the 20<sup>th</sup> August and four at Church Hougham on the 24<sup>th</sup> August. The last flew west over Abbotscliffe on the 20<sup>th</sup> September.

#### Grey Wagtail

*Motacilla cinerea*

Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

Ones and twos were seen at numerous sites in the early winter period, including West Hythe, Nickolls Quarry, Pedlinge, Brockhill Country Park, Chesterfield Wood, Hythe, Saltwood, Saltwood Castle, Seabrook and Enbrook Park.

There was a very slight spring passage with one flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 13<sup>th</sup> March, two flying east there on the 25<sup>th</sup> March and one flying east there on the 27<sup>th</sup> March. Breeding records included two pairs along the Seabrook Stream in the Horn Street area.

Autumn passage was also fairly insignificant with around 13 logged flying over, with the first at Samphire Hoe on the 5<sup>th</sup> September and a peak of three over Creteway Down on the 15<sup>th</sup> October.

Small numbers were again wintering at the latter end of the year, with records from the Willop Outfall, Willop Sewage Works, Donkey Street, Nickolls Quarry, Brockhill Country Park, Hythe, Enbrook Park, Folkestone and Folkestone Harbour.



Tree Sparrow at Donkey Street (Ian Roberts)



Yellow Wagtail at Donkey Street (Brian Harper)

#### Pied/White Wagtail

*Motacilla alba*

Pied Wagtail (*M. a. yarrellii*) is a breeding resident and passage migrant. White Wagtail (*M. a. alba*) is a scarce passage migrant, mainly in spring, that has bred once (in 2013) (A)

The only counts of note from the early winter period came from the Willop Sewage Works where there were 65 in early January, increasing to a peak of 70 on the 6<sup>th</sup> February. There was a small spring passage of Pied/White Wagtails noted in March and early April, with counts of three over Samphire Hoe on the 15<sup>th</sup> March, three in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 27<sup>th</sup> March and three at Samphire Hoe the next day.

Autumn passage was noted between late September and the end of October but was rather light, with counts of just five flying east at Princes Parade on the 26<sup>th</sup> September, six flying over Abbotscliffe on the 6<sup>th</sup> October and seven flying west there on the 15<sup>th</sup> October.

Counts from the late winter period included 13 at both Samphire Hoe on the 6<sup>th</sup> November and Donkey Street on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December.

The only confirmed records of White Wagtail were one at Beachborough Lakes on the 13<sup>th</sup> March, two there the following day and three at Samphire Hoe on the 28<sup>th</sup> March.

#### Tree Pipit

*Anthus trivialis*

Scarce passage migrant, mainly in autumn (A)

In spring one flew north over Abbotscliffe on the 25<sup>th</sup> April and one was seen at Church Hougham on the 12<sup>th</sup> May. The total of two constituted the best spring passage since 2012.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference
	2017	2016	
Arrival	25 <sup>th</sup> Apr	8 <sup>th</sup> May	-13
Departure	27 <sup>th</sup> Aug	8 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-42

Prev. ten year mean	Difference
	+/-
9 <sup>th</sup> May	-14
29 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-33

Earliest/Latest ever
26 <sup>th</sup> Mar 1965
20 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2001



Autumn passage comprised one flying over Abbotscliffe on the 9<sup>th</sup> August, six flying over there on the 20<sup>th</sup> August, one flying over Hythe on the 24<sup>th</sup> August and one at Creteway Down on the 27<sup>th</sup> August. The total of nine was very similar to the mean for the previous ten autumns of 7.8.



Grey Wagtail at Saltwood Castle (Nigel Webster)



White Wagtail at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)

#### Meadow Pipit

*Anthus pratensis*

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Counts from the early winter period included 11 near Folks' Wood, 17 at Samphire Hoe and 30 at the Willop Basin. There was a good spring passage noted in March and early April, with peak counts of 71 arriving in off the sea at Mill Point on the 20<sup>th</sup> March and 18 flying in/east at Abbotscliffe on the 27<sup>th</sup> March.

Autumn passage was noted from the 7<sup>th</sup> September, when 26 flew west over Hythe and 33 flew south over Beachborough Lakes, whilst an estimated 200 were at Abbotscliffe on the 14<sup>th</sup> September. Further movements included 40 flying west at Hythe Ranges on 17<sup>th</sup> September, 35 flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 20<sup>th</sup> September and 65 flying east there on the 25<sup>th</sup> September. In October 25 flew west at Abbotscliffe on the 4<sup>th</sup>, 20 flew west over Hythe on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 20 were at Samphire Hoe on the 14<sup>th</sup>.

In the late winter period there were up to 50 at Donkey Street in November and up to 16 at Samphire Hoe in December.



Tree Pipit at Creteway Down (Brian Harper)



Meadow Pipit at Donkey Street (Brian Harper)

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant. The Scandinavian form *A. p. littoralis* can only be identified when it begins to assume its summer plumage and is probably a regular winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

In January/February there were up to four at Samphire Hoe, two in the Folkestone Harbour area and singles at the Willop Outfall, Hythe Redoubt and Battery Point. Numbers increased in March, presumably being swelled by passage migrants, with 11 at Samphire Hoe on the 4<sup>th</sup> March including at least one of the form *littoralis*, and a count of five there on the 18<sup>th</sup> March included another *littoralis*, with a further bird of this form at the Hythe Redoubt on the 1<sup>st</sup> April.

At least one pair bred successfully at Samphire Hoe and were seen feeding young in June. Numbers increased in September, with nine at Samphire Hoe on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 13 there on the 4<sup>th</sup>, 14 on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 15 on the 8<sup>th</sup>, whilst two flew west at Hythe Ranges on the 17<sup>th</sup> September and three were at Folkestone Harbour on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September, with up to two remaining there until the end of the year. Up to 13 remained at Samphire Hoe until December, whilst three flew over Hythe on the 13<sup>th</sup> October, and singles were seen there on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October and the 15<sup>th</sup> December.

Very rare vagrant (A)

A very elusive individual was seen intermittently at Donkey Street between the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> November (I. A. Roberts, B. Harper). The fifth area record and the first since 2010.



Rock Pipit at Samphire Hoe (Martin Collins)



Water Pipit at Donkey Street (Ian Roberts)

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

There were no winter counts of note but spring passage was evident from the 6<sup>th</sup> March when 54 flew east at Abbotscliffe. This was followed by an excellent total of 4,655 flying east there on the 13<sup>th</sup> March, 320 east there on the 15<sup>th</sup> March, 588 east there on the 27<sup>th</sup> March and 113 east there on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April, with a few smaller movements until the 7<sup>th</sup> April. Despite the large count, which was the second highest ever (after 8,190 flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 18<sup>th</sup> March 2015), the spring total of 5,820 was less than half of that recorded in the two previous years. It was however still higher than the previous ten year mean of 4,540.

Autumn passage was noted between mid-October and early November, with counts including 80 flying over Princes Parade on the 15<sup>th</sup> October, 910 arriving in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 26<sup>th</sup> October and 40 flying in off the sea at Capel-le-Ferne on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November.

# Brambling

*Fringilla montifringilla*

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

The only records in a fairly typical spring passage involved two at Nickolls Quarry on the 12<sup>th</sup> March and one flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 27<sup>th</sup> March.

Departure/Arrival	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Departure	27 <sup>th</sup> Mar	31 <sup>st</sup> Mar	-4	25 <sup>th</sup> Mar	+2	23 <sup>rd</sup> Apr 1958
Arrival	15 <sup>th</sup> Oct	3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct	+12	12 <sup>th</sup> Oct	+3	21 <sup>st</sup> Sep 1996

In autumn two flew over Princes Parade on the 15<sup>th</sup> October, singles flew over Abbotscliffe on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> October, and Creteway Down on the 27<sup>th</sup> October and ten flew in off the sea at Capel-le-Ferne on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November. The autumn total of 15 was a little below the mean for the previous decade of 23.

# Greenfinch

*Carduelis chloris*

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant, having declined in recent years (A)

The recent decline was described in the 2015 report and numbers remained low with no double-figure counts received. The only hint of spring passage involved one flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 6<sup>th</sup> March. In autumn migrants appeared to include two at Abbotscliffe on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September, singles at Samphire Hoe on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> September, three flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 15<sup>th</sup> October, one flying west there on the 17<sup>th</sup> October and three there on the 26<sup>th</sup> October.

# Goldfinch

*Carduelis carduelis*

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant, widespread but less common in winter (A)

There were no counts of note received for the early winter period. A light spring passage was noted between early March and mid-April and included counts of 20 flying over Abbotscliffe on the 6<sup>th</sup> March, 12 flying in/east there on the 27<sup>th</sup> March, 10 in off the sea there on the 31<sup>st</sup> March, 15 in/east there on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April and 15 flying east there on the 6<sup>th</sup> April.

Autumn passage was also modest with counts including 155 at Abbotscliffe on the 24<sup>th</sup> August, 100 at Abbotscliffe on the 30<sup>th</sup> September and the 6<sup>th</sup> October, 60 flying west at Princes Parade on the 15<sup>th</sup> October, 135 flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 17<sup>th</sup> October and 80 flying east at Mill Point on the 29<sup>th</sup> October.

# Siskin

*Carduelis spinus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

The only records from the early winter period related to two seen near Saltwood Castle on the 31<sup>st</sup> January and a small flock heard in Casebourne Wood on the 17<sup>th</sup> February.

Spring passage was noted between early March and late April and included counts of 29 flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 6<sup>th</sup> March, 62 flying east there on the 13<sup>th</sup> March, 14 east there on the 17<sup>th</sup> March, 16 east at Mill Point on the 25<sup>th</sup> March and 45 east at Abbotscliffe on the 27<sup>th</sup> March. Whilst considerably less than last year's record passage (542), the total of 190 was still higher than the previous ten year mean (165).

Three flying over Seabrook on the 8<sup>th</sup> June were an unusual mid-summer occurrence as there have only been records in this month in two previous years (2010 and 2015). Summer records are excluded from the table below (as indicated by the asterisks).

Departure/Arrival	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Departure	26 <sup>th</sup> Apr*	3 <sup>rd</sup> May	-7	14 <sup>th</sup> Apr*	+12	29 <sup>th</sup> May 2000*
Arrival	20 <sup>th</sup> Sep*	30 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-10	18 <sup>th</sup> Sep*	+2	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sep 1997*

Autumn passage, noted between the 20<sup>th</sup> September and the 5<sup>th</sup> December, was poor with a total of just 319 logged, compared to the mean for the previous decade of 1,305. Counts included 50 flying west at Mill Point on the 12<sup>th</sup> October, 25 flying west at Samphire Hoe on the 18<sup>th</sup> October, 41 flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 26<sup>th</sup> October, 30 flying over Nickolls Quarry on the 28<sup>th</sup> October, 20 flying west at Samphire Hoe on the 31<sup>st</sup> October and 25 arriving in off the sea there on the 25<sup>th</sup> November.

Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>
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Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant, less common in winter (A)

Very few were noted in the early winter period with the peak counts being six at the Willop Basin and 16 near Pedlinge in January.

Spring passage was noted from early March to late April and included counts of 78 (including 58 flying east) at Abbotscliffe on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 27 there (including 12 flying east) on the 5<sup>th</sup> April, 20 in/west there on the 13<sup>th</sup> April, 30 there the next day, 16 flying west at Princes Parade on the 16<sup>th</sup> April and a further 16 flying west there and 20 at Abbotscliffe on the 18<sup>th</sup> April.

Autumn saw an increase in numbers, including 100 at Samphire Hoe on the 5<sup>th</sup> September, 57 at Folkestone Warren on the 17<sup>th</sup> September, 125 in the Botolph's Bridge area in late September and up to 75 at Abbotscliffe in early October. There were few counts of visual migrants but these included 31 flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 4<sup>th</sup> October, 125 west there on the 15<sup>th</sup> October and 50 west there on the 26<sup>th</sup> October. Up to 150 were in a stubble field along Donkey Street in mid-November, decreasing to 45 by early December and there were also 11 at Hythe Ranges and 15 at Nickolls Quarry in December.

Twite	<i>Linaria flavirostris</i>
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Rare passage migrant (A)

A group of eight were reported near the Shearway Business Park (Cheriton) on the 6<sup>th</sup> February (J. Varley) and between 20 and 30 were reported at Broadmead Village on the 9<sup>th</sup> February (J. Wood), possibly involving some of the same birds. These were the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> area records but the first since 2012.

Lesser Redpoll	<i>Acanthis cabaret</i>
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Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

For the first year since 1999 there were no records from the early winter or spring periods.

Small numbers were noted in October, including 11 flying west over Abbotscliffe on the 6<sup>th</sup>, four flying over Folkestone Downs on the 12<sup>th</sup>, four flying over Princes Parade on the 17<sup>th</sup>, 11 flying over Hythe on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, seven flying west over Abbotscliffe on the 26<sup>th</sup> October, four flying over Abbotscliffe and Creteway Down on the 27<sup>th</sup>, five flying over Nickolls Quarry on the 28<sup>th</sup> and four flying flew east at Mill Point on the 31<sup>st</sup>. November produced seven at Nickolls Quarry on the 1<sup>st</sup>, four at Beachborough Lakes on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and smaller numbers until the 17<sup>th</sup>. A single flew west over Nickolls Quarry on the 6<sup>th</sup> December. The total of 85 was an improvement on last autumn's 28 but well below the mean for the previous ten autumns of 196.



Breeding resident (A)

There were records of resident birds from numerous sites including West Hythe, Nickolls Quarry, Brockhill Country Park, Princes Parade, Paraker Wood, Asholt Wood and Beachborough Lakes (where there was a notable count of 14 on the 24<sup>th</sup> August. This was the largest count since 17 were seen in Folkestone Warren in November 1971 and the only other larger count related to 50 that were seen flying west over Hythe in January 1968). There was no evidence of any passage this year.



Goldfinch at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)



Lesser Redpoll at Beachborough Lakes (Steve Tomlinson)

Very rare vagrant, perhaps formerly resident (A)

Three which flew over Creteway Down on the 27<sup>th</sup> October (B. Harper) were part of a significant influx into Britain. The 12<sup>th</sup> area record and the first since 2011.

Scarce passage migrant, mainly in autumn, has overwintered (A)

Singles were seen at Donkey Street on the 17<sup>th</sup> November and Abbotscliffe on the 24<sup>th</sup> November. There were records in all but one year between 1991 and 2012 but these are only the second and third sightings since.

Breeding resident (A)

In the early winter period there were up to 25 near Pedlinge, 20 near Stanford, 16 at Botolph's Bridge, 15 at the Willop Sewage Works and eight at West Hythe. One at Samphire Hoe on the 30<sup>th</sup> March was of note as the species is now irregular there.

Counts from the late winter period included up to 20 at Abbotscliffe, six at Donkey Street and four at Creteway Down.

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Only small numbers were noted in the early winter period with a peak of six at the Willop Basin in January.

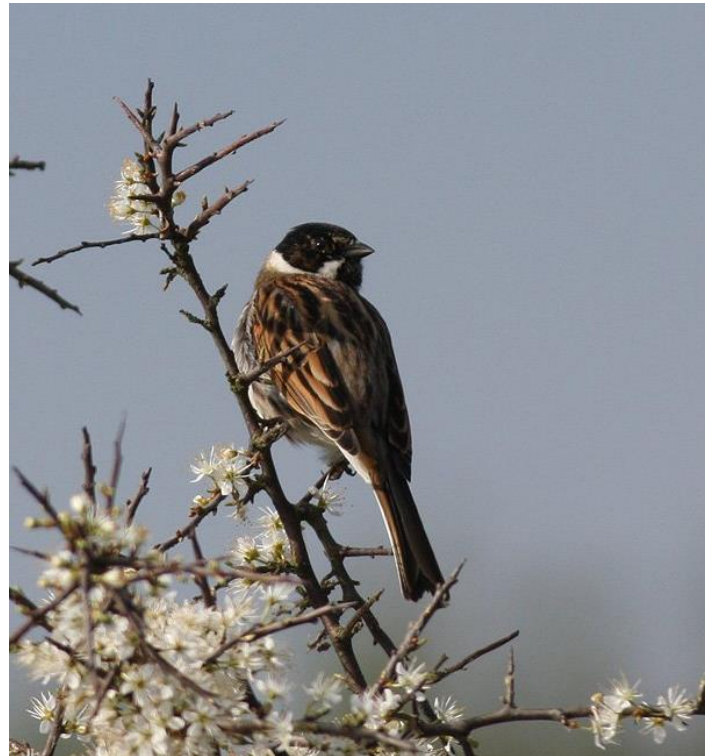
Spring passage included two at Abbotscliffe on the 6<sup>th</sup> March, two at Samphire Hoe on the 15<sup>th</sup> March, two at Princes Parade on the 25<sup>th</sup> March and singles at Samphire Hoe on the 28<sup>th</sup> and the 30<sup>th</sup> March. In April singles were noted at Abbotscliffe on the 6<sup>th</sup> and Samphire Hoe on the 17<sup>th</sup>, whilst a male was singing at Abbotscliffe on the 17<sup>th</sup> May.

Breeding records included three or four pairs at Nickolls Quarry and up to two pairs at Beachborough Lakes.

Autumn passage was noted from the 10<sup>th</sup> September but was very light with peak counts of just three flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 4<sup>th</sup> October and four there on the 6<sup>th</sup> October. In the late winter period there were up to 15 at Donkey Street and ten at Nickolls Quarry.



Yellowhammer at Samphire Hoe (Ian Roberts)



Reed Bunting at Nickolls Quarry (Brian Harper)

Declining resident, probably still breeding in most years (A)

There were no records from the early winter period but one was singing at Donkey Street on the 20<sup>th</sup> April and eight were seen there on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April, whilst there three summer records: singles at Donkey Street on the 16<sup>th</sup> June and 6<sup>th</sup> August and at Beachborough Lakes on the 24<sup>th</sup> August. The series of records from Donkey Street suggests that breeding may have occurred in this area.

In the late winter period there were three at the Willop Sewage Works on the 14<sup>th</sup> October and up to three in a stubble field along Donkey Street in November and December.

### Category E species

Indian Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>
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Escapee. Native to India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka (E)

One seen in a garden at Blackhouse Hill on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> September (G. Saunders) presumably originated from the collection at Saltwood Castle.

Budgerigar	<i>Melopsittacus undulatus</i>
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Escapee. Native to Australia (E)

One at Seabrook on the 16<sup>th</sup> September was unfortunately run and killed over by a car (P. Howe).



Corn Bunting at Beachborough Lakes (Steve Tomlinson)



Corn Bunting at Donkey Street (Ian Roberts)

## First and last dates for selected migrants

The arrival and departure dates for selected summer and winter migrants are shown in the tables below. In cases where records appear to relate to over-wintering or over-summering individuals these have been excluded, and are indicated by an asterisk by the date. A negative difference in the table indicates that a species arrived or departed earlier than the previous year or ten year mean, whilst a positive difference indicates a later arrival or departure. Winter records of Chiffchaffs and Blackcaps have become so frequent in recent years that these species have been excluded due to the difficulty of determining the first arriving or last departing migrant.

Spring arrival was earlier than last year for 13 species and later for 12. There were earliest ever arrival dates for Sandwich Tern and Sedge Warbler, whilst the arrival date for Reed Warbler equalled the earliest ever. There were also notable early arrival dates for Common Sandpiper, Sand Martin, House Martin, Lesser Whitethroat and Tree Pipit, whilst 2017 was only the second time that all three common hirundines were seen in March. However the arrival dates for Arctic Skua and Little Tern were particularly late.

### Arrival dates of summer migrants

Species	Arrival date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest ever arrival
	2017	2016				
Honey Buzzard	17 <sup>th</sup> May	28 <sup>th</sup> May	-11	22 <sup>nd</sup> May	-5	3 <sup>rd</sup> May 2013
Hobby	26 <sup>th</sup> Apr	24 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+2	24 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+2	9 <sup>th</sup> Apr 1998
Whimbrel	16 <sup>th</sup> Apr	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+5	12 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+4	25 <sup>th</sup> Mar 2011
Common Sandpiper	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr	24 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-13	22 <sup>nd</sup> Apr	-11	4 <sup>th</sup> Mar 2013*
Arctic Skua	29 <sup>th</sup> Apr	14 <sup>th</sup> Mar*	+46	14 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+15	14 <sup>th</sup> Mar 2016*
Little Tern	7 <sup>th</sup> May	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+26	26 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+11	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr 2016
Sandwich Tern	18 <sup>th</sup> Feb	23 <sup>rd</sup> Mar	-33	23 <sup>rd</sup> Mar	-33	18 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2017*
Common Tern	8 <sup>th</sup> Apr	2 <sup>nd</sup> Apr	+6	14 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-6	2 <sup>nd</sup> Apr 2016
Cuckoo	29 <sup>th</sup> Apr	19 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+10	21 <sup>st</sup> Apr	+8	27 <sup>th</sup> Mar 2001
Swift	22 <sup>nd</sup> Apr	18 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+4	23 <sup>rd</sup> Apr	-1	18 <sup>th</sup> Apr 2015
Sand Martin	29 <sup>th</sup> Mar	7 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-9	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-13	5 <sup>th</sup> Mar 1995
Swallow	30 <sup>th</sup> Mar	23 <sup>rd</sup> Mar	+7	24 <sup>th</sup> Mar	+6	10 <sup>th</sup> Mar 1952
House Martin	26 <sup>th</sup> Mar	31 <sup>st</sup> Mar	-5	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-15	7 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2004
Willow Warbler	30 <sup>th</sup> Mar	30 <sup>th</sup> Mar	-	5 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-6	26 <sup>th</sup> Mar 1960
Garden Warbler	5 <sup>th</sup> May	1 <sup>st</sup> May	+4	29 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+6	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr 2001
Lesser Whitethroat	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr	13 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-3	16 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-6	8 <sup>th</sup> Apr 2007
Common Whitethroat	8 <sup>th</sup> Apr	7 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+1	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-2	30 <sup>th</sup> Mar 2002
Sedge Warbler	1 <sup>st</sup> Apr	7 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-6	15 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-14	1 <sup>st</sup> Apr 2017
Reed Warbler	3 <sup>rd</sup> Apr	3 <sup>rd</sup> Apr	-	14 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-11	3 <sup>rd</sup> Apr 2016
Ring Ouzel	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-1	16 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-6	9 <sup>th</sup> Mar 1997
Spotted Flycatcher	12 <sup>th</sup> May	6 <sup>th</sup> May	+6	13 <sup>th</sup> May	-1	19 <sup>th</sup> Apr 1961
Nightingale	18 <sup>th</sup> Apr	19 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-1	24 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-6	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr 1981
Redstart	18 <sup>th</sup> Apr	12 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+6	12 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+6	12 <sup>th</sup> Mar 1960
Whinchat	25 <sup>th</sup> Apr	26 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-1	1 <sup>st</sup> May	-6	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr 2011
Wheatear	18 <sup>th</sup> Mar	22 <sup>nd</sup> Mar	-4	18 <sup>th</sup> Mar	-	8 <sup>th</sup> Mar 2015
Yellow Wagtail	4 <sup>th</sup> Apr	8 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-4	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-7	28 <sup>th</sup> Mar 1991
Tree Pipit	25 <sup>th</sup> Apr	8 <sup>th</sup> May	-13	9 <sup>th</sup> May	-14	26 <sup>th</sup> Mar 1965



Departures of summer migrants were generally a little earlier than last year, with 15 leaving earlier and nine later. The departure dates of Sandwich Tern (third latest ever) and Cuckoo (September records in only five previous years) were notably late.

#### Departure dates of summer migrants

Species	Departure date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Latest ever departure
	2017	2016	+/-		+/-	
Honey Buzzard	-	-	-	14 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-	15 <sup>th</sup> Oct 1995
Hobby	12 <sup>th</sup> Oct	22 <sup>nd</sup> Sep	+20	1 <sup>st</sup> Oct	+11	22 <sup>nd</sup> Oct 2001
Whimbrel	11 <sup>th</sup> Aug	29 <sup>th</sup> Jul	+13	30 <sup>th</sup> Aug	-19	12 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2013
Common Sandpiper	11 <sup>th</sup> Aug	23 <sup>rd</sup> Sep	-43	24 <sup>th</sup> Sep*	-44	Several wintered
Arctic Skua	18 <sup>th</sup> Oct	16 <sup>th</sup> Oct	+2	19 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-1	21 <sup>st</sup> Nov 2002
Little Tern	-	-	-	-	-	16 <sup>th</sup> Sep 1999
Sandwich Tern	31 <sup>st</sup> Oct	19 <sup>th</sup> Oct	+12	3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct	+28	9 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2010*
Common Tern	31 <sup>st</sup> Aug	29 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-29	2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct	-32	30 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2007
Turtle Dove	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sep	-	-	21 <sup>st</sup> Aug	+12	24 <sup>th</sup> Oct 1981*
Cuckoo	6 <sup>th</sup> Sep	29 <sup>th</sup> Jun	+69	28 <sup>th</sup> Jul	+40	28 <sup>th</sup> Sep 1969
Swift	17 <sup>th</sup> Sep	19 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-2	14 <sup>th</sup> Sep	+3	16 <sup>th</sup> Nov 1957
Sand Martin	5 <sup>th</sup> Oct	3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct	+2	6 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-1	4 <sup>th</sup> Nov 1963
Swallow	10 <sup>th</sup> Nov	8 <sup>th</sup> Nov	+2	14 <sup>th</sup> Nov	-4	8 <sup>th</sup> Dec 1955
House Martin	10 <sup>th</sup> Nov	19 <sup>th</sup> Oct	+22	1 <sup>st</sup> Nov	+9	2 <sup>nd</sup> Dec 1974
Willow Warbler	14 <sup>th</sup> Sep	12 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-28	25 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-11	19 <sup>th</sup> Oct 1986
Garden Warbler	31 <sup>st</sup> Aug	8 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-8	12 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-12	6 <sup>th</sup> Nov 1981
Lesser Whitethroat	24 <sup>th</sup> Sep	26 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-2	24 <sup>th</sup> Sep	0	3 <sup>rd</sup> Nov 1994
Common Whitethroat	4 <sup>th</sup> Oct	19 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-15	3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct	+1	19 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2016
Sedge Warbler	17 <sup>th</sup> Sep	14 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-27	24 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-7	15 <sup>th</sup> Oct 1996
Reed Warbler	14 <sup>th</sup> Sep	27 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-13	27 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-13	4 <sup>th</sup> Nov 1984
Ring Ouzel	2 <sup>nd</sup> Nov	29 <sup>th</sup> Oct	+4	3 <sup>rd</sup> Nov	-1	26 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2005
Spotted Flycatcher	30 <sup>th</sup> Sep	2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct	-2	21 <sup>st</sup> Sep	+9	11 <sup>th</sup> Oct 1999
Redstart	27 <sup>th</sup> Sep	6 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-9	1 <sup>st</sup> Oct	-4	27 <sup>th</sup> Oct 1999
Whinchat	15 <sup>th</sup> Oct	21 <sup>st</sup> Oct	-6	8 <sup>th</sup> Oct	+7	10 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2009
Wheatear	23 <sup>rd</sup> Oct	4 <sup>th</sup> Dec	-42	30 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-7	4 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2016
Yellow Wagtail	20 <sup>th</sup> Sep	7 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-17	29 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-9	20 <sup>th</sup> Oct 1984
Tree Pipit	27 <sup>th</sup> Aug	8 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-42	29 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-33	20 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2001

Spring departure dates and autumn arrivals of winter visitors were again fairly evenly balanced compared to last year. Of particular note were the departure date of Purple Sandpiper (only one day short of equalling the latest ever) and Fieldfare (with May records in only three previous years, and one in June last year being the latest ever), and arrival date of Red-throated Diver (there had only been three earlier records). The departures and arrival dates for Siskin exclude the unusual mid-summer occurrence in June.

#### Departure dates of winter migrants

Species	Departure date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Latest ever departure
	2017	2016				
Brent Goose	8 <sup>th</sup> May	5 <sup>th</sup> May	+3	3 <sup>rd</sup> May	+5	26 <sup>th</sup> May 1997*
Red-throated Diver	10 <sup>th</sup> May	6 <sup>th</sup> May	+4	1 <sup>st</sup> May	+9	6 <sup>th</sup> June 2006
Purple Sandpiper	9 <sup>th</sup> May	5 <sup>th</sup> May	+4	2 <sup>nd</sup> May	+7	10 <sup>th</sup> May 2009
Fieldfare	1 <sup>st</sup> May	5 <sup>th</sup> Jun	-35	6 <sup>th</sup> Apr	+25	5 <sup>th</sup> Jun 2016
Redwing	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr	16 <sup>th</sup> Apr	-6	1 <sup>st</sup> Apr	+9	4 <sup>th</sup> May 1981
Brambling	27 <sup>th</sup> Mar	31 <sup>st</sup> Mar	-4	25 <sup>th</sup> Mar	+2	23 <sup>rd</sup> Apr 1958
Siskin	26 <sup>th</sup> Apr*	3 <sup>rd</sup> May	-7	14 <sup>th</sup> Apr*	+12	29 <sup>th</sup> May 2000*

#### Arrival dates of winter migrants

Species	Arrival date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest ever arrival
	2017	2016				
Brent Goose	23 <sup>rd</sup> Sep	17 <sup>th</sup> Sep	+6	20 <sup>th</sup> Sep*	+3	11 <sup>th</sup> Sep 2014*
Red-throated Diver	15 <sup>th</sup> Sep	11 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-26	7 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-22	7 <sup>th</sup> Sep 1997
Purple Sandpiper	25 <sup>th</sup> Oct	3 <sup>rd</sup> Nov	-9	31 <sup>st</sup> Oct	-6	30 <sup>th</sup> Sep 1984
Fieldfare	27 <sup>th</sup> Oct	4 <sup>th</sup> Oct	+23	13 <sup>th</sup> Oct	+14	29 <sup>th</sup> Sep 2007
Redwing	6 <sup>th</sup> Oct	7 <sup>th</sup> Sep	+29	1 <sup>st</sup> Oct	+5	7 <sup>th</sup> Sep 2016
Brambling	15 <sup>th</sup> Oct	3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct	+12	12 <sup>th</sup> Oct	+3	21 <sup>st</sup> Sep 1996
Siskin	20 <sup>th</sup> Sep*	30 <sup>th</sup> Sep	-10	18 <sup>th</sup> Sep*	+2	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sep 1997*



The fourth earliest ever autumn record of Red-throated Diver at Fisherman's Beach, Hythe (Ian Roberts)

## Year list

### January

1	Mute Swan	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
2	Teal	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
3	Mallard	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
4	Common Scoter	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
5	Goosander	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
6	Grey Partridge	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
7	Pheasant	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
8	Red-throated Diver	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
9	Gannet	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
10	Cormorant	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
11	Little Egret	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
12	Grey Heron	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
13	Little Grebe	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
14	Great Crested Grebe	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
15	Moorhen	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
16	Coot	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
17	Oystercatcher	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
18	Golden Plover	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
19	Lapwing	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
20	Purple Sandpiper	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
21	Common Snipe	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
22	Redshank	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
23	Turnstone	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
24	Great Skua	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
25	Black-headed Gull	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
26	Mediterranean Gull	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
27	Common Gull	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
28	Herring Gull	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
29	Great Black-backed Gull	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
30	Feral Pigeon/Rock Dove	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
31	Stock Dove	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
32	Wood Pigeon	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
33	Collared Dove	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
34	Tawny Owl	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
35	Common Kingfisher	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
36	Green Woodpecker	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
37	Magpie	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
38	Jackdaw	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
39	Rook	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
40	Carrion Crow	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
41	Blue Tit	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
42	Great Tit	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
43	Sky Lark	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
44	Long-tailed Tit	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
45	Blackcap	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
46	Wren	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
47	Starling	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
48	Blackbird	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
49	Fieldfare	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
50	Song Thrush	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
51	Redwing	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan

52	Robin	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
53	Stonechat	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
54	Duncock	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
55	House Sparrow	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
56	Pied Wagtail	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
57	Meadow Pipit	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
58	Chaffinch	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
59	Goldfinch	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
60	Linnet	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
61	Yellowhammer	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
62	Reed Bunting	1 <sup>st</sup> Jan
63	Shag	2 <sup>nd</sup> Jan
64	Marsh Harrier	2 <sup>nd</sup> Jan
65	Sparrowhawk	2 <sup>nd</sup> Jan
66	Common Kestrel	2 <sup>nd</sup> Jan
67	Sanderling	2 <sup>nd</sup> Jan
68	Barn Owl	2 <sup>nd</sup> Jan
69	Great Spotted Woodpecker	2 <sup>nd</sup> Jan
70	Jay	2 <sup>nd</sup> Jan
71	Goldcrest	2 <sup>nd</sup> Jan
72	Coal Tit	2 <sup>nd</sup> Jan
73	Cetti's Warbler	2 <sup>nd</sup> Jan
74	Grey Wagtail	2 <sup>nd</sup> Jan
75	Bullfinch	2 <sup>nd</sup> Jan
76	Gadwall	3 <sup>rd</sup> Jan
77	Shoveler	3 <sup>rd</sup> Jan
78	Guillemot	3 <sup>rd</sup> Jan
79	Little Owl	3 <sup>rd</sup> Jan
80	Rock Pipit	3 <sup>rd</sup> Jan
81	Greenfinch	3 <sup>rd</sup> Jan
82	Brent Goose	4 <sup>th</sup> Jan
83	Kittiwake	4 <sup>th</sup> Jan
84	Razorbill	4 <sup>th</sup> Jan
85	Shelduck	5 <sup>th</sup> Jan
86	Wigeon	5 <sup>th</sup> Jan
87	Water Rail	5 <sup>th</sup> Jan
88	Ringed Plover	5 <sup>th</sup> Jan
89	Green Sandpiper	5 <sup>th</sup> Jan
90	Bearded Tit	5 <sup>th</sup> Jan
91	Chiffchaff	5 <sup>th</sup> Jan
92	Mistle Thrush	5 <sup>th</sup> Jan
93	Common Buzzard	6 <sup>th</sup> Jan
94	Lesser Black-backed Gull	6 <sup>th</sup> Jan
95	Iceland Gull	6 <sup>th</sup> Jan
96	Mandarin	7 <sup>th</sup> Jan
97	Woodcock	7 <sup>th</sup> Jan
98	Firecrest	7 <sup>th</sup> Jan
99	Common Treecreeper	7 <sup>th</sup> Jan
100	Peregrine	8 <sup>th</sup> Jan
101	Jack Snipe	8 <sup>th</sup> Jan
102	Waxwing	8 <sup>th</sup> Jan
103	Scaup	10 <sup>th</sup> Jan
104	Raven	13 <sup>th</sup> Jan
105	Tufted Duck	14 <sup>th</sup> Jan
106	Grey Plover	15 <sup>th</sup> Jan



107	Marsh Tit	16 <sup>th</sup> Jan
108	Nuthatch	20 <sup>th</sup> Jan
109	Curlew	21 <sup>st</sup> Jan
110	Merlin	22 <sup>nd</sup> Jan
111	Greylag Goose	23 <sup>rd</sup> Jan
112	Fulmar	27 <sup>th</sup> Jan
113	Hen Harrier	29 <sup>th</sup> Jan
114	Siskin	31 <sup>st</sup> Jan

#### February

115	Black Redstart	3 <sup>rd</sup> Feb
116	Ring-necked Parakeet	6 <sup>th</sup> Feb
117	Twite	7 <sup>th</sup> Feb
118	Red-breasted Merganser	10 <sup>th</sup> Feb
119	Avocet	18 <sup>th</sup> Feb
120	Sandwich Tern	18 <sup>th</sup> Feb
121	Canada Goose	19 <sup>th</sup> Feb
122	Egyptian Goose	21 <sup>st</sup> Feb

#### March

123	Red Kite	2 <sup>nd</sup> Mar
124	Pintail	3 <sup>rd</sup> Mar
125	Wood Lark	4 <sup>th</sup> Mar
126	Red-legged Partridge	11 <sup>th</sup> Mar
127	Velvet Scoter	12 <sup>th</sup> Mar
128	Brambling	12 <sup>th</sup> Mar
129	Short-eared Owl	13 <sup>th</sup> Mar
130	Goshawk	14 <sup>th</sup> Mar
131	Northern Wheatear	18 <sup>th</sup> Mar
132	Black-throated Diver	22 <sup>nd</sup> Mar
133	Little Gull	22 <sup>nd</sup> Mar
134	Dunlin	23 <sup>rd</sup> Mar
135	Bar-tailed Godwit	23 <sup>rd</sup> Mar
136	Knot	24 <sup>th</sup> Mar
137	Black-tailed Godwit	24 <sup>th</sup> Mar
138	Greenshank	25 <sup>th</sup> Mar
139	House Martin	26 <sup>th</sup> Mar
140	Eider	28 <sup>th</sup> Mar
141	Sand Martin	29 <sup>th</sup> Mar
142	Swallow	30 <sup>th</sup> Mar
143	Willow Warbler	30 <sup>th</sup> Mar

#### April

144	Sedge Warbler	1 <sup>st</sup> Apr
145	Reed Warbler	3 <sup>rd</sup> Apr
146	Yellow Wagtail	4 <sup>th</sup> Apr
147	Common Tern	8 <sup>th</sup> Apr
148	Common Whitethroat	8 <sup>th</sup> Apr
149	Lesser Whitethroat	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr
150	Ring Ouzel	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr
151	Common Sandpiper	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr
152	Whimbrel	16 <sup>th</sup> Apr

153	Nightingale	18 <sup>th</sup> Apr
154	Common Redstart	18 <sup>th</sup> Apr
155	Corn Bunting	20 <sup>th</sup> Apr
156	Common Swift	22 <sup>nd</sup> Apr
157	Spoonbill	23 <sup>rd</sup> Apr
158	Whinchat	25 <sup>th</sup> Apr
159	Tree Pipit	25 <sup>th</sup> Apr
160	Hobby	26 <sup>th</sup> Apr
161	Arctic Skua	29 <sup>th</sup> Apr
162	Arctic Tern	29 <sup>th</sup> Apr
163	Cuckoo	29 <sup>th</sup> Apr
164	Hoopoe	29 <sup>th</sup> Apr
165	Black Kite	30 <sup>th</sup> Apr
166	Pomarine Skua	30 <sup>th</sup> Apr

#### May

167	Yellow-legged Gull	1 <sup>st</sup> May
168	Garden Warbler	5 <sup>th</sup> May
169	Little Tern	7 <sup>th</sup> May
170	Black Tern	7 <sup>th</sup> May
171	Spotted Flycatcher	12 <sup>th</sup> May
172	European Bee-eater	14 <sup>th</sup> May
173	Honey Buzzard	17 <sup>th</sup> May
174	Common Crane	28 <sup>th</sup> May

#### June

175	Turtle Dove	16 <sup>th</sup> Jun
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#### August

176	Pied Flycatcher	30 <sup>th</sup> Aug
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#### September

177	Grasshopper Warbler	4 <sup>th</sup> Sep
178	Greenish Warbler	17 <sup>th</sup> Sep
179	Wood Warbler	18 <sup>th</sup> Sep
180	Yellow-browed Warbler	22 <sup>nd</sup> Sep
181	Wryneck	29 <sup>th</sup> Sep

#### October

182	Lesser Redpoll	6 <sup>th</sup> Oct
183	Great White Egret	13 <sup>th</sup> Oct
184	Short-toed Treecreeper	15 <sup>th</sup> Oct
185	Dartford Warbler	23 <sup>rd</sup> Oct
186	Rough-legged Buzzard	25 <sup>th</sup> Oct
187	Hawfinch	27 <sup>th</sup> Oct
188	Sooty Shearwater	31 <sup>st</sup> Oct

## November

189	Red-necked Grebe	4 <sup>th</sup> Nov
190	Long-tailed Duck	4 <sup>th</sup> Nov
191	Tree Sparrow	5 <sup>th</sup> Nov
192	Water Pipit	5 <sup>th</sup> Nov
193	Great Northern Diver	14 <sup>th</sup> Nov
194	Lapland Bunting	17 <sup>th</sup> Nov

## December

195	Caspian Gull	2 <sup>nd</sup> Dec
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Waxwing at Hythe (Martin Casemore)

## Ringing recoveries

Details of birds ringed elsewhere and recovered in the Folkestone and Hythe area are given here. The code of the metal ring and colour rings are provided on the left. The distances and directions travelled are in relation to the ringing site in all cases.

One of the highlights was the return of the Icelandic-ringed Sanderling to its favoured wintering site at the Willop Outfall in March and again in December 2017. This bird had previously been seen here in January 2015 and had visited Shoebury in Essex on several occasions since.

Other notable recoveries included Mediterranean Gulls from France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Hungary, a Great Black-backed Gull from Normandy and a Wheatear from Skokholm Island in Wales.

I am grateful to Brian Harper for passing on details of the Sanderling in December, to Martin Collins, John Tomlinson and Nigel Webster for passing on details of the Mediterranean Gulls, to Martin Collins and Nigel Webster for passing on details of the Great Black-backed Gull and to Mark Kennett for passing on details of the Wheatear. I am also grateful to the coordinators of the various ringing schemes for providing the relevant information, with particular thanks to Paul Roper of the North Thames Gull Group.

The female Stonechat mentioned in last year's report (with the 'green over black' ring combination) remained faithful to a very specific part of at Samphire Hoe until the end of 2017, continuing its remarkable site fidelity, and several new birds were ringed this year. Please continue to report sightings of these Stonechats, making a note of the position and order of the rings, the date and location, by either picking up a form from the Rangers' Office at Samphire Hoe or by emailing [pwjfindley@hotmail.com](mailto:pwjfindley@hotmail.com).

Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>
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8108201	Ringed	31-May-2013	-	Sandgerði, Iceland	
G4WWBG	Read in field	02-Jun-2013	-	Sandgerði, Iceland	0km
	Read in field	21-Jan-2014	-	St. Mary's Bay, Kent	2,048km SE
	Read in field	13-Apr-2014	-	Shoebury, Essex	1,958km SE
	Read in field	19-Jul-2014	-	Foula, Shetland	1,171km ESE
	Read in field	19-Dec-2014	-	Dymchurch, Kent	2,048km SE
	Read in field	29-Dec-2014	-	Dymchurch, Kent	2,048km SE
	Read in field	09-Jan-2015	-	Willop Outfall	2,048km SE
	Read in field	08-Feb-2015	-	Dymchurch, Kent	2,048km SE
	Read in field	30-Aug-2015	-	Shoebury, Essex	1,958km SE
	Read in field	02-Nov-2015	-	Shoebury, Essex	1,958km SE
	Read in field	24-Apr-2016	-	Shoebury, Essex	1,958km SE
	Read in field	15-Oct-2016	-	Shoebury, Essex	1,958km SE
	Read in field	19-Oct-2016	-	Shoebury, Essex	1,958km SE
	Read in field	18-Mar-2017	-	Willop Outfall	2,048km SE
	Read in field	04-Dec-2017	-	Willop Outfall	2,048km SE

Mediterranean Gull	<i>Ichthyaetus melanocephalus</i>
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EY79544	Ringed	25-Jan-2015	Adult	Great Yarmouth	
Yellow 2J22	Read in field	08-Feb-2015	Adult	Great Yarmouth	0km
	Read in field	18-Feb-2015	Adult	Great Yarmouth	0km
	Read in field	19-Feb-2015	Adult	Great Yarmouth	0km
	Read in field	17-Oct-2015	Adult	Great Yarmouth	0km
	Then seen at Great Yarmouth on several dates to				
	Read in field	13-Dec-2015	Adult	Great Yarmouth	0km
	Read in field	12-Dec-2016	Adult	Great Yarmouth	0km
	Read in field	19-Jan-2017	Adult	Copt Point	173km SSW



FS72490 Green R29V	Ringed	11-Jun-2010	Juvenile	Conchil le Temple, France	
	Read in field	27-Jan-2011	1 <sup>st</sup> -year	Folkestone Harbour	86km NNW
	Read in field	08-Feb-2011	1 <sup>st</sup> -year	Copt Point	86km NNW
	Read in field	14-Feb-2011	1 <sup>st</sup> -year	Folkestone Harbour	86km NNW
	Read in field	16-Apr-2011	1 <sup>st</sup> -year	Titchfield Haven, Hampshire	210km WNW
	Read in field	03-Aug-2011	2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	Boulogne-sur-Mer, France	40km N
	Read in field	06-Dec-2011	2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	Copt Point	86km NNW
	Read in field	01-Jul-2012	Adult	Paimpol, France	399km SW
	Read in field	16-Mar-2013	Adult	La Flèche, France	323km SSW
	Then seen at La Flèche regularly until				
	Read in field	17-Apr-2013	Adult	La Flèche, France	323km SSW
	Read in field	18-Apr-2013	Adult	Montreuil-sur-Loir, France	340km SSW
	Then seen at Montreuil-sur-Loir and La Flèche regularly until				
	Read in field	29-May-2013	Adult	Montreuil-sur-Loir, France	340km SSW
	Read in field	06-Jun-2013	Adult	Barbâtre, Vendee, France	473km SW
	Read in field	26-Jun-2013	Adult	Longué-Jumelles, France	352km SSW
	Read in field	11-Mar-2014	Adult	Longué-Jumelles, France	352km SSW
	Then seen at Longué-Jumelles regularly until				
	Read in field	07-Apr-2014	Adult	Longué-Jumelles, France	352km SSW
	Read in field	13-Apr-2014	Adult	La Flèche, France	323km SSW
	Read in field	24-Apr-2014	Adult	Montreuil-sur-Loir, France	340km SSW
	Read in field	02-May-2014	Adult	Montreuil-sur-Loir, France	340km SSW
	Read in field	12-Apr-2015	Adult	Montreuil-sur-Loir, France	340km SSW
	Read in field	23-Apr-2015	Adult	Montreuil-sur-Loir, France	340km SSW
	Read in field	11-Feb-2017	Adult	Copt Point	86km NNW
EZ09720 Yellow 2E46	Ringed	05-Mar-2015	Adult	Copt Point	
	Read in field	21-Dec-2015	Adult	Folkestone Harbour	0km
	Read in field	19-Jan-2017	Adult	Copt Point	0km
	Read in field	12-Feb-2017	Adult	Copt Point	0km
HA07663 Red HU00	Ringed	17-Jun-2012	Juvenile	Szeged, Hungary	
	Read in field	22-Apr-2013	1 <sup>st</sup> -year	Icklesham, Sussex	1,510km WNW
	Read in field	03-Sep-2013	2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	Den Oever, Netherlands	1,308km NW
	Read in field	26-Dec-2013	2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	Copt Point	1,480km WNW
	Read in field	13-Mar-2016	Adult	Boulogne-sur-Mer, France	1,445km WNW
	Read in field	07-Feb-2017	Adult	Princes Parade	1,486km WNW
HA07663 Red H9A5	Read in field	12-Feb-2017	Adult	Copt Point	1,480km WNW
	Ringed	15-Jun-2013	Juvenile	Budapest, Hungary	
	Read in field	29-Jul-2013	Juvenile	Scharendijke, Netherlands	1,198km NW
	Read in field	30-Jul-2013	Juvenile	Scharendijke, Netherlands	1,198km NW
	Read in field	02-Dec-2015	2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	Princes Parade	1,370km WNW
	Read in field	19-Jan-2017	Adult	Copt Point	1,364km WNW
	Read in field	20-Jan-2017	Adult	Copt Point	1,364km WNW
	Read in field	11-Feb-2017	Adult	Copt Point	1,364km WNW
FS73561 Green RC10	Read in field	14-Feb-2017	Adult	Copt Point	1,364km WNW
	Ringed	14-Jun-2011	Juvenile	Conchil-le-Temple, France	
	Read in field	18-Jul-2012	2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	Le Portel, France	40km S
	Read in field	18-Aug-2012	2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	Le Portel, France	40km S
	Read in field	23-Aug-2012	2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	Le Portel, France	40km S
	Read in field	16-Apr-2013	Adult	Icklesham, Sussex	91km NW
	Read in field	14-Aug-2014	Adult	Hameau de Strouanne, France	60km N
	Read in field	15-Aug-2014	Adult	Wissant, France	58km N

	Read in field	13-Mar-2017	Adult	Seabrook	87km NNW
3692555	Ringed	27-Jun-2014	Juvenile	IJsselmeer, Netherlands	
White 3KNP	Read in field	10-Feb-2016	2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	Paimpol, France	739km SW
	Read in field	25-Mar-2016	2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	Icklesham, Sussex	384km SW
	Read in field	29-Mar-2016	2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	Icklesham, Sussex	384km SW
	Read in field	17-Mar-2017	Adult	Icklesham, Sussex	384km SW
	Read in field	02-Jul-2017	Adult	Princes Parade	350km SW
E910287	Ringed	10-Jun-2006	Juvenile	Antwerp, Belgium	
White 319H	Read in field	10-Aug-2006	1 <sup>st</sup> -year	Copt Point	217km WSW
	Read in field	09-Sep-2006	1 <sup>st</sup> -year	Copt Point	217km WSW
	Read in field	07-Oct-2006	1 <sup>st</sup> -year	Copt Point	217km WSW
	Read in field	16-Dec-2006	1 <sup>st</sup> -year	Copt Point	217km WSW
	Read in field	13-Jan-2007	1 <sup>st</sup> -year	Copt Point	217km WSW
	Read in field	15-Jan-2007	1 <sup>st</sup> -year	Copt Point	217km WSW
	Read in field	17-Feb-2007	1 <sup>st</sup> -year	Copt Point	217km WSW
	Read in field	21-Mar-2007	1 <sup>st</sup> -year	Copt Point	217km WSW
	Read in field	24-Feb-2010	Adult	Great Yarmouth	223km NW
	Re-ringed	21-May-2017	Adult	Antwerp, Belgium	0km
	Read in field	28-Sep-2017	Adult	Princes Parade	224km WSW
382350	Ringed	26-May-2007	Juvenile	Rétság, Hungary	
Red 9LO	Read in field	05-Jan-2008	1 <sup>st</sup> -year	Gijón, Spain	1,931km WSW
	Read in field	12-Sep-2009	Adult	Outreau, France	1,319km WNW
	Read in field	21-Sep-2009	Adult	Le Portel, France	1,320km WNW
	Read in field	01-Oct-2009	Adult	Wimereux, France	1,319km WNW
	Read in field	07-Apr-2010	Adult	Montlouis-sur-Loire, France	1,346km W
	Read in field	05-Jun-2010	Adult	Montlouis-sur-Loire, France	1,346km W
	Read in field	29-Jun-2010	Adult	Montlouis-sur-Loire, France	1,346km W
	Read in field	21-Jul-2010	Adult	Le Portel, France	1,320km WNW
	Read in field	27-Jul-2010	Adult	Le Portel, France	1,320km WNW
	Read in field	29-Jul-2010	Adult	Le Portel, France	1,320km WNW
	Read in field	10-Oct-2010	Adult	Wimereux, France	1,319km WNW
	Read in field	17-Mar-2011	Adult	Montlouis-sur-Loire, France	1,346km W
	Read in field	21-Apr-2011	Adult	La Flèche, France	1,411km W
	Read in field	22-Apr-2011	Adult	La Flèche, France	1,411km W
	Read in field	28-Apr-2011	Adult	L'Île-d'Olonne, France	1,556km W
	Read in field	03-May-2011	Adult	La Flèche, France	1,411km W
	Read in field	02-Aug-2011	Adult	Boulogne-sur-Mer, France	1,319km WNW
	Read in field	03-Aug-2011	Adult	Boulogne-sur-Mer, France	1,319km WNW
	Read in field	15-Sep-2011	Adult	Wissant, France	1,318km WNW
	Read in field	13-Mar-2012	Adult	La Flèche, France	1,411km W
	Then seen at La Flèche on most days until				
	Read in field	29-Mar-2012	Adult	La Flèche, France	1,411km W
	Read in field	06-Apr-2012	Adult	Beaugency, France	1,284km W
	Read in field	18-Apr-2012	Adult	Montreuil-sur-Loir, France	1,437km W
	Read in field	24-May-2012	Adult	Beaugency, France	1,284km W
	Read in field	12-Jun-2012	Adult	Montreuil-sur-Loir, France	1,437km W
	Read in field	26-Jun-2012	Adult	La Flèche, France	1,411km W
	Read in field	21-Jul-2012	Adult	Outreau, France	1,319km WNW
	Read in field	02-Aug-2012	Adult	Le Portel, France	1,320km WNW
	Then seen at Le Portel daily until				
	Read in field	05-Aug-2012	Adult	Le Portel, France	1,320km WNW
	Read in field	06-Mar-2013	Adult	La Flèche, France	1,411km W

Then seen at La Flèche regularly until					
Read in field	05-May-2013	Adult	La Flèche, France	1,411km W	
Read in field	12-Jul-2013	Adult	Le Portel, France	1,320km WNW	
Then seen at Le Portel regularly until					
Read in field	25-Jul-2013	Adult	Le Portel, France	1,320km WNW	
Read in field	16-Aug-2013	Adult	Wissant, France	1,318km WNW	
Then seen at Wissant regularly until					
Read in field	21-Aug-2013	Adult	Wissant, France	1,318km WNW	
Read in field	20-Mar-2013	Adult	Santa Cruz de Oleiros, Spain	2,144km WSW	
Read in field	22-Mar-2013	Adult	Santa Cruz de Oleiros, Spain	2,144km WSW	
Read in field	29-Mar-2013	Adult	Saint-Denis-d'Oléron, France	1,534km W	
Read in field	16-Jan-2014	Adult	La Rochelle, France	1,517km W	
Read in field	10-Mar-2014	Adult	La Flèche, France	1,411km W	
Read in field	19-Jul-2014	Adult	Le Portel, France	1,320km WNW	
Read in field	13-Aug-2014	Adult	Wissant, France	1,318km WNW	
Read in field	16-Aug-2014	Adult	Wissant, France	1,318km WNW	
Read in field	17-Aug-2014	Adult	Wissant, France	1,318km WNW	
Read in field	30-Sep-2014	Adult	Audinghen, France	1,323km WNW	
Read in field	09-Jan-2015	Adult	La Rochelle, France	1,517km W	
Read in field	15-Jan-2015	Adult	La Rochelle, France	1,517km W	
Read in field	17-Jul-2015	Adult	Outreau, France	1,319km WNW	
Read in field	11-Mar-2016	Adult	Beaugency, France	1,284km W	
Read in field	20-Jul-2016	Adult	Boulogne-sur-Mer, France	1,319km WNW	
Read in field	08-Oct-2016	Adult	Audresselles, France	1,321km WNW	
Read in field	09-Oct-2016	Adult	Audresselles, France	1,321km WNW	
Read in field	11-Aug-2017	Adult	Wissant, France	1,318km WNW	
Read in field	14-Oct-2017	Adult	Princes Parade	1,360km WNW	
EL37971	Ringed	03-Dec-2013	1 <sup>st</sup> -year	Great Yarmouth, Norfolk	
Yellow 2H43	Read in field	14-Dec-2013	1 <sup>st</sup> -year	Great Yarmouth, Norfolk	0km
Then seen at Great Yarmouth regularly until					
Read in field	24-Jan-2014	1 <sup>st</sup> -year	Great Yarmouth, Norfolk	0km	
Read in field	06-May-2014	1 <sup>st</sup> -year	Minsmere, Suffolk	43km S	
Read in field	07-May-2014	1 <sup>st</sup> -year	Minsmere, Suffolk	43km S	
Read in field	01-Aug-2014	2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	Saint-Pol-de-Léon, France	595km SW	
Read in field	03-Aug-2014	2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	Plouénan, France	597km SW	
Read in field	16-Aug-2014	2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	Saint-Pol-de-Léon, France	595km SW	
Read in field	21-Aug-2014	2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	Taulé, France	594km SW	
Read in field	24-Dec-2015	Adult	Lac d'Hossegor, France	1,023km SSW	
Read in field	22-Jan-2016	Adult	Ciboure, France	1,056km SSW	
Read in field	13-Feb-2016	Adult	Ciboure, France	1,056km SSW	
Read in field	15-Jun-2016	Adult	Barbâtre, France	691km SSW	
Read in field	02-Jul-2016	Adult	Barbâtre, France	691km SSW	
Read in field	23-Aug-2016	Adult	Tournemine, Plérin, France	551km SW	
Read in field	15-Sep-2016	Adult	Tournemine, Plérin, France	551km SW	
Read in field	04-Dec-2016	Adult	Mimizan, France	963km SSW	
Read in field	22-Dec-2016	Adult	Mimizan, France	963km SSW	
Read in field	23-Dec-2016	Adult	Mimizan, France	963km SSW	
Read in field	07-Feb-2017	Adult	Ciboure, France	1,056km SSW	
Read in field	09-Mar-2017	Adult	Les Manteaux, France	521km SSE	
Read in field	04-Apr-2017	Adult	Barbâtre, France	691km SSW	
Read in field	18-Jun-2017	Adult	Barbâtre, France	691km SSW	
Read in field	14-Oct-2017	Adult	Princes Parade	177km SSW	

EY95238 Yellow 2E53	Ringed	20-Nov-2010	Adult	Pitsea, Essex		
	Read in field	29-Mar-2017	Adult	Icklesham, Sussex	73km	S
	Read in field	31-Mar-2017	Adult	Icklesham, Sussex	73km	S
	Read in field	29-Oct-2017	Adult	Sandgate	69km	SE
EZ12145 Yellow 2H70	Ringed	11-Jun-2016	Adult	Pitsea, Essex		
	Read in field	29-Oct-2017	Adult	Sandgate	69km	SE
FS72007 Green R16T	Ringed	15-Jun-2009	Juvenile	Oye Plage, France		
	Read in field	20-Sep-2009	1 <sup>st</sup> -year	Copt Point	62km	W
	Read in field	27-Apr-2011	2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	Barbâtre, Vendee, France	547km	SW
	Read in field	29-Apr-2011	2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	Barbâtre, Vendee, France	547km	SW
	Read in field	10-May-2011	2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	Marais d'Olonne, France	573km	SW
	Read in field	12-May-2011	2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	Marais d'Olonne, France	573km	SW
	Read in field	26-May-2011	2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	Les Arequiers, France	849km	S
	Read in field	05-Nov-2011	Adult	Saint Jean du Doigt, France	490km	SW
	Read in field	30-Mar-2012	Adult	Barbâtre, Vendee, France	547km	SW
	Read in field	29-Jun-2012	Adult	Barbâtre, Vendee, France	547km	SW
	Read in field	06-Mar-2013	Adult	Barbâtre, Vendee, France	547km	SW
	Then seen at Barbâtre on numerous dates until					
	Read in field	14-Jun-2013	Adult	Barbâtre, Vendee, France	547km	SW
	Read in field	21-Nov-2014	Adult	Louannec, France	463km	SW
	Read in field	19-Dec-2014	Adult	Lannion, France	470km	SW
	Read in field	24-Apr-2015	Adult	Barbâtre, Vendee, France	547km	SW
	Read in field	26-Apr-2015	Adult	Barbâtre, Vendee, France	547km	SW
	Read in field	10-Jun-2015	Adult	Barbâtre, Vendee, France	547km	SW
	Read in field	30-Nov-2015	Adult	La Torche, Finistère, France	583km	SW
	Read in field	18-Dec-2015	Adult	Louannec, France	463km	SW
	Read in field	29-Jan-2016	Adult	Paimpol, France	442km	SW
	Read in field	28-Jul-2016	Adult	Plouénan, France	506km	SW
	Read in field	04-Jun-2017	Adult	Ile de Montsoreau, France	446km	SSW
	Read in field	08-Jun-2017	Adult	Ile de Montsoreau, France	446km	SSW
	Read in field	17-Jun-2017	Adult	Ile de Montsoreau, France	446km	SSW
	Read in field	29-Oct-2017	Adult	Sandgate	67km	W
FS37156 Green R80V	Ringed	14-May-2011	Adult	Antwerp, Belgium		
	Read in field	05-Jul-2011	Adult	Le Portel, France	202km	WSW
	Read in field	31-Jul-2011	Adult	Le Portel, France	202km	WSW
	Read in field	01-Aug-2011	Adult	Boulogne-sur-Mer, France	199km	WSW
	Read in field	02-Aug-2011	Adult	Boulogne-sur-Mer, France	199km	WSW
	Read in field	03-Aug-2011	Adult	Boulogne-sur-Mer, France	199km	WSW
	Read in field	12-Mar-2012	Adult	Antwerp, Belgium	0km	
	Read in field	08-Jul-2012	Adult	Le Portel, France	202km	WSW
	Read in field	01-Aug-2012	Adult	Wimereux, France	198km	WSW
	Read in field	03-Mar-2013	Adult	Antwerp, Belgium	0km	
	Then seen at Antwerp on several dates until					
	Read in field	10-Apr-2013	Adult	Antwerp, Belgium	0km	
	Read in field	06-Apr-2014	Adult	Antwerp, Belgium	0km	
	Then seen at Antwerp on several dates until					
	Read in field	20-Apr-2014	Adult	Antwerp, Belgium	0km	
	Read in field	18-Jul-2014	Adult	Le Portel, France	202km	WSW
	Read in field	26-Dec-2014	Adult	La Rochelle, France	700km	SW
	Read in field	23-Mar-2015	Adult	Antwerp, Belgium	0km	
	Then seen at Antwerp on several dates until					
	Read in field	13-Apr-2015	Adult	Antwerp, Belgium	0km	



Read in field	20-Apr-2017	Adult	Antwerp, Belgium	0km
Read in field	26-Jun-2017	Adult	Beveren, Belgium	7km SW
Read in field	29-Oct-2017	Adult	Sandgate	224km W

#### Herring Gull

*Larus argentatus*

GV33513	Ringed	10-Oct-2015	2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	Pitsea, Essex	
Orange J2PT	Read in field	11-Nov-2017	4 <sup>th</sup> -year	Folkestone Harbour	71km SSE

#### Great Black-backed Gull

*Larus marinus*

DB115361	Ringed	02-Jul-2012	Juvenile	Le Harve, Normandy	
Black 80L	Read in field	29-Aug-2013	2 <sup>nd</sup> -year	Guersney	196km W
	Read in field	02-Sep-2014	3 <sup>rd</sup> -year	Looe Island, Cornwall	340km WNW
	Read in field	04-Nov-2015	4 <sup>th</sup> -year	Folkestone Harbour	192km NE
	Read in field	18-Dec-2015	4 <sup>th</sup> -year	Princes Parade	190km NE
	Read in field	23-Aug-2016	Adult	Princes Parade	190km NE
	Read in field	04-Mar-2017	Adult	Princes Parade	190km NE
	Read in field	21-Mar-2017	Adult	Princes Parade	190km NE
	Read in field	28-Jun-2017	Adult	Sandgate	191km NE

#### Wheatear

*Oenanthe oenanthe*

Green A69	Ringed	03-Jul-2017	Juvenile	Skokholm Island, Wales	
	Read in field	26-Jul-2017	Juvenile	Samphire Hoe	459km ESE

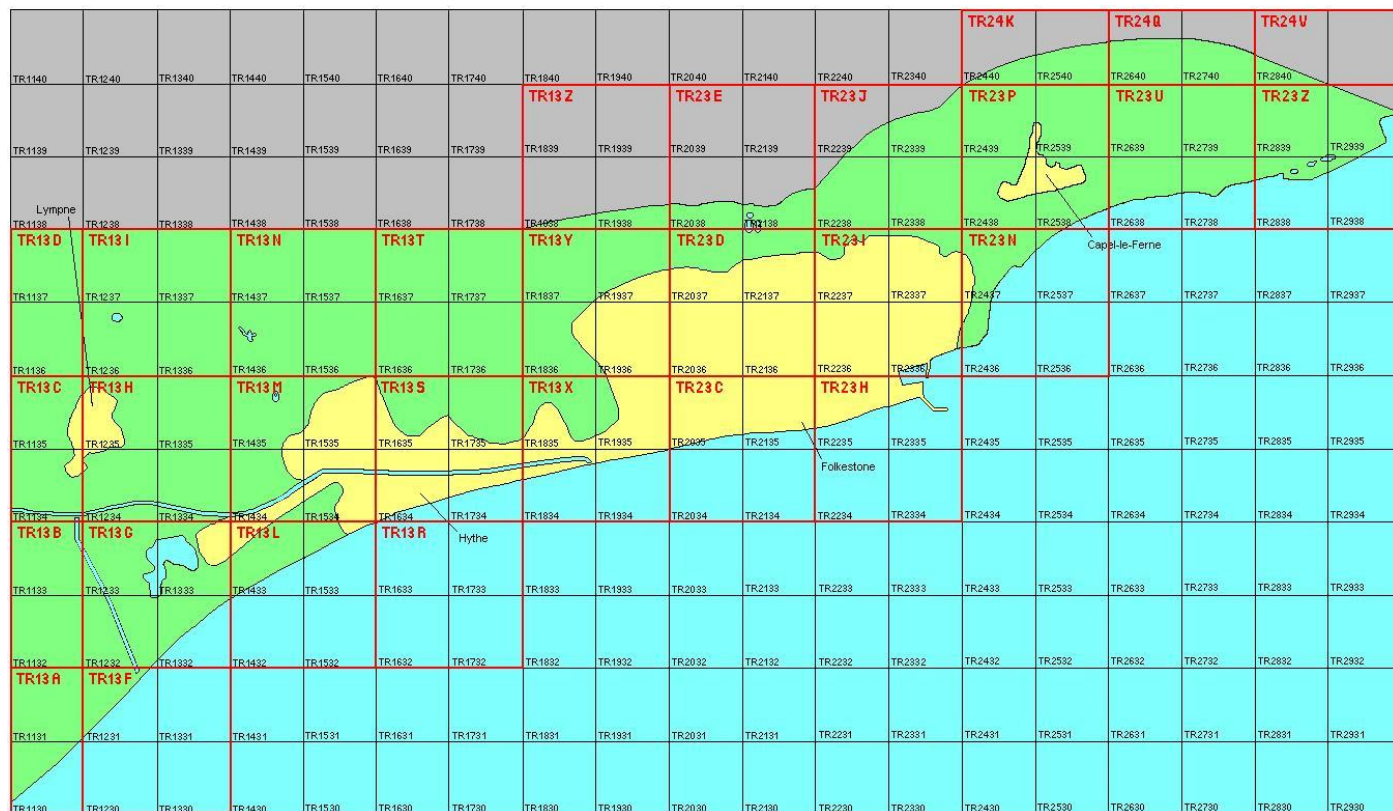


Icelandic-ringed Sanderling at the Willop Outfall (Brian Harper)

## The Folkestone and Hythe area

The Folkestone and Hythe area includes most of the 10km squares TR13 and TR23, though excludes the western half of the first 'column' of 2km tetrads in TR13 and the most northern 'row' of 2km tetrads, and it also includes a small component of the most southerly part of TR24, as shown in the map below.

It therefore extends from the Willop Outfall and Basin in the south-west to Folkestone Racecourse, Westenhanger in the north-west to Samphire Hoe in the east, and excludes Dymchurch, Sellindge, Hawkinge and Dover.



## Gazetteer

The locations mentioned in this report are listed below together with the 2km square(s) or tetrad(s) in which they are located. The tetrads which form the Folkestone and Hythe area can be found on the map on the preceding page.

A map of some of the major sites listed together with the tetrads and 1km squares is available via Google maps on the 'where to watch' section of the website: [www.folkestonebirds.com/wheretowatch.htm](http://www.folkestonebirds.com/wheretowatch.htm).

Site	Tetrad
Abbotscliffe	TR23 U/TR23 Z
Aldington Road	TR13 H
Asholt Wood	TR13 T
Bargrove Wood	TR13 T
Barrowhill (Westenhanger)	TR13 D
Battery Point (Seabrook)	TR13 X
Beachborough Lakes	TR13 T
Blackhouse Hill	TR13 S
Blackhouse Shaw	TR13 S
Botolph's Bridge	TR13 G
Broadmead Village	TR23 D
Brockhill Country Park	TR13 M
Browning Place (Folkestone)	TR23 I
Capel-le-Ferne	TR23 P
Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site	TR23 N/TR23 P
Casebourne Wood	TR13 Y
Cheriton	TR13 Y/TR23 D
Cheriton Place (Folkestone)	TR23 H
Chesterfield Wood (Saltwood)	TR13 N
Church Hougham	TR23 U/TR24 Q
Copt Point	TR23 N
Crete Road West	TR23 E
Creteway Down	TR23 J
Cowtye Wood	TR13 N
Dixwell Road (Folkestone)	TR23 C
Donkey Street	TR13 B
Downs Road (Folkestone)	TR23 I
East Cliff Gardens (Folkestone)	TR23 I
Enbrook Park (Sandgate)	TR23 C
Fisherman's Beach (Hythe)	TR13 L
Folkestone	TR23 C/TR23 D/TR23 H/TR23 I
Folkestone Beach	TR13 H
Folkestone Downs	TR23 I/TR23 J
Folkestone Harbour	TR13 H/TR13 I
Folkestone Leas	TR23 C/TR23 H
Folkestone Pier	TR23 H
Folkestone Racecourse (Westenhanger)	TR13 I
Folkestone Road (B2011)	TR23 U
Folkestone Warren	TR23 N/TR23 P
Folks' Wood (Pedlinge)	TR23 H

Site	Tetrad
Heane Wood (Saltwood)	TR13 N
Hillhurst Farm (Westenhanger)	TR13 I
Horn Street	TR13 X/TR13 Y
Hythe	TR13 M/TR13 S
Hythe Imperial golf course	TR13 S
Hythe Ranges	TR13 G/TR13 L
Hythe Redoubt	TR13 G (/TR13 F for records on sea)
Hythe Roughs	TR13 H/TR13 M
Hythe seafront	TR13 S
Ingles Manor (Folkestone)	TR23 C
Lympne	TR13 H
Lympne Church	TR13 C
Lympne Park Wood	TR13 C/TR13 H
Lynton Road (Hythe)	TR13 S
Mill Point	TR23 C/TR23 H
Mill Road (Hythe)	TR13 S
Mill Stream (Hythe)	TR13 S
Naildown Road (Seabrook)	TR13 X
Newington	TR13 Y
Nickolls Quarry	TR13 G
Oak Banks	TR13 T
Ormonde Road (Hythe)	TR13 S
Palmarsh	TR13 G
Paraker Wood (Seabrook)	TR13 X
Park Road (Hythe)	TR13 M/TR13 S
Pedlinge	TR13 H
Peene Quarry	TR13 Z
Perry Wood (Westenhanger)	TR13 I
Pleydell Gardens (Folkestone)	TR23 H
Postling Wents	TR13 N
Princes Parade	TR13 S/TR13 X
Saltwood	TR13 M
Saltwood Castle	TR13 S
Samphire Hoe	TR23 Z
Sandgate	TR23 C
Sandling	TR13 N
Sandling Station	TR13 N
Scene Wood	TR13 S
Seabrook	TR13 X
Shearway Business Park (Cheriton)	TR23 D
Shorncliffe Camp	TR13 X
St. Eanswythe's churchyard (Folkestone)	TR23 H
St. Hilda's Road (Hythe)	TR13 M
St. Leonard's Road (Hythe)	TR13 M
Stade Court Hotel (Hythe)	TR13 S
Stade Street groyne (Hythe)	TR13 S

Site	Tetrad
Stanford	TR13 I
Stutfall Castle (West Hythe)	TR13 C
Summerhouse Hill	TR13 T
Sunny Sands (Folkestone)	TR23 I
The Bell Inn (Hythe)	TR13 S
Tumble Tye Farm (Capel-le-Ferne)	TR24 K
Turketel Road (Folkestone)	TR23 C
Twiss Road groyne (Hythe)	TR13 S
Westenhanger	TR13 I
West Hythe	TR13 H
West Hythe dam	TR13 C
Willop Basin	TR13 A
Willop Outfall	TR13 A
Willop Sewage Works	TR13 A/TR13 B



Iceland Gull at Nickolls Quarry (Ian Roberts)



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Starling murmuration at Folkestone (David Featherbe)