

Pink-footed Goose

Anser brachyrhynchus

Category A

Very rare vagrant

7 records

There are two discrete breeding populations, one in Iceland and Greenland, and the other in Spitsbergen. The former winter in Britain, south to the Wash, and the latter in Demark, west Germany and the Low Countries, with a few reaching northern France and eastern England, especially in severe winters. The first successful breeding in Britain was documented in 2010 when single pairs bred in Cumbria and Highland, with another pair present in the Outer Hebrides. These records appeared to relate to wild birds which lingered in the spring perhaps because of injury (Holling *et al*, 2012).



Pink-footed Geese at Botolph's Bridge (Ian Roberts)

A scarce passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers to Kent, with occasional larger flocks recorded. It is considered likely that Kent birds originate from the Spitsbergen population.

First recorded at Folkestone and Hythe in October 1997, when there were two records, followed by further sightings in 1998 and 1999, as shown by figure 1. There was then a 12 year gap until the next, before there were records in two consecutive years in 2011 and 2012, and another two in 2020.

The records by year are shown in figure 1.

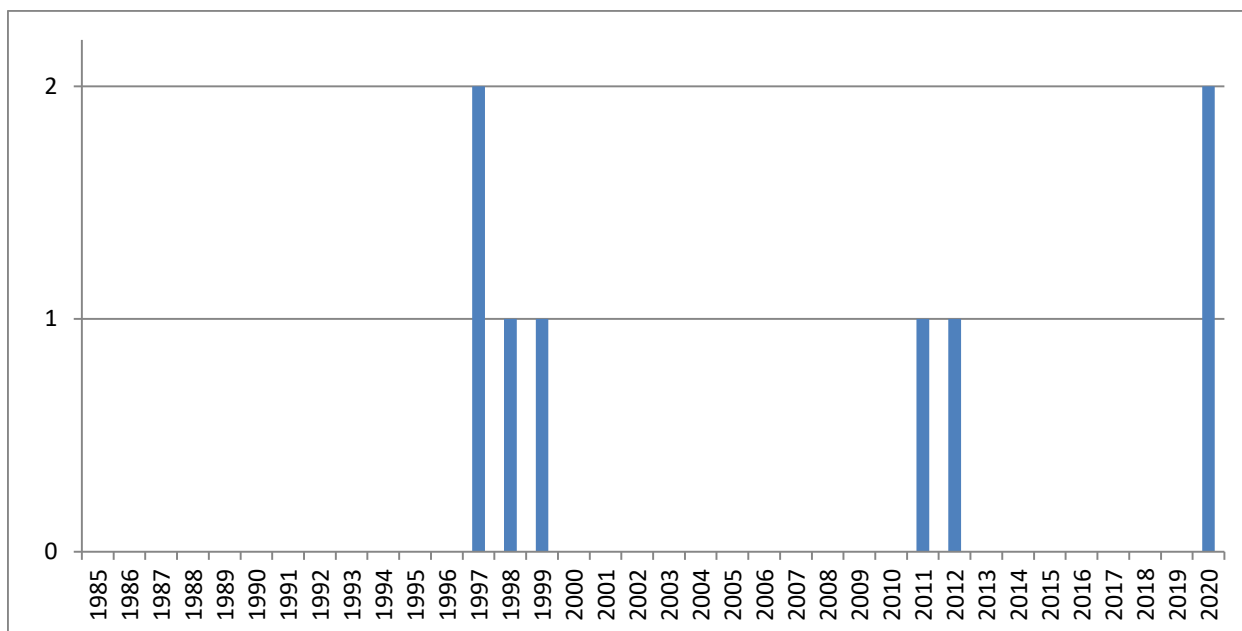


Figure 1: Pink-footed Goose records at Folkestone and Hythe

There have been six autumn records, between 12th October (week 41) and 15th November (week 46), and one in spring, on 12th March 1999 (week 11). The records by week are given in figure 2.

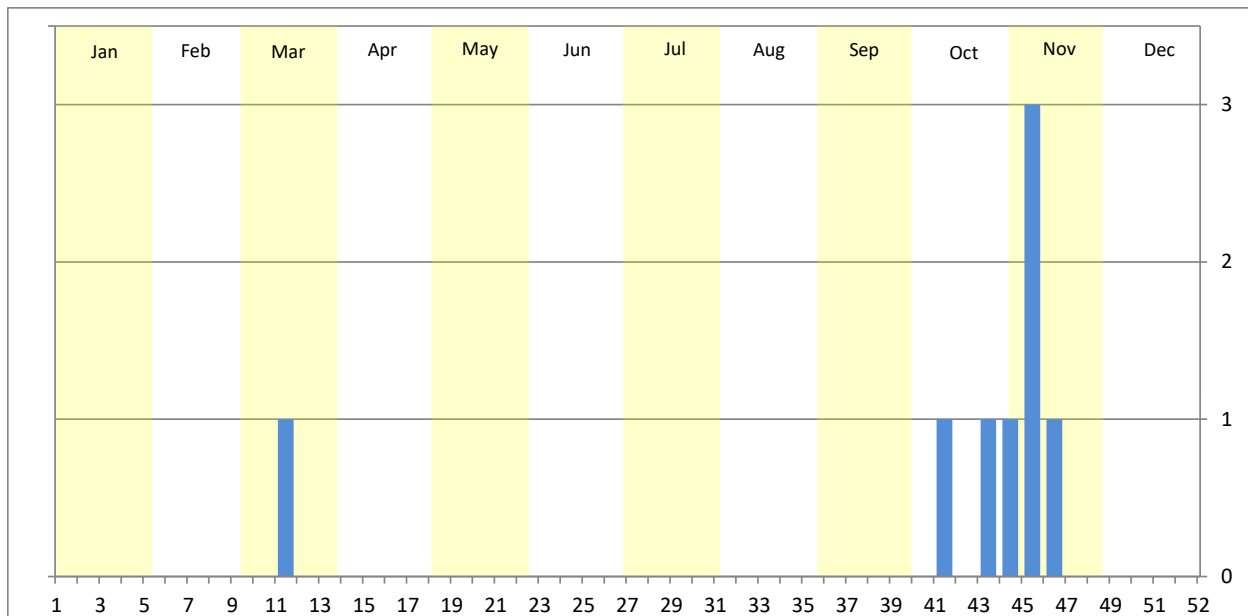


Figure 2: Pink-footed Goose records at Folkestone and Hythe by week

Figure 3 shows the distribution of records by tetrad. Records have been from coastal sites apart from single flocks seen at Botolph's Bridge and over Nickolls Quarry.



Figure 3: Distribution of all Pink-footed Goose records at Folkestone and Hythe by tetrad

The full list of records is as follows:

- 1997** Nickolls Quarry, 18 flew north-east, 12th October (R. K. Norman)
- 1997** Hythe Ranges, 17 flew north, 24th October (R. K. Norman)
- 1998** Samphire Hoe, one seen "on the water and in flight", 30th October (F. R. Fisher)
- 1999** Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site, six flew west, 12th March (D. A. Gibson)
- 2011** Willop Outfall, one flew east, 6th November (I. A. Roberts)
- 2012** Botolph's Bridge, 28, 15th November, photographed (I. A. Roberts)
- 2020** Samphire Hoe, one, then flew east, 8th November (M. D. Kennett)
- 2020** Seabrook, one flew west, 9th November (P. Howe), possibly same as above

References

Holling, M. & the Rare Breeding Birds Panel, 2012. Rare breeding birds in the UK in 2010. *British Birds*, 105: 352-416



Pink-footed Geese at Botolph's Bridge (Ian Roberts)

Acknowledgements

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