

Knot

Calidris canutus

Category A

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

World/British distribution (Snow & Perrins 1998):

Breeds in the high Arctic, mostly on peninsulas and large islands north of the continental mainland. Birds breeding in the Canadian high-arctic islands and Greenland winter in western Europe, whilst those from north-central Siberia and probably further east migrate through western Europe to winter in West Africa.

Kent status (KOS 2021):

In Kent it is a common passage migrant and winter visitor, which occasionally summers, but is scarce inland.



Knot at the Dymchurch Redoubt (Brian Harper)

The Knot was not included in Knight and Tolputt's "list of birds observed in Folkestone and its immediate neighbourhood" (1871) and the first documented record involved three seen flying west past Hythe Ranges by Roger Norman on the 1st September 1957 (Norman 2006). Roger only noted one further occurrence in the 1950s or 1960s, a single at Nickolls Quarry on the 10th May 1959 (Norman 2007), which is interesting, given its scarcity inland. There were no further records until 1988 when one flew west past Mill Point on the 8th July and 11 flew west past Copt Point on the 1st September but it has since proved to be a regular passage migrant, recorded in small numbers annually.

Overall distribution

Figure 1 shows the distribution of all records of Knot by tetrad, with records in 11 tetrads (35%).



Figure 1: Distribution of all Knot records at Folkestone and Hythe by tetrad

The July sighting in 1988 remains the only one to have been noted in that month and there have been just four records in August: four flying east past Copt Point on the 8th August 1995, two flying west there on the 3rd August 2008, one at the Dymchurch Redoubt on the 23rd to 24th August 2015 and an exceptional count (the third largest to date) of 47 at the Willop Outfall on the 25th August 2020.

September, October and November have each produced five records, mostly involving birds passing offshore and including counts of seven west past Samphire Hoe on the 11th September 2008, 11 west past Copt Point on the 1st September 1988, 17 east past Hythe/Mill Point on the 28th October 2018 and 20 east past the Dymchurch Redoubt on the 9th November 2001, whilst 16 were present at Copt Point on the 27th October 2012.

It is a scarce winter visitor, often associated with cold weather. Most records involve small numbers but counts of more than five have been noted on a few occasions: seven at the Dymchurch Redoubt on the 6th January 2003, 11 there on the 12th January 2003, 13 at the Willop Outfall on the 9th December 2017, 16 there on the 27th December 2019 and 50 there on the 5th February 2006.



Knot at the Dymchurch Redoubt (Brian Harper)



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Spring passage is noted in some years, usually in late April or early May, and typically involves small numbers but there have been double-figure counts on nine occasions:

- 10 east past Mill Point on the 2nd May 1990
- 19 east past Copt Point on the 2nd May 1994
- 11 east past Copt Point on the 28th April 1995
- 12 east past Copt Point on the 11th May 1996
- 12 east past Copt Point on the 1st May 2011

26 east past Copt Point on the 2nd May 2011
12 east past Copt Point on the 4th May 2011
16 east past Samphire Hoe on the 23rd Mar 2013
104 east past Mill Point on the 5th May 2017

There have been just two sightings in June: two at Nickolls Quarry on the 11th June 2002 and one by the west pond at Samphire Hoe on the 20th June 2010.



Knot at the Dymchurch Redoubt (Brian Harper)



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Aside from the two records listed above, Nickolls Quarry has produced one further sighting (one on the 30th December 1995), whilst the only other inland record involved one at Botolph's Bridge on the 5th January 1996.



Knot at Folkestone Warren (David Featherbe)



Knot at Folkestone Warren (Amy Woodland)

References

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Acknowledgements

The tetrad map images were produced from the Ordnance Survey [Get-a-map service](#) and are reproduced with kind permission of [Ordnance Survey](#).

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Knot at the Dymchurch Redoubt (Brian Harper)