

Greenshank

Tringa nebularia

Category A

Scarce passage migrant.

World/British distribution (Snow & Perrins 1998):

Breeds in north-west Scotland, Fenno-Scandia and Russia eastwards across central and southern Siberia to Kamchatka. Small numbers winter in western Europe, in the Mediterranean Basin and on the Atlantic coast of north-west Africa, however the majority of European birds are trans-Saharan migrants, wintering south to South Africa.

Kent status (KOS 2021):

In Kent it is a regular passage migrant with a few overwintering.



Greenshanks at Donkey Street (Ian Roberts)

The Greenshank was not included in Knight and Tolputt's "List of birds observed in Folkestone and its immediate neighbourhood" (1871), whilst neither Ticehurst (1909) nor Harrison (1953) cited any local records, so the first documented sighting involved two seen at Nickolls Quarry by Roger Norman on the 20th August 1952. A single was seen at the same site on the 28th to 29th August 1956, whilst the following year produced the first spring record, at Hythe Ranges on the 24th April 1957, whilst another soon followed at Nickolls Quarry on the 27th April of that year, increasing to two on the following day, with one present to the 2nd May. The final record from this era involved two at Nickolls Quarry on the 4th June 1960, which equals the latest spring sighting (Norman 2006; 2007).

Twenty years later Dave Weaver noted two at Nickolls Quarry on the 7th May 1980, with singles there on the 25th December 1980 and the 30th October 1981. One was then noted in the Botolph's Bridge/Nickolls Quarry area between the 11th and 19th February 1983, with one at Nickolls Quarry on the 19th February 1984 and one at Botolph's Bridge on several dates in December 1985/January 1986. There have been no subsequent winter records, so this suggests that these sightings are perhaps attributable to one returning individual.

One was seen at Copt Point on the 8th August 1988, a flock of 12 flew west past Mill Point on the 31st August 1988, one flew west there on the 6th September 1988, one flew east there on the 4th May 1990 and nine flew east there the following day. There have been annual sightings since 1990.



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Overall distribution

Figure 1 shows the distribution of all records of Greenshank by tetrad, with records in 10 tetrads (32%).

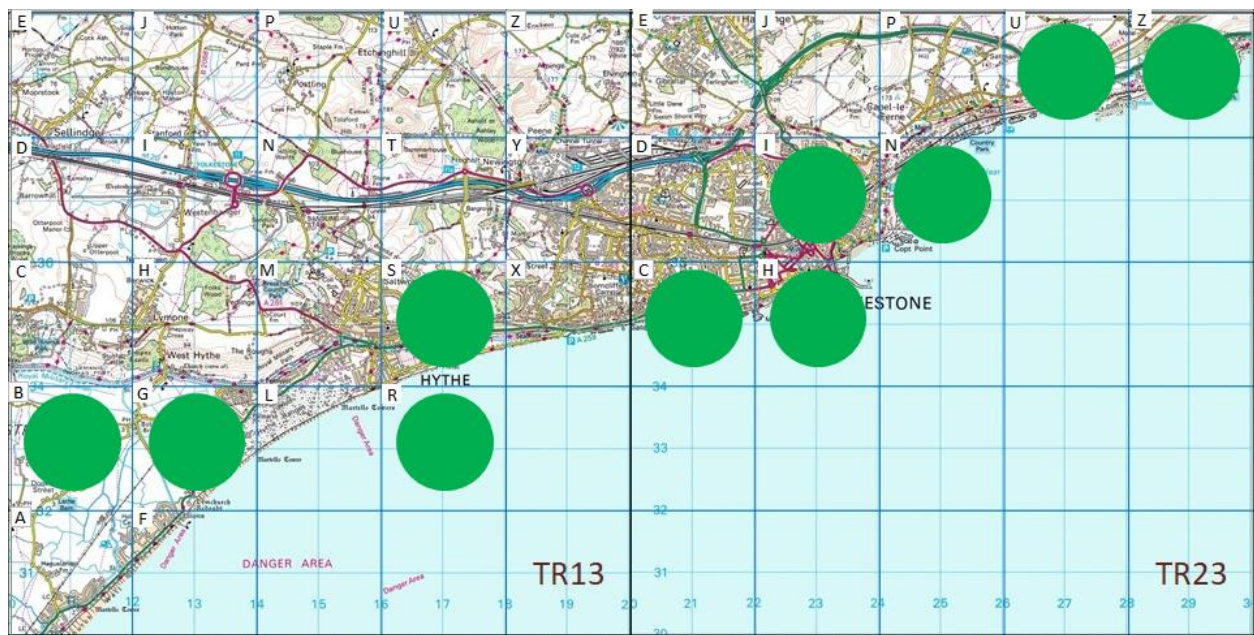


Figure 1: Distribution of all Greenshank records at Folkestone and Hythe by tetrad

Apart from a remarkably early individual that flew west over Princes Parade on the 25th March 2017 and one at Nickolls Quarry on the 13th April 2017, all spring records have occurred between mid-April and early June, with 70% having been recorded in May. It was formerly more frequent on spring passage, with an average of 6.9 birds per annum between 1990 and 2004, when the habitat that had been suitable for migrant waders at Nickolls Quarry was filled in. The mean for the most recent decade is 2.5 birds per annum. The majority of records have related to ones or twos, with counts of three or more having been noted as follows:

- 9 east past Mill Point on the 5th May 1990
- 3 at Nickolls Quarry on the 2nd May 1997
- 3 at Nickolls Quarry on the 15th May 1997
- 10 at Nickolls Quarry on the 17th May 1997
- 3 east past Copt Point on the 30th Apr 1998
- 4 east past Copt Point on the 3rd May 1999
- 4 east past Copt Point on the 10th May 2000
- 4 east past Copt Point on the 11th May 2001
- 4 at Nickolls Quarry on the 18th May 2003
- 3 north-east over Nickolls Quarry on the 25th April 2004
- 3 east past Samphire Hoe on the 6th May 2008
- 3 east past Copt Point on the 1st May 2011
- 4 east past Mill Point on the 10th May 2016
- 4 at Donkey Street on the 25th to 26th April 2021

There have been just three sightings in June, two at Nickolls Quarry on the 4th June 1960 (as mentioned above), another there on the same date in 2001 and one at Pent Farm on the 6th June.

Autumn passage has been noted between early July, with the earliest at Nickolls Quarry on the 4th July 2000, and early October. It was also formerly more frequent on autumn passage, with an average of 7.5 birds per annum between 1990 and 2004, and a mean for the most recent decade of 1.1 birds per annum. Again the majority of records have related to ones or twos, with counts of three or more having been noted as follows:

- 12 west past Mill Point on the 31st August 1988
- 5 (including 4 flying west) at Nickolls Quarry on the 7th September 1997
- 5 out to sea at Abbotscliffe on the 8th August 2000

4+ at Nickolls Quarry on the 4th September 2000
3 at Nickolls Quarry on the 24th September 2000
4 at Nickolls Quarry on the 10th August 2003
4 (including 3 flying west) at Nickolls Quarry on the 27th August 2003
4 west at Nickolls Quarry on the 3rd September 2003
3 flew over at Nickolls Quarry on the 3rd September 2007

There have been just two sightings in October, singles at Nickolls Quarry on the 10th October 2007 and at Botolph's Bridge on the 18th October 2002, and no recent winter records.



Greenshank at Donkey Street (Brian Harper)

References

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Greenshanks at Donkey Street (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](#).

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