

Wren

Scientific name

Category A

Troglodytes troglodytes.

World/British distribution (Snow & Perrins 1998):

Breeds across most of Europe east to south-east Russia. Many in the southern parts of the range are sedentary but more northern populations are migratory, either on a north-south axis or altitudinally.

Kent status (KOS 2021):

In Kent it is an abundant resident and a passage migrant in small numbers.



Wren at Nickolls Quarry (Brian Harper)

The Wren was included in Knight and Tolputt's "List of birds observed in Folkestone and its immediate neighbourhood" (1871). This list covered an area of six miles radius from Folkestone town hall, therefore extending further inland than the current Folkestone and Hythe area, so this does not provide conclusive evidence of its occurrence here. However, Ticehurst (1909) considered it to be "exceedingly abundant throughout the county" and so there can be little doubt that it was to be found locally.

Breeding atlas distribution

Figure 1 shows the breeding distribution by tetrad based on the results of the 2007-13 BTO/KOS atlas fieldwork.

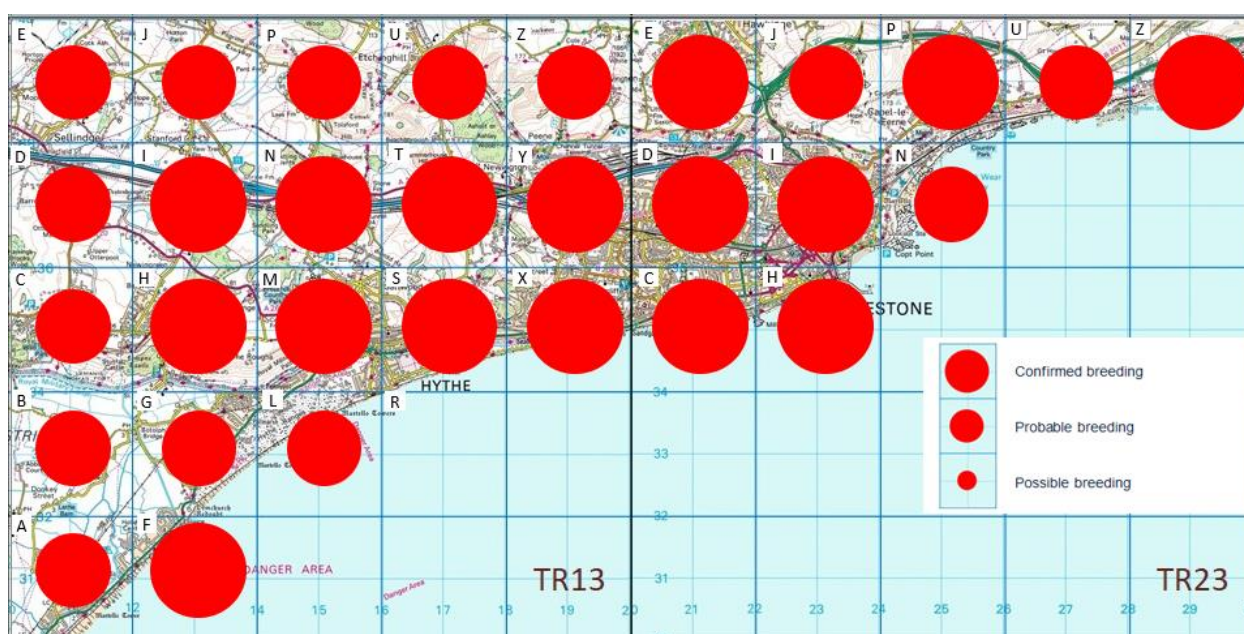


Figure 1: Breeding distribution of Wren at Folkestone and Hythe by tetrad (2007-13 BTO/KOS Atlas)

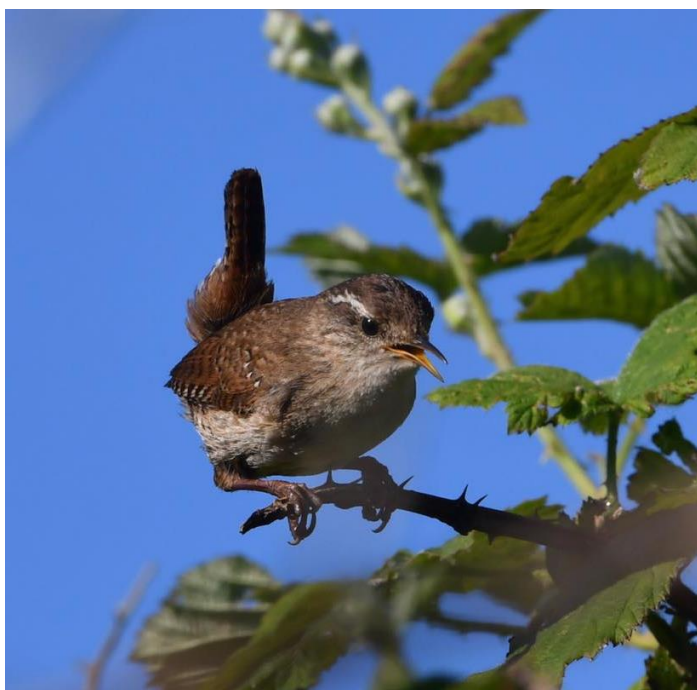
Breeding was confirmed in 16 tetrads, with probable breeding in 14 more. The table below shows how this compares to previous atlases (Taylor *et al.* 1981; Henderson & Hodge 1998). The confirmed and probable breeding categories have been combined to account for differing definitions of these in the first atlas.

Breeding atlases	1967 - 1973		1988 - 1994		2007 - 2013	
Possible	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	0	(0%)
Probable/Confirmed	28	(90%)	30	(97%)	30	(97%)
Total	28	(90%)	30	(97%)	30	(97%)
Change			+2	(+7%)	0	(0%)

The table below shows the changes in tetrad occupancy across the three atlas periods.

Trends	First to second atlas (1967-73 to 1988-94)	Second to third atlas (1988-94 to 2007-13)	First to third atlas (1967-73 to 2007-13)
Local	0%	+7%	+7%
Kent	+10%	+3%	+13%

The Wren is probably the most numerous species in Britain and Clements *et al.* (2015) considered it was also the most likely candidate for that title in Kent. It is able to find nest-sites in most habitats. Severe winters have caused dramatic crashes in some years, but producing two broods a year allows the population to recover rapidly. The long sequence of mild winters over the last 25 years may have allowed numbers to stabilise.



Wren at Princes Parade (Nigel Webster)



Wren at West Hythe (Brian Harper)

Overall distribution

Figure 2 shows the distribution of all records of Wren by tetrad, with records in 30 tetrads (97%).

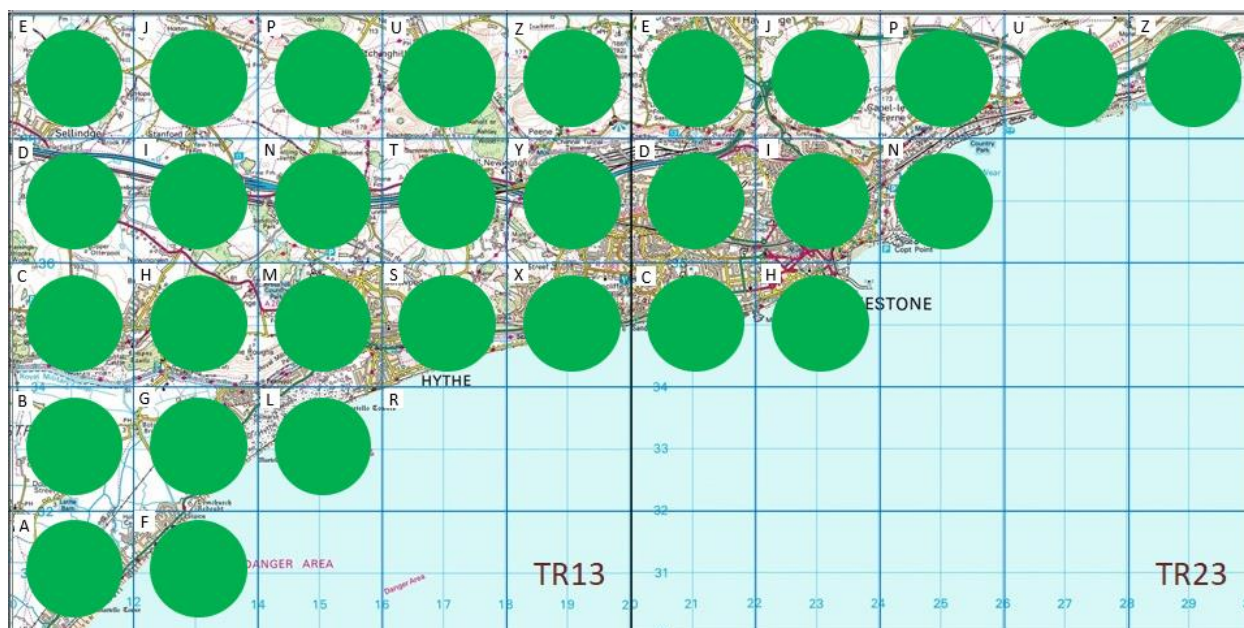


Figure 2: Distribution of all Wren records at Folkestone and Hythe by tetrad

An increase in numbers may be noted in autumn, mainly at coastal sites between September and November, with double-figure counts noted on a few occasions:

16 at Mill Point on the 8th September 1988
20 at the cliffs (10 at Abbotscliffe and 10 at Capel Battery) on the 29th September 1992
15 at Abbotscliffe on the 12th October 2002
11 at Nickolls Quarry on the 13th October 2002
12 at Samphire Hoe on the 11th November 2003
10 at Nickolls Quarry on the 23rd October 2007
10 at Samphire Hoe on the 16th November 2014
15 at Samphire Hoe on the 13th November 2016
20 at Abbotscliffe on the 13th November 2022



Wren at Seabrook (Brian Harper)



Wren at Seabrook (Brian Harper)

Taylor *et al.* noted that the return spring passage is comparatively small and it is generally imperceptible locally.

Click [here](#) to listen to a local audio recording of one singing at Lympe on the 28th April 2022 (Ian Roberts).



Wren at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)



Wren at Samphire Hoe (Martin Collins)

References

Clements, R., Orchard, M., McCanch, N. & Wood, S. 2015. *Kent Breeding Bird Atlas 2008-13*. Kent Ornithological Society.

Henderson, A. & Hodge, T. 1998. The Kent Breeding Bird Atlas 1988-94. *Kent Bird Report* 1996: 134-272.

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Ticehurst, N. F. 1909. *A History of the Birds of Kent*. Witherby, London.



Wren at West Hythe (Brian Harper)



Wren at West Hythe (Brian Harper)



Wren at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)

Acknowledgements

The tetrad map images were produced from the Ordnance Survey [Get-a-map service](#) and are reproduced with kind permission of [Ordnance Survey](#). I am indebted to Andrew Henderson and Tim Hodge for providing access to the Kent Ornithological Society archives.