

2020



Folkestone and Hythe Bird Report



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Introduction

Welcome to the ninth annual Folkestone and Hythe Bird Report which covers the 207 species recorded in 2020, which was 15 more than the previous year and the highest total since lists began to be compiled in 1996 (surpassing the 204 recorded in 2012).

There were two additions to the area list in 2020, subject to these records being considered to be acceptable by the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC), both of which would also be new species for the county: a female Bufflehead at Nickolls Quarry in April and a first-winter Crag Martin at Samphire Hoe (having earlier been seen at Kingsdown) in November and December.

Following the decision by the British Ornithologists' Union Records Committee to admit Falcated Duck into category A of the British List (Stoddart & McInerny, 2020), based on a bird first seen in Norfolk 1986, the BBRC undertook a review of all records that were currently being held in category D (Holt *et al*, 2020), which included one local occurrence, a drake seen at West Hythe, Nickolls Quarry and Hythe between the 15th April and 14th June 2003. Unfortunately, this record did not meet the criteria for acceptance and so now moves to category E (for further details of these categorisations refer to p.25).

There are many other highlights to report, including the second records of Red-necked Phalarope and Rose-coloured Starling, the third records of Night Heron and Cattle Egret, the fourth record of White-tailed Eagle, the fifth record of Bluethroat, the sixth and seventh records of Pink-footed Goose and the eighth record of Water Pipit. Sightings of Bewick's Swan, Egyptian Goose, Caspian Gull, White Stork, Spoonbill, Goshawk, Rough-legged Buzzard, Richard's Pipit and Hawfinch added further excitement. A total of four Red-backed Shrikes and up to four Wrynecks were also a significant highlight.

The early winter period was notable for confirming that a Ring Ouzel had over-wintered for the first time and for the second largest ever count of Little Egrets, whilst the spring saw the earliest ever arrival of Common Tern, the second earliest Whimbrel, a record count of Sanderling and the third largest count of Turnstone, and a record count of Red Kites (as part of a record year for the species).

The highlight of the breeding season was the first apparent (though seemingly unsuccessful) breeding attempt by Marsh Harriers (at Nickolls Quarry). The pair of Long-eared Owls were present again at the undisclosed breeding site early in the year but were not able to be looked for subsequently. A pair of Little Ringed Plovers were present again at Nickolls Quarry in spring but there was no evidence of breeding success. Breeding by Ravens away from the cliffs was confirmed for the first time and at least four pairs bred within the area. A Marsh Warbler held territory at an undisclosed site, with a second male present for two days.

The latter half of the year saw a record count of Robins and an exceptional passage of finches, with record counts of Lesser Redpoll, Crossbill, Goldfinch and Siskin, with record annual totals of Lesser Redpoll and Siskin, and the second highest annual totals of Crossbill and Goldfinch. The third largest count of Knot and third largest autumn movement of Skylarks were also of note. There was the earliest ever autumn arrival of Wigeon and the latest departure date of Arctic Skua, with the equal latest Sand Martin, the second latest Whimbrel and Sandwich Tern, the equal second latest Swallow also worthy of mention. The late winter period produced a record count of Magpies and a record winter (and third largest ever) count of Linnets.

If there are any local records which have not been included within this report I would be very grateful to receive them. The boundaries of the local area can be found on page 97 and my contact details are given below.

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5th February 2021

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Front cover: Crag Martin at Samphire Hoe (Steve Ashton)

Citation: Roberts, I. A. (2021). *2020 Folkestone and Hythe Bird Report*. www.folkestonebirds.com

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	S Wright
J Allchin		
S Ashton	S Lea	
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H Baker	P Lightman	
R Blackman	M Linklater	
T Bolton		
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	J L Riley	
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R Flamant	P J Sharp	
A Fletcher	D E Smith	
M Fletcher	P Smith	
N C Frampton	R Smith	
A Gay	M Taylor	
D A Gibson	R Thorogood	
C Gillard	J Tilby	
S Gonsalvez	C Tomlinson	
D Gower	J Tomlinson	
	J Tomsett	
K Harding	P Trodd	
B Harper	G Tutton	
N Hollands		
P Holt	M Vandoen	
L Hooper		
P Howe	M Whybrow	
	J Wood	
A Johnson	B Woolhouse	
	D Wrathall	

Review of the year

January

High pressure lay over southern parts of the country at the beginning of the year, bringing dry, settled conditions though generally with plenty of cloud. This gradually moved away south-eastwards allowing frontal systems in from the west, and from the 7th to the 17th the weather was mild, unsettled and very windy at times. More settled weather returned between the 18th and 25th as high pressure dominated again, but the rest of the month saw windy conditions and some rain, though it was mild.



Purple Sandpipers at Hythe (Glenn Tutton)

A flock of five **Bewick's Swans** flew west past Samphire Hoe at 11:30 on the 2nd, with presumably four of the same flock continuing west past Hythe 15 minutes later, but Mute Swan numbers were low, with a peak of just 20 at Donkey Street on the 11th. Three Greylag Geese were seen at Cock Ash Lake on the 3rd and a flock of 15 Canada Geese flew over Nickolls Quarry on the 5th with perhaps the same flock (of 15) at Horton Park Lakes on the 8th. There was little sign of up-channel passage of Brent Geese, though two flew east past Mill Point on the 2nd and seven flew east past the Willop Outfall on the 3rd. Four Shelduck flew west past the Willop Outfall on the 1st and up to three were noted from coastal sites on several dates.

A Mandarin Duck was seen at Folks' Wood on the 4th and counts of Teal included seven there, 20 at Chesterfield Wood and 80 at the Willop Basin. A Shoveler, a Pochard and a Tufted Duck were at Nickolls Quarry on the 1st, whilst up to 4 Pochard and 15 Tufted Ducks were present at Cock Ash Lake during the month, with a pair of Tufted Ducks at Hayton Lake, whilst three flew past Folkestone Harbour on the 5th. Two Velvet Scoter flew east past the Dymchurch Redoubt on the 1st, when three Common Scoter were seen from Samphire Hoe.

Red-throated Diver movements included 148 flying west past Seabrook on the 3rd and 260 flying west past Hythe on the 5th, with a single Black-throated Diver off Samphire Hoe on the latter date. Good numbers of Cormorants continued to be seen, with a peak of 2,700 flying east past the Dymchurch Redoubt on the 1st, whilst up to two Shags frequented Samphire Hoe, with two off Mill Point on the 23rd. Single Little Egrets were noted from Botolph's Bridge, Nickolls Quarry, Palmarsh and Broadmead Village, with up to two at Samphire Hoe and an excellent count of 11 at the Aldergate Bridge on the 26th. Great Crested Grebes increased during the month to a peak of 352 off Seabrook on the 20th.

Away from the usual haunts at the cliffs, a Peregrine was seen at Donkey Street on the 11th. Water Rails were wintering at Nickolls Quarry (at least two), Princes Parade (at least two) and Gibbin's Brook and there was a peak of 23 Coot at Nickolls Quarry on the 1st. Up to three Oystercatchers were at the Willop Outfall during the month, whilst three flew past Samphire Hoe on the 2nd, and up to 16 Ringed Plovers were present in the Folkestone Beach/Harbour area.

Lapwing numbers were low, with peaks of just 20 at Hillhurst Farm on the 10th and 38 at the Willop Basin on the 28th. Up to nine Sanderling were noted at the Willop Outfall, whilst two Purple Sandpipers were at Hythe throughout, frequenting the rock groynes opposite the Stade Court and Hythe Imperial hotels. A Jack Snipe and up to 50 Snipe were wintering at the Willop Basin and nine Snipe were flushed from Abbotscliffe on the 20th, whilst Woodcock were noted from Thorn Wood, Folks' Wood (two) and Castle Hill (two). The Curlew remained at the Willop Basin as did the Green Sandpiper at Nickolls Quarry and Redshank at Folkestone Harbour (at least two) and the Willop Basin (8).

Single Great Skuas flew past Mill Point on the 2nd and Samphire Hoe on the 5th, whilst 300 Mediterranean Gulls were present at Nickolls Quarry on the 3rd. Numbers of auks were low though 150 Guillemots/Razorbills flew west past Mill Point on the 14th and 40 Razorbills flew west past the Willop Outfall on the 31st. A pair of **Long-eared Owls** were present again at last year's breeding site (details withheld to avoid disturbance).

Firecrests were wintering at West Hythe, Nickolls Quarry, Chesterfield Wood, Hythe, Princes Parade, Mill Point and Samphire Hoe (up to three), whilst Chiffchaffs were seen at the Willop Sewage Works and in a garden in Folkestone and Blackcaps were seen at Samphire Hoe, in a garden in Folkestone (two) and Princes Parade (at least three). Winter thrush numbers were very low with peaks of just 20 Redwings at Cock Ash Lake and 55 Fieldfares at Shrine Farm. A Black Redstart remained at Samphire Hoe throughout and there were up to nine Stonechats there, with one near Selby Farm and two at Princes Parade.

At least one **Water Pipit** remained in the Donkey Street area and up to 50 Meadow Pipits were present at the Willop Sewage Works. A Siskin, 30 Goldfinches and 30 Chaffinches were at Cock Ash Lake on the 6th. A Lapland Bunting was reported at West Hythe on the 10th, whilst there were up to 15 Yellowhammers at Haguelands and Abbotscliffe, and up to 6 Yellowhammers, 14 Reed Buntings and 16 Corn Buntings at the Willop Sewage Works.

February

The mild, windy and wet weather persisted into the first few days of February before a ridge of high pressure brought a brief interlude of more settled conditions between the 5th and the 7th. This was short-lived and the rest of the month was exceptionally wet, with frequent belts of persistent heavy rain and strong winds as three named storms hit the country during the month, but there were a few intervals of brighter showery weather.

Up to 60 Greylag Geese (the second largest flock ever recorded locally) were present in the Folkestone Racecourse area from the 8th, whilst the breeding pair of Canada Geese had returned to Nickolls Quarry by the 12th. There were signs of the commencement of a spring passage of Brent Geese at the end of the month, with 48 flying east past Seabrook on the 27th and 11 flying east past Mill Point the following day, whilst six **Egyptian Geese** flew east over the Willop Sewage Works on the 7th.

A pair of Gadwall were seen at Nickolls Quarry on the 6th and two drake Shoveler were present on the 13th, with one remaining until the next day, whilst small numbers of Shelduck were noted offshore during the month. Up to 4 Pochard and 17 Tufted Ducks remained at Cock Ash Lake. A **Great White Egret** was seen at West Hythe on the 19th but few Little Egrets were reported.

A Marsh Harrier arrived in off the sea at Samphire Hoe on the 5th, a Merlin was seen at Hythe Seafront on the 11th and two Red Kites flew north over Folkestone on the 19th. Lapwing numbers remained low with peaks of just 12 at Hillhurst Farm and 40 at the Willop Basin, but there was a good count of 30 Sanderling at the Willop Outfall on the 12th. Two Purple Sandpipers remained at Hythe throughout. There were peak counts of two Curlew and 8 Snipe at the Willop Basin and a Green Sandpiper was seen at Hythe Ranges on the 1st.



Ring Ouzel at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)

A Short-eared Owl was seen near Selby Farm on the 6th and a Barn Owl was present there on the 12th. Small numbers of Firecrests and Blackcaps continued to be noted, whilst two Chiffchaffs (including a singing individual) were at the Willop Sewage Works on the 7th, with one at Cock Ash Lake the next day and two at The Little Piece on Donkey Street at the end of the month. A count of c.750 Starlings at the Willop Sewage Works on the 7th was of note.

The Ring Ouzel last seen in December reappeared at Samphire Hoe on the 3rd (and was also seen on at least three subsequent dates in the month), becoming the first ever over-wintering record locally, but winter thrush numbers remained low, both reflecting the mildness of the season.

A White Wagtail was reported at Samphire Hoe on the 12th and the Water Pipit was seen again at Donkey Street on the 7th.

March

There was a cool and showery start to the month, with winds mainly from the westerly quadrant. Overwintering birds that were still present included the Ring Ouzel at Samphire Hoe (to at least the 16th), a Chiffchaff and 2 Blackcaps in gardens in Folkestone, a Blackcap at Seabrook and up to 3 Purple Sandpipers at Hythe. There were some indications of spring arrival from the 2nd, when a Chiffchaff, a Firecrest, a Reed Bunting and 2 Black Redstarts were at Samphire Hoe, and 30 Brent Geese flew east, whilst a Reed Bunting and a Redwing were at Abbotscliffe.

On the 3rd a **Hawfinch** was seen at Burmarsh Churchyard, when a Barn Owl and a Corn Bunting were at Abbots Court Farm, a Firecrest and 2 Chiffchaffs were at Enbrook Park and a Greenfinch and 3 Goldfinches flew west at Abbotscliffe. A Firecrest and two Chiffchaffs were at Samphire Hoe on the 4th and 18 Greylag Geese were seen in the Folkestone Racecourse area



White-tailed Eagle at Hythe (Ian Roberts)

A Red-breasted Merganser, 3 Kittiwakes and 30 Gannets flew east past Mill Point on the 5th, when a Firecrest was present there, whilst 7 Meadow Pipits and 67 Chaffinches flew over Abbotscliffe the following day. Two Pintail, 2 Red-breasted Mergansers, 8 Common Scoter and 24 Red-throated Divers flew east past Samphire Hoe on the 7th, when a Tufted Duck and 2 Shoveler were at Nickolls Quarry and newly-arrived Chiffchaffs were at Hythe and the Willop Basin (2). A Blackcap was singing at Samphire Hoe on the 9th.

On the 10th there were 3 Pochard, 8 Tufted Ducks, 10 Fieldfares and 20 Redwings at Cock Ash Lake, whilst mild, drizzly conditions in the evening induced a significant movement of Redwings, with hundreds, probably thousands heard calling over a two hour period. A White Wagtail was at the Samphire Hoe the next day, when four Shelduck flew east at Seabrook and there was another large Redwing passage that evening, with a sample count of around 250 calls in a ten minute period and an estimated total of at least 2,000 before movement ceased as the weather cleared.

A Red-breasted Merganser was fishing close inshore off the Willop Outfall on the 12th (with probably the same bird off the Dymchurch Redoubt on the 17th), when 11 Sanderling were present there, and newly-arrived Chiffchaffs were seen at Mill Point and Nickolls Quarry. Another Chiffchaff was noted in a garden in Folkestone the following day, when a Grey Plover was at the Willop Outfall. A Gadwall, 2 Red-breasted Mergansers, 5 Pintail, 6 Fulmar, 29 Shelduck, 36 Common Scoter and 430 Brent Geese flew past Mill Point on the 14th and a Chiffchaff was singing along canal by Hythe Roughs.

The wintering **Water Pipit** was last seen at Donkey Street on the 15th, when a **Great White Egret**, a Tufted Duck and two Gadwall were also present and a Marsh Harrier, 3 Green Sandpipers and 5 Little Egrets were at Nickolls Quarry.

The weather turned more settled in the second half of month and the first three Wheatears and six Chiffchaffs arrived at Samphire Hoe on the 16th, when six Meadow Pipits, 39 Siskins and 1,570 Chaffinches flew east at Abbotscliffe. A Firecrest, a Water Rail, 2 Chiffchaffs, 4 Green Sandpipers and 10 Snipe were at Nickolls Quarry on the 17th, with a Little Egret there the following day. Overcast conditions and a switch to a north-easterly wind on the 19th produced an arrival of 2 Firecrests, 4 Goldcrests and 11 Chiffchaffs at Samphire Hoe with smaller numbers of Chiffchaffs at other sites.

Easterly winds led to some movement at sea from the 20th, when a Shelduck, 17 Dunlin, 23 Sandwich Terns, 24 Red-throated Divers, 30 Fulmars, 31 Common Scoter and 44 Brent Geese flew east past Mill Point, and a Shag was seen off Seabrook. Two Shovelers and four Green Sandpipers were at Nickolls Quarry the following day. A Curlew, 3 Greylag Geese and 29 Brent Geese flew east at sea on the 22nd, whilst a Shelduck, 3 Eider, 4 Pintail, 40 Red-throated Divers and 77 Black-headed Gulls flew past the next day, whilst Blackcaps and Chiffchaffs continued to arrive.

A male white-spotted **Bluethroat** was seen at Samphire Hoe on the 24th, when a Shelduck, 2 adult Little Gulls, 4 Red-breasted Mergansers and 290 Brent Geese flew east past Mill Point. A Shelduck, 3 Curlew, 4 Avocet and 260 Brent Geese flew east past Mill Point the following day, when a Firecrest was singing there, a Red Kite flew over West Hythe and three White Wagtails were feeding on the Hotel Imperial Golf Course.

On the 26th a total of 1,484 Chaffinches were logged heading east along the coast, along with 3 Stock Doves, 4 Greenfinches and 46 Siskins, whilst 3 Greylag Geese and 28 Brent Geese flew east at sea. A **Long-eared Owl** was roosting at Nickolls Quarry on the 27th, when two Red Kites flew over Cheriton, a pair of Firecrests were at Little Dibgate Wood, a Whimbrel, 6 Mediterranean Gulls, 61 Common Gulls and 603 Black-headed Gulls flew east at sea and a Reed Bunting, 8 Siskins and 110 Chaffinches flew east at the Dymchurch Redoubt. The first Common Tern flew past Seabrook on the 29th.

An immature **White-tailed Eagle** (of continental origin) flew north over Hythe on the 30th and a Brambling, a Grey Wagtail, 22 Linnets, 54 Siskins and 1,845 Chaffinches flew east at Abbotscliffe, whilst a Short-eared Owl, a Firecrest and a Reed Bunting were at Samphire Hoe.

A further 24 Siskins and 1,640 Chaffinches flew east at the cliffs the next day, when a Goosander, a Sand Martin, a Redshank, 2 Swallows and 2 **Little Ringed Plovers** were at Nickolls Quarry, two Little Owls were seen near Summerhouse Hill.

April

The first half of the month was dry with a settled high pressure system, winds were predominately from the easterly quadrant and, after a cool start, temperatures climbed to around 20°C between the 4th and the 12th.

April began with seven Crossbills, 13 Linnets 30 Siskins, 95 Wood Pigeons and 970 Chaffinches flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 1st and a Reed Bunting was seen there the next day when 23 Linnets arrived in off, whilst small numbers of Blackcaps and Chiffchaffs continued to arrive. A Shelduck, a Sandwich Tern and 80 Brent Geese flew east at sea on the 3rd, when five Green Sandpipers were at Nickolls Quarry and eight Redwings were at Abbotscliffe.

Increasing temperatures on the 4th induced some raptor passage, with a **Goshawk** flying over Brockhill Country Park, a Red Kite and a Marsh Harrier over Folkestone and good numbers of Buzzards, including 13 over Hythe. The first Sedge Warbler, a Redshank, 2 Shovelers, 3 **Little Ringed Plovers** (with a pair remaining until the 10th and at least one present until the end of May) and 6 Green Sandpipers were seen at Nickolls Quarry and 2 Curlew, 18 Sandwich Terns, 20 Common Scoter and 230 Brent Geese flew east past Mill Point, whilst four Shags were offshore there.

A Black-throated Diver, 4 Red-breasted Mergansers, 6 Teal, 9 Shelduck, 10 Kittiwakes, 22 Red-throated Divers, 25 Shovelers, 57 Black-headed Gulls, 68 Common Scoters, 95 Brent Geese, 100 Gannets and 180 Sandwich Terns flew east at sea on the 5th, when a Red Kite flew west over Folkestone, single Swallows flew east over Hythe, Seabrook and Mill Point and 9 Greylag Geese and ten Chiffchaffs were at Nickolls Quarry.

The first Reed Warbler of the year and 2 Shelducks were at Nickolls Quarry on the 6th and 58 Common Scoter and 87 Sandwich Terns flew east at sea. A Ring Ouzel and a Firecrest were at Abbotscliffe on the 7th, whilst the first House Martin, a Swallow and two Sand Martins arrived in off the sea at the cliffs and a Red Kite flew east over Capel-le-Ferne and Folkestone. A Brambling, 3 Redwings and 4 Green Sandpipers were at Nickolls Quarry, a Reed Warbler was at Princes Parade, further Swallows were at Copt Point, the Willop Outfall and Hythe (2), with three Common Terns off the latter site.



Bufflehead at Nickolls Quarry (Ian Roberts)

A Grasshopper Warbler and the first Willow Warbler were singing at the Aldergate Bridge on the 8th, when an **Egyptian Goose** and 5 Greylag Geese were at Nickolls Quarry, the first two Yellow Wagtails were at Donkey Street, a Sand Martin flew in off the sea at Capel-le-Ferne and a Swallow flew east at Seabrook. A Ring Ouzel was at Abbotscliffe on the 9th and a Red Kite flew east over Hythe, whilst a House Martin was at Crete Road West, a Willow Warbler was near Asholt Wood, 2 Reed Warblers, 3 Cetti's Warblers, 6 Blackcaps and 6 Chiffchaffs were noted along the canal between Seabrook and Hythe and 61 Turnstones were counted at the Dymchurch Redoubt.

A **Rough-legged Buzzard** was hunting at Folkestone Racecourse on the 10th, and the first Whitethroats were seen there, at Donkey Street and at Nickolls Quarry. Red Kites were seen over Cheriton, Seabrook, Hythe and Folkestone (three), two Snipe, 4 Sedge Warblers and 7 Green Sandpipers were at Nickolls Quarry and a Sedge Warbler and a Corn Bunting were at Donkey Street. The last Fieldfare was at West Hythe on the 11th, when a Firecrest was at Enbrook Park, a Whitethroat was at Scene Wood and 100 Sanderling were at the Dymchurch Redoubt. The 12th produced a Ring Ouzel, the first two Lesser Whitethroats and 4 Whitethroats at Abbotscliffe, where a Yellow Wagtail flew in off the sea and a Curlew flew over, a Whitethroat, 2 Reed Warblers, 9 Sedge Warblers at Nickolls Quarry, a Yellow Wagtail at Botolph's Bridge and Red Kites flew over Cheriton, Lympe and Saltwood.

The 13th was markedly cooler with a brisk northerly-easterly breeze and 3 Sand Martins, 3 House Martins and 20 Swallows were feeding over the lake at Nickolls Quarry, whilst four Red-breasted Mergansers and 15 Sandwich Terns flew east at sea and a Willow Warbler was singing in a garden in Folkestone. Three Ring Ouzels were at Abbotscliffe the next day and 12 Brent Geese flew east past Hythe.

A Greenshank was seen at Nickolls Quarry on the 16th when a Red Kite flew east over Hythe, a Wheatear was at Battery Point, a Ring Ouzel was still at Abbotscliffe and small numbers of Swallows, Reed Warblers and Whitethroats continued to arrive, whilst 4 Oystercatchers, 7 Whimbrel, 7 Mediterranean Gulls, 12 Common Scoter and 13 Sandwich Terns flew east at sea.

A north-easterly breeze on the 17th encouraged some passage at sea where an **Egyptian Goose**, a Little Tern, 8 Whimbrel, 8 Oystercatchers, 11 Brent Geese, 24 Common Terns, 62 Sandwich Terns and 118 Common Scoter flew east at sea. A Garden Warbler was singing at Enbrook Park and a Willow Warbler was singing at Nickolls Quarry. In similar conditions the following day there was an excellent offshore movement involving an Avocet, a Little Gull, 2 Arctic Skuas, 3 Redshanks, 4 Grey Plovers, 8 Arctic Terns, 10 Dunlin, 12 Velvet Scoters, 20 Bar-tailed Godwits, 25 Brent Geese, 61 Common Scoters, 62 Sandwich Terns, 73 Whimbrel, 180 Gannets and 237 Common Terns flying east whilst 2 Shags and 9 Eider were on the sea off Mill Point. A Willow Warbler, a Whimbrel, 3 Sand Martins, 6 Common Sandpipers, 10 House Martins and 10 Swallows were at Nickolls Quarry, a Whimbrel flew over Lympe, two Ring Ouzels were at Samphire Hoe and a Wheatear was at Abbotscliffe.

The 19th produced a female **Bufflehead** at Nickolls Quarry, a new species for the area and the county should it be accepted by the relevant authorities. Three Common Sandpipers and 18 House Martins were also noted there, Wheatears were at Abbotscliffe, Mill Point and near Folkestone Pier, and 5 House Martins and 25 Swallows arrived in off the sea. A quieter next day produced just an **Egyptian Goose** flying east past Seabrook and 8 Whimbrel flying east past Mill Point of note, whilst the 21st saw a Wheatear at the Hotel Imperial golf course and a further 35 Whimbrel flying east past Hythe.

The first two Swifts of the year arrived in off the sea at Seabrook on the 22nd and two Wheatears were seen at Donkey Street. A warmer south-easterly wind on the 23rd encouraged 18 Whimbrel, 33 Mediterranean Gulls, 36 Sandwich Terns, 71 Common Gulls and 112 Black-headed Gulls to head up-channel past Hythe, whilst Red Kites flew over Cheriton and Lympe (2) and single Common Sandpipers were at Botolph's Bridge and the Dymchurch Redoubt.

Another mild day on 24th brought further Red Kite sightings, with one flying over Folkestone and three seen over Copt Point and Folkestone Warren, whilst a Red-breasted Merganser, 5 Shelduck, 18 Mediterranean Gulls, 23 Common Scoter and 30 Whimbrel flew east at sea, four Common Sandpipers were at the Dymchurch Redoubt and Wheatears were noted at Mill Point and Hotel Imperial golf course (2).

The 25th produced singing Nightingales near Stanford North and at Nickolls Quarry, with a Shelduck, 2 Swifts, 2 Sand Martins, 3 Common Sandpipers, 8 House Martins and 25 Swallows also of note at the latter site. An Arctic Skua, 2 Knot, 2 Bar-tailed Godwits and 5 Whimbrel flew east at sea.

A **White Stork** was reported flying north-east over Lympe on the 26th, when a Wheatear and a Yellow Wagtail were at Princes Parade, a Wheatear was at Copt Point and nine Shelduck drifted east past Seabrook. Two **Cattle Egrets** flew east past Copt Point on the 27th, when a Turtle Dove was seen at Lower Cock Ash (near Monks Horton), a Whinchat was at Abbotscliffe, a Sedge Warbler and a Yellow Wagtail were at Samphire Hoe and two Great Skuas were on the sea off Mill Point.

April had been exceptionally dry but the last three days saw some heavy falls of rain. In a moderate north-easterly wind on the 28th a Little Gull, a Ringed Plover, 2 Arctic Skuas, 2 Great Skuas, 4 Whimbrel, 5 Sanderling, 8 Grey Plover, 14 Common Terns and 19 Dunlin flew east at sea. A switch to a brisk southerly the next day produced a Great Skua, a flock of 6 Manx Shearwaters, 30 Brent Geese and 39 Common Scoter flying east past Mill Point, whilst a Willow Warbler was at Samphire Hoe. The month ended with a Little Tern and 2 Arctic Skuas flying past Hythe.

May

After a showery first day which produced very little of note, May was the driest and sunniest on record. A north-westerly breeze on the 2nd produced a Sedge Warbler, a Wheatear and 3 Willow Warblers at Abbotscliffe, whilst 2 Yellow Wagtails, 6 House Martins, 8 Swifts and 31 Swallows arrived in off the sea.

A run of easterly winds from the 3rd induced some passage at sea with a **Spoonbill** and a Great Skua flying east past Mill Point on the 3rd, when two Golden Plovers flew in off the sea at Abbotscliffe. The following day saw a Ringed Plover, 2 Greenshank, 2 Arctic Skuas, 5 Curlew, 11 Whimbrel, 22 Dunlin and 30 Brent Geese flying east past Mill Point and a Yellow Wagtail, 5 House Martins, 9 Swifts and 12 Swallows arrived in off there, whilst a Wheatear was on the beach and seven Swifts were seen over Folkestone.



Marsh Warbler at undisclosed location (Brian Harper)

The 5th produced just two Curlew and two Dunlin flying east past Mill Point but the next day 3 Grey Plover, 3 Curlew, 4 **Black-tailed Godwits**, 4 Little Terns, 26 Common Scoter, 29 Whimbrel and 85 Common/Arctic Terns flew east there and 5 Swallows arrived in off. A Garden Warbler was singing at Princes Parade and a Willow Warbler was at Copt Point, whilst Swifts continued to arrive, with eight at Hythe. A Great Skua, a Brent Goose, a Turnstone, 3 Sanderling, 92 Gannets and 106 Common Scoter flew east past Mill Point on the 7th, when a Whinchat was at Abbotscliffe, single Red Kites were seen over Palmarsh and the Aldergate Bridge and 18 Reed Warblers were counted along the canal between Hythe and Seabrook.

The continuing easterly winds produced a **Wryneck** at Abbotscliffe on the 8th, whilst a Yellow Wagtail and 2 Sand Martins arrived in off the sea there, two **Ring-necked Parakeets** flew over Cheriton, 12 Crossbills flew north-east over Lympne, a Nightingale was singing in the Holy Well area and the first Hobbies were noted at Westenhanger and along the Aldington Road (2). A Turtle Dove was purring at Hythe Roughts on the 9th, when a Corn Bunting was singing at Abbotscliffe, three Common Sandpipers were at Nickolls Quarry and up to 12 Red Kites were noted across the area.

A Red Kite flew east over West Hythe on the 10th, when Common Sandpipers were at Nickolls Quarry and the Dymchurch Redoubt (2), where the last Brent Goose of the winter was noted. Little Terns were recorded off Princes Parade and Hythe (4) the following day. A Turtle Dove was seen in a garden in Lympne on the 13th and six Sand Martins were at Nickolls Quarry.

A Siskin, 2 Yellow Wagtails and 4 Swallows flew in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 16th, when two Corn Buntings were present, a Hobby was at Seabrook and a Redshank was seen at Hythe Ranges. A Shag was seen off Seabrook on the 17th and 6 Swallows flew in off the sea, whilst five Ravens fledged from a nest at Lympe (whilst further pairs nested in the Beachborough Park area, at Capel-le-Ferne and at Samphire Hoe). A Little Egret was below Abbotscliffe on the 18th and 7 Swallows flew in off the sea.

A **Marsh Warbler** was singing at an undisclosed location from the 21st and a Hobby flew north over Hythe, whilst a **Wood Sandpiper** flew over Nickolls Quarry the next day and the fourth Turtle Dove of the spring was seen in a garden near the Sene Valley golf course on the 23rd. A Little Egret was at Donkey Street on the 24th when a Red Kite and 40 Swifts flew west over Nickolls Quarry and two Red Kites flew east over Lympe.

A female **Red-backed Shrike** was seen at Samphire Hoe on the 25th, when a Honey Buzzard flew in off the sea at Folkestone Warren and two Hobbies arrived in off the sea at Abbotscliffe. A **Ring-necked Parakeet** flew over Hythe on the 27th, when a late migrant Reed Warbler was at Abbotscliffe and a Garden Warbler was seen near Westenhanger Castle. A male **Red-backed Shrike** was at Hythe Ranges on the 30th, when a Red Kite flew south over Folkestone, five Crossbills flew over Hythe and nine Oystercatchers flew over Seabrook, with a Red Kite flying west there the next day.

A pair of Marsh Harriers had been seen displaying, apparently nest building and possibly carrying food at Nickolls Quarry during April and May but there were no signs that breeding was successful.

June

The first couple of days of June were dry and sunny with high pressure and temperatures exceeding 25°C but the following week was more changeable with northerly winds. After a wet day on the 10th it became generally warm and fairly humid until further rain arrived on the 17th and a cooler few days ensued. There was a hot spell from the 23rd to the 26th when daytime temperatures reached 30°C. The last few days of the month though saw a return to cooler changeable weather.



Rose-coloured Starling at Folkestone (Alison Fletcher)

A second **Marsh Warbler** was singing at an undisclosed site on the 1st and 2nd, where the original male remained until at least the 14th. The first day of the month also produced 3 Little Egrets and 11 Crossbills flying east at Abbotscliffe and four Red Kites over Hythe Roughs. An excellent total of up to **18** Red Kites flew east over Hythe on the 2nd, when smaller numbers were noted over Folkestone.

A **Night Heron** (third area record) was seen in the Princes Parade area on the 3rd and 4th and a **Rose-coloured Starling** (second area record) was seen in a private garden near Tram Road (Folkestone) on the 5th and 6th.

Five Ringed Plovers were seen at Folkestone Beach on the 3rd, two Greylag Geese and 32 Canada Geese flew past Seabrook on the 5th and a Canada Goose flew east there on the 7th. Hobbies were noted at Nickolls Quarry, Folks' Wood, Seabrook, Park Farm, central Folkestone and Church Hougham.

There were several large counts of Swifts, with 178 flying west at Nickolls Quarry and 550 flying west at Seabrook on the 5th, 150 at Seabrook and c.300 in the Donkey Street/Nickolls Quarry area on the 7th and 864 flying west at Seabrook on the 29th.

A Honey Buzzard flew west at Samphire Hoe on the 13th when a Garden Warbler was singing at Folks' Wood. The first returning waders involved a Whimbrel flying inland over Copt Point on the 19th and a Lapwing flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 25th. Single Turtle Doves were seen at Botolph's Bridge and again at West Hythe, whilst a Corn Bunting and 2 Yellow Wagtails were present in the Donkey Street area.

Another Honey Buzzard flew over Lympe on the 26th, when a Red Kite flew over Folkestone.

July

The beginning of the month saw low pressure dominating and this brought unsettled weather until the 9th before high pressure often ridged in between the 10th and 22nd, giving drier, sunnier weather. It was generally changeable thereafter but there was a very warm end to July with temperatures soaring to 33°C on the 31st.



Sparrowhawk at Lympe (Phil Sharp)

Waders continued to return during July and sightings included a Grey Plover flying east at Samphire Hoe on the 1st, single Common Sandpipers at Seabrook on the 6th and Donkey Street on the 7th, a Green Sandpiper and 2 Oystercatchers flying over Samphire Hoe on the 12th, a Curlew and 3 Oystercatchers flying over Hythe Ranges on the 16th, a Whimbrel flying past Hythe on the 17th and single Green Sandpipers flying over Hythe and Westenhanger on the 31st.

A Turtle Dove was reported again at West Hythe on the 3rd, whilst a Corn Bunting remained in the Donkey Street area, with another at Abbot's Court Farm (Burmarsh). There were several sightings of Crossbills at Lympe, where a flock of 20 flew south-west on the 6th, a single flew over on the 12th and groups of two, three and four (potentially a total of nine but perhaps with some duplication) flew over on the 17th, whilst a Siskin flew over Samphire Hoe on the 12th.

A Red Kite flew east over Palmarsh on the 10th and one was noted at Stanford North on two dates during the month. A Honey Buzzard flew over Cheriton on the 12th and an Osprey flew east and then out to sea at Hythe on the 14th, whilst Hobbies were noted at Hythe and Samphire Hoe. A total of 871 Swifts flew over Seabrook on the 6th and 48 Sand Martins flew east there on the 12th, whilst two Sand Martins and 100 Swifts flew east over Folkestone on the 17th.

Mediterranean Gull numbers started to increase during July, with about 50 at Donkey Street on the 12th, 350 at Copt Point on the 16th and "far above 500, maybe up to 1,000" at Copt Point on the 23rd, including colour-ringed birds from eight countries.

Returning passerine migrants included an early Wheatear at Samphire Hoe on the 15th, two Wheatears there and a Willow Warbler, 2 Blackcaps, 5 Whitethroats and 8 Reed Warblers at Nickolls Quarry on the 21st, a Whinchat at Abbotscliffe on the 24th, a Willow Warbler in a garden in Folkestone on the 28th, a Reed Bunting, 9 Lesser Whitethroats, 16 Willow Warblers and 18 Whitethroats at Abbotscliffe and 2 Willow Warblers, 3 Whitethroats and 7 Reed Warblers at Nickolls Quarry on the 29th and two Wheatears at Samphire Hoe on the 30th.

There was little movement at sea until the 29th, when a Great Crested Grebe, at least 3 Manx Shearwaters, 27 Sandwich Terns and 36 Gannets flew past Samphire Hoe. Little Egrets were noted at Hythe, Seabrook, Abbotscliffe and Samphire Hoe during the month.

August

After a changeable start, a generally hot and sunny spell with some thundery outbreaks set in from the 6th, with maximum temperatures approaching 35°C locally. It turned more unsettled mid-month, and then from the 19th it was often windy with some deep depressions moving in from the west. Temperatures were mostly near normal during this spell but it turned cooler during the last few days.

There was a quiet start to the month, although passerine migrants continued to trickle through, with a Yellow Wagtail flying west over Hythe on the 1st, a Wheatear, a Reed Warbler and 5 Willow Warblers at Abbotscliffe on the 3rd, a Reed Warbler, 2 Willow Warblers, 2 Lesser Whitethroats at 12 Whitethroats at Nickolls Quarry on the 4th, a Garden Warbler, 2 Blackcaps, 3 Reed Warblers and 8 Willow Warblers there the following day, a Lesser Whitethroat, 4 Reed Warblers and 15+ Whitethroats there on the 6th and a Garden Warbler at Pond Hill Road on the 9th.

Ten Oystercatchers flew west over Hythe on the 1st and eight flew east past Seabrook on the 4th, whilst a Hobby was noted at the latter site on the 7th.

Migration gathered pace from the 10th, when 2 Pied Flycatchers, 2 Wheatears, 4 Lesser Whitethroats, 6 Willow Warblers and 19 Whitethroats were at Abbotscliffe, with a Red Kite, a Crossbill and 10 Lesser Whitethroats there the next day, when a Honey Buzzard was found at Horn Street (where it remained until the 13th) and a Wheatear was at Samphire Hoe. A Whimbrel flew west at Hythe on the 12th.

The 13th produced 2 Pied Flycatchers, 3 Whinchats, 5 Willow Warblers, 11 Lesser Whitethroats and 12 Whitethroats at Abbotscliffe, a Pied Flycatcher, a Chiffchaff, 3 Lesser Whitethroats, 5 Reed Warblers, 8 Whitethroats and 15 Willow Warblers at Nickolls Quarry and a Pied Flycatcher and a Whinchat at Samphire Hoe, whilst a Spotted Flycatcher was at Nickolls Quarry the following day, when a Wheatear was at Copt Point.



Red-backed Shrike at Abbotscliffe (Ian Roberts)

A total of three Pied Flycatchers were seen in gardens in Folkestone on the 16th (one at East Cliff Gardens and two at Ingles Manor), when a Common Sandpiper was at Samphire Hoe and two Whinchats were at Abbotscliffe. A Greenshank flew west past Hythe on the 18th, when a Wheatear was at Cheriton Hill. On the 20th a Red Kite and a Marsh Harrier flew over Horton Priory and a Wigeon was at Cock Ash Lake.

A **Balearic Shearwater**, a Shag and 4 Swifts flew past Samphire Hoe on the 22nd, two Tree Pipits, 3 Swifts and 4 Yellow Wagtails flew over Abbotscliffe on the 23rd and a Bar-tailed Godwit, 2 **Sooty Shearwaters**, 6 Teal, 15 Ringed Plover and 47 Knot flew past the Willop Outfall on the 24th, when an Arctic Skua, a Whimbrel, 12 Bar-tailed Godwits and 30 Common Scoter flew west past Copt Point. An Arctic Skua, a Whimbrel, 3 Shags, 14 Common Terns, 16 Gannets and 21 Sandwich Terns flew past Samphire Hoe the following day.

A **Ruff** was seen at the Willop Sewage Works on the 27th, when a Short-eared Owl was at Donkey Street and Wheatears were seen at the Willop Outfall (2), Samphire Hoe (3) and the Dymchurch Redoubt (5). A Redstart and 3 Swifts were at Abbotscliffe on the 29th, when an Arctic Skua was seen off Samphire Hoe. The next day saw an Arctic Skua, 2 **Balearic Shearwaters**, 3 Shags, 4 Teal, 5 Dunlin and 23 Gannets flying past Samphire Hoe and a juvenile **Caspian Gull** and ten Ringed Plovers at Folkestone Beach, whilst a Hobby flew in off the sea at Princes Parade (and confirmation was received that a pair bred again at Lympne Park Wood, where a juvenile was present at the end of the month, and birds continued to be seen into September).

August ended well, with a **Red-backed Shrike** at Abbotscliffe, a Redstart, a Spotted Flycatcher, a Whinchat and a Firecrest at Hythe Roughts, three Spotted Flycatchers at Folks' Wood, a Spotted Flycatcher at Brockhill Country Park and a Hobby at Kiln Wood on the 31st.

September

The early part of the month was unsettled with areas of rain moving in from the west, interspersed with brighter showery weather. There was a spell of mostly warm and sunny conditions from the 13th to 21st, and daytime temperatures exceeded 25°C around mid-month. It turned much more unsettled and cooler from the 22nd, with strong winds and rain at times.



Wryneck at Abbotscliffe (Ian Roberts)

The **Red-backed Shrike** remained at Abbotscliffe until the 2nd, and a ringtail **Hen Harrier**, a Hobby, a Redstart, a Swift, a Wheatear, 2 Sand Martins, 3 Whinchats, 5 Yellow Wagtails, 7 Siskins, 10 Whitethroats and 15 Blackcaps were also seen there on the 1st, with a Redstart, a Pied Flycatcher, a Spotted Flycatcher, a Hobby, 2 Wheatears, 4 Whinchats, 10 Whitethroats and 10 Blackcaps there the next day, when a Tree Pipit, a Great Spotted Woodpecker, a Lapwing, a Grey Wagtail, 2 Swifts and 8 Yellow Wagtails flew over.

A quieter spell ensued, in stronger winds, with little of note over the next couple of days, and just a Wheatear, 3 Whinchats and 3 Yellow Wagtails at Abbotscliffe on the 5th, when a Yellow Wagtail, 4 Wheatears and 4 Swifts were at Hythe Ranges. However, on the 6th a **Wryneck**, a Short-eared Owl, 2 Whinchats and 5 Wheatears were seen at Abbotscliffe, where a Yellow Wagtail, 2 Swifts, 30 Meadow Pipits and 35 Siskins flew over, a Spotted Flycatcher was at Nickolls Quarry and a Kingfisher was seen in Folkestone Harbour. Around 1,000 Mediterranean Gulls were seen at Copt Point and it was estimated that over 4,000 had been present over a five day period at the end of August/early September.

Another **Red-backed Shrike** was found on the 7th, at Capel-le-Ferne, and a Tree Pipit, a Whinchat, a Wheatear, a Swift, 2 Yellow Wagtails, 8 Whitethroats and 11 Blackcaps were at Abbotscliffe, with 3 Chiffchaffs and 20+ Blackcaps at Nickolls Quarry.

The following day produced a Great Spotted Woodpecker, 5 Blackcaps and 8 Chiffchaffs at Nickolls Quarry and six Wheatears at Samphire Hoe. 2 Spotted Flycatchers and 2 Siskins were seen at Lympe on the 9th, when 40 Siskins flew west at Postling.

A **Wryneck** (thought probably to be a new individual) was seen briefly at Abbotscliffe on the 10th, with a Spotted Flycatcher, a Willow Warbler, 2 Redstarts, 3 Lesser Whitethroats and 5 Whitethroats also of note there, whilst a Great Spotted Woodpecker and 58 Siskins flew over. A **Great White Egret**, a Grey Heron and 2 Great Spotted Woodpeckers flew in off the sea at Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site the following day, when a Lesser Whitethroat, 7 Blackcaps and 25 Chiffchaffs were at Nickolls Quarry, with a Great Spotted Woodpecker, a Grey Wagtail, 4 Chiffchaffs, 5 Blackcaps and 5 Siskins there on the 12th.

The 13th produced a Whinchat, 2 Great Spotted Woodpeckers, 2 Lesser Whitethroats and 10 Blackcap at Abbotscliffe, where 5 Yellow Wagtails, 14 Siskins and 29 Meadow Pipits flew over, and a Hobby flew west at Seabrook. Two Yellow Wagtails flew over Hythe on the 14th and a quieter few days followed, although a Red-throated Diver, 6 Dunlin, 14 Teal and 16 Wigeon off the Willop Outfall on the 17th were noteworthy, with a single Whinchat of note at Abbotscliffe the next day.

Seven Wigeon and 25 Brent Geese flew past the Willop Outfall on the 19th, when 45 Siskins flew east at Abbotscliffe, and three Ring Ouzels flew east at Creteway Down the following day, when 28 Siskins and 29 Swallows flew east at Seabrook. A Redstart, a Spotted Flycatcher, 3 Great Spotted Woodpeckers and 10 Chiffchaffs were at Nickolls Quarry on the 21st, when a Redstart was at Copt Point and 7 Crossbills flew over, a Great Spotted Woodpecker, a Lesser Whitethroat and 21 Chiffchaffs were at Abbotscliffe and 5 Siskins and 72 Meadow Pipits flew east, and two Wheatears were at the Dymchurch Redoubt, with a further two at the Willop Outfall where two Brent Geese flew past, and six Brent Geese passed Seabrook.

A **Hawfinch** was found at Copt Point on the 22nd, when a Redstart, a Sedge Warbler, 12 Blackcaps and 30 Chiffchaffs were at Nickolls Quarry, a Common Sandpiper, a Whinchat, 8 Blackcaps and 32 Chiffchaffs were at Samphire Hoe, 14 Chiffchaffs were 3 ringed in a garden in Folkestone and a Barn Owl was at the Aldergate Bridge.

The next day saw a Firecrest at Castle Hill, where a Redpoll and 20 Siskins flew over, and 4 Redpolls and 12 Siskins were at Lympe, whilst a Redpoll and 240+ Siskins were at Lympe on the 25th, when 427 House Martins flew west at Seabrook and at least 557 Mediterranean Gulls were seen at Hythe.

A Hobby was at Nickolls Quarry from the 26th to the 27th, and on the latter date a Barn Owl was seen along the Lower Wall Road, a Dunlin was at Samphire Hoe, three Snipe flew in off the sea at Hythe, 20 Chiffchaffs were counted along the canal at Hythe and 36 Brent Geese flew east past Hythe.

A brisk north-westerly breeze on the 28th produced an excellent passage of finches, including record counts of **53** Crossbills and **3,175** Siskins moving east at Abbotscliffe, with a Merlin, Brambling, a Reed Bunting, 2 Tree Pipits, 2 Grey Wagtails, 28 Redpolls, 85 Goldfinches and 110 Linnets also of note, whilst 21 Crossbills and 600 Siskins were seen heading east over Copt Point. The first Redwings of the autumn were at Lympe and Samphire Hoe, with a Redstart, a Whinchat, 4 Blackcaps 8 Chiffchaffs, 10 Stonechats and 15 Robins at the latter site, and six Sand Martins were noted at Folkestone Leas.

The third **Wryneck** of the month was seen at Abbotscliffe on the 29th, where three Ring Ouzels were also seen, four Crossbills and 1,475 Swallows flew east at Seabrook, and a Great Spotted Woodpecker, a Stonechat and 2 Rock Pipits were at Princes Parade, where 6 Yellow Wagtails, 25 Meadow Pipits, 400 Swallows and 650 House Martins flew east. The month ended with a Velvet Scoter on the sea off the Willop Outfall.

October

It was a generally unsettled month with rain crossing the area at frequent intervals and this was heavy and persistent at times. It was drier and more settled from the 14th to 19th with mainly easterly winds, but the rest of the month was mostly wet and windy.

October got off to a good start with a **Yellow-browed Warbler** behind New Beach caravan park, near Dymchurch on the 1st, when a Hobby was seen at Lypne and two 2 Wheatears and 19 Pied Wagtails were at Church Hougham. The next day saw a Manx Shearwater, a Wigeon, six Brent Geese and 34 Gannets passing offshore



Cackling Goose at the Willop Outfall (Brian Harper)

On the 3rd a Cackling Goose (presumably of feral origin), a Knot, a Red-breasted Merganser, 2 Arctic Skuas, 2 Ringed Plovers, 2 Common Terns, 3 Shelduck, 5 Red-throated Divers, 13 Canada Geese, 20 Teal, 28 Sandwich Terns, 81 Wigeon, 132 Common Scoter, 343 Brent Geese and 384 Mediterranean Gulls flew past the Willop Outfall, a Redstart, a Whinchat, 2 Ring Ouzels, 5 Redwings, 40 Chiffchaffs and a record count of 200+ Robins were in the Copt Point/Creteway Down area, a Ring Ouzel, a Golden Plover and 2 Whinchats were at Abbotscliffe, where 91 Meadow Pipits flew west, a Black Redstart was at Nickolls Quarry, seven Pintail flew past Hythe and three Pochard and 21 Greylag Geese were at Folkestone Racecourse.

A Swift, 8 Chiffchaffs, 8 Crossbills, 9 Redpolls and 15 Siskins were at Lypne on the 4th, when a Merlin and a Snipe were at Donkey Street, a Yellow Wagtail was at Botolph's Bridge, 3 Sand Martins and 200 House Martins were at Nickolls Quarry, 23 Redpolls were at Crete Road East and two Firecrests were at Saltwood.

A Golden Plover flew west over Princes Parade the next day, when 12 Crossbills and 62 Redpolls flew east over Horn Street and 7 Blackcaps and 10 Chiffchaffs were at Nickolls Quarry. A Spotted Flycatcher, a Brambling and 8 Siskins were at West Hythe on the 6th, when a Merlin was seen at Selby Farm.

On the 7th a **Great White Egret** flew over the Aldergate Bridge, a Tree Pipit, a Reed Bunting, 8 Redpolls and 120 Linnets flew over Hythe, a Sedge Warbler and a Reed Warbler were at the Willop Sewage Works, three Wigeon were at Donkey Street and 27 Siskins were at Botolph's Bridge. A Swift, a Redpoll, 4 Crossbill and 80 Swallows flew over Lypne Church on the 8th.

The 9th produced 3 Ring Ouzels, 8 Blackcaps and 14 Chiffchaffs at Abbotscliffe, where a Jay, a Yellow Wagtail, 2 Grey Wagtails, 3 Tree Pipits, 3 Tree Sparrows, 10 Reed Buntings, 58 Redpolls, 131 Siskins, 450 Starlings, c.1,000 Swallows and 2,875 Chaffinches flew over, whilst a Black Redstart, 6 Crossbills, 6 Redpolls, 11 Sand Martins and 35 Linnets were seen at Lympe, a Firecrest and a Ring Ouzel were at Samphire Hoe and 14 Blackcaps and 20 Chiffchaffs were at Nickolls Quarry.

A **Great White Egret**, a Green Sandpiper and 10 Teal were at Donkey Street on the 10th where 2 **Wood Larks** flew west, a Yellow Wagtail was at the Willop Sewage Works and a Ring Ouzel was at Abbotscliffe, where a Great Spotted Woodpecker, 7 Tree Sparrows, 120 House Martins and 150 Starlings flew over.

The 11th saw the first significant arrival of winter thrushes, with 13 Fieldfares and 1,250 Redwings seen over Copt Point, 1,100 Redwings seen over Abbotscliffe, 29 Fieldfares and 400 Redwings seen over Folkestone Rugby Club and 85 Redwings seen over Brockhill Country Park. Also of note were 2 Ring Ouzels, 10 Blackcaps, 17 Song Thrushes, 22 Chiffchaffs and 40 Robins at Copt Point, where 2 Sky Larks, 3 Siskins, 3 Great Spotted Woodpeckers, 5 Jays, 6 Redpolls flew over, and 3 Grey Wagtails, 4 Brambling, 7 Reed Buntings, 33 Redpolls, 53 Siskins, 110 House Martins, 170 Starlings and 360 Goldfinches flew over Abbotscliffe, whilst 157 Gannets flew past Seabrook.

A **Great White Egret** flew in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 12th, when a Great Spotted Woodpecker, a Fieldfare, 2 Brambling, 2 Grey Wagtails, 2 Goldcrests, 3 Reed Buntings, 5 Redpolls, 18 Redwings and 345 Starlings were also noted there, whilst a Great Spotted Woodpecker, a Shag, a Shelduck, 2 Arctic Skuas, 2 Whimbrel, 2 Reed Buntings, 2 Black Redstarts, 23 Song Thrushes and 36 Brent Geese were at Samphire Hoe. A Fieldfare, 2 Redwings, 2 Blackcaps, 3 Ring Ouzels, 8 Chiffchaffs and 23 Robins were seen at Samphire Hoe the next day, when a Brambling was in a garden in Folkestone. A Ring Ouzel, 8 Sky Larks, 22 Redwings, 27 Redpolls, 35 Crossbills, 120 Fieldfares, 152 Siskins and a record count of 2,140 Goldfinches flew over Abbotscliffe on the 14th, when 3 Ring Ouzels and 12 Redwings were at Creteway Down and three Ring Ouzels were at Samphire Hoe.

On the 15th a Black Redstart, 3 Reed Buntings, 10 Ring Ouzels, 15 Goldcrest, 25 Song Thrushes, 40 Redwings and 50 Sky Larks were at Abbotscliffe, where a Jay, a Brambling, 40 House Martins, 68 Siskins, 90 Redpolls and 760 Goldfinches flew over and five Ring Ouzels were at Samphire Hoe. Three **Great White Egrets** were seen near Abbot's Court Farm on the 16th, when three Ring Ouzels at Abbotscliffe, where 23 Crossbills, 30 Swallows, 66 Redpolls, 105 Siskins, 250 Starlings and 970 Goldfinches flew over and 152 Sky Larks arrived in off the sea at Seabrook. A Lapwing and a Ring Ouzel were at Abbotscliffe the next day, where a Brambling, 12 Fieldfares, 12 Redwings, 25 Crossbills, 35 Swallows, 102 Siskins, 104 Redpolls and 505 Goldfinches flew over and 602 Swallows flew east at Seabrook.

The 18th produced a Ring Ouzel at the Willop Outfall, where 32 Siskins and a record count of 255 Redpolls flew east, a Ring Ouzel and a Black Redstart at Abbotscliffe and a Marsh Harrier at Abbot's Court Farm, whilst 2 Crossbills and 4 Tree Sparrows flew east over Nickolls Quarry, 3 Crossbills flew east over Saltwood and 179 Swallows flew east at Seabrook. Two Firecrests, 4 Chiffchaffs, 6 Redwings and 6 Goldcrests were at Samphire Hoe on the 21st.

A male **Hen Harrier** arrived in off the sea at Copt Point on the 22nd and a **Yellow-browed Warbler** was seen at Horn Street the following day, when 2 Green Sandpipers and 2 Corn Buntings were in the Donkey Street/Willop Sewage Works area. A Merlin and at least 1,350 Mediterranean Gulls were seen at West Hythe on the 24th and two Crossbills were at Chesterfield Wood the next day.

A Velvet Scoter was seen off the Willop Outfall on the 27th, when a Green Sandpiper, 2 Wigeon and 3 Shoveler were at Donkey Street, a Wheatear was at the Dymchurch Redoubt, a Firecrest and 4 Snipe were at Folkestone Racecourse and 245 Swallows were counted at West Hythe. A Short-eared Owl was seen at Princes Parade on the 28th, when three Firecrests were at Copt Point.

A **Water Pipit** was seen at Donkey Street on the 30th, when a Purple Sandpiper was at Battery Point and a Water Rail was seen along the canal at Seabrook. The month ended with a Sooty Shearwater, a Red-breasted Merganser, 5 Great Skuas, 6 Sandwich Terns, 40 Kittiwakes, 500 Starlings and 580 Gannets flying west past Mill Point and a Merlin, a Red-legged Partridge and 2 Little Egrets at West Hythe, where 540 Starlings flew west.

November

After a mild, wet and windy start, November briefly turned cooler and more settled from the 4th to the 7th due to the influence of a ridge of high pressure. Southerly and south-westerly winds then predominated until the 18th, bringing mild conditions with wet and windy spells. It continued to be mostly unsettled and mild until the 25th before becoming more settled and colder for the last few days of the month.

There was a quiet start to the month but a few hirundines were lingering in the mild conditions. A Purple Sandpiper was seen at Hythe on the 2nd, when a Barn Owl was hunting to the north of Abbot's Court Farm and four House Martins were at Lympne. The next day saw six Swallows flying west at Seabrook, seven House Martins flying west over the Golden Valley and a Merlin flying west at Hythe.



Crag Martin at Samphire Hoe (Steve Ashton)

A **Wood Lark** flew in off the sea at Copt Point on the 4th, when a **Dartford Warbler** and 2 Chiffchaffs were at Abbotscliffe, where a very late Sand Martin (equalling the latest ever), a Snow Bunting, a 2 Redpolls, 4 Swallows, 6 House Martins, 15 Siskins, 51 Stock Doves, 330 Starlings and 335 Wood Pigeons flew over, and a Brambling and 3 Mandarin Ducks were at Chesterfield Wood.

A **Richard's Pipit** flew east at Abbotscliffe on the 5th, whilst a Woodcock was also seen there and a Brambling and 160 Starlings flew over. The following day produced a **Yellow-browed Warbler**, a Firecrest, a Blackcap and 10 Goldcrests at Samphire Hoe, where a Marsh Harrier, 70 Siskins and 120 Goldfinches flew over and Purple Sandpipers increased to two at Hythe.

A **Great White Egret** was seen at Botolph's Bridge and Selby Farm on the 7th, when the **Water Pipit** was seen again at Donkey Street, three Jack Snipe, 50 Teal, 65 Snipe and 92 Lapwings were at the Willop Basin, a Swallow was at Botolph's Bridge, two Green Sandpipers were in the Botolph's Bridge/Nickolls Quarry area. A Firecrest and 15 Goldcrests were noted along the canal by Hythe Roughs and two Firecrests and 12 Goldcrests were at Enbrook Park, with another Firecrest trapped and ringed in a garden in Folkestone. Two Sandwich Terns were seen off the Dymchurch Redoubt and Little Egrets continued to be noted at various sites.

A **Pink-footed Goose** and a Firecrest were at Samphire Hoe on the 8th, when a Ring Ouzel, 2 Corn Buntings and 2 Swallows were at Abbotscliffe, two Goosanders were at West Hythe (remaining until the 9th) and a Crossbill flew over Nickolls Quarry. A **Pink-footed Goose** flew west at Seabrook the next day, when a **Great White Egret** was at Botolph's Bridge, ten Brambling flew north over Lympe, three Corn Buntings were at the Willop Sewage Works, a Sandwich Tern, a Tufted Duck, 2 Teal, 5 Razorbills and 10 Wigeon off the Dymchurch Redoubt and 13 Ringed Plovers were at Hythe Ranges.

A flock of nine **Barnacle Geese** flew west past Hythe on the 11th and a juvenile **Glaucous Gull** was found there on the 13th (remaining until the 14th), whilst 25 Kittiwakes and 100 Gannets flew west and a Pochard and 2 Gadwall were at Folkestone Racecourse. The 14th produced a Sandwich Tern and 2 Purple Sandpipers at Folkestone Harbour.

Three Goosanders were seen at Botolph's Bridge on the 15th (and at West Hythe the next day), with two Dunlin and 140 Lapwing at the Willop Basin. On the 16th a Curlew flew west past Samphire Hoe, a Sandwich Tern was seen off Hythe and a male Blackcap arrived in a garden in Folkestone, with two Sandwich Terns off Hythe the next day, when three Redpolls and nine Crossbills flew over Lympe.

Three Snow Buntings flew west at Abbotscliffe on the 23rd, when 410 Starlings arrived in off the sea there. A Barn Owl and 26 Fieldfares were seen near the Aldergate Bridge on the 25th, when a Merlin was seen at Seabrook and 21 Rock Pipits were counted at Samphire Hoe. A Snow Bunting flew west at Abbotscliffe the next day, when 20 Siskins flew east at the cliffs and 73 Fieldfares were seen at Lympe. A Goldeneye was seen off the Dymchurch Redoubt on the 27th, when four Wigeon and 14 Brent Geese flew west.

There was nothing quiet about the end of the month. On the 28th the **Crag Martin** that had previously been seen at Kingsdown (where it was the first Kent and 14th British record) made an appearance at Samphire Hoe before returning to roost at Kingsdown (a pattern it repeated until the 2nd December). The following day a juvenile **Red-necked Phalarope** (the second area record) was found at a private site near Donkey Street (where it remained until the 4th December), where a **Great White Egret** was also present, and an influx of **White-fronted Geese** commenced, with singles at Donkey Street, the Hythe Imperial golf course and Samphire Hoe, whilst 25 grey geese sp. flew over Cheriton. A Chiffchaff at the Willop Sewage Works, 65 Fieldfares at Donkey Street and two Eider, four Razorbills, 20 Teal, 32 Wigeon and 40 Common Scoter off the Willop Outfall were also of note.

On the 30th **White-fronted Geese** increased to two at the Hythe Imperial golf course, three at Donkey Street and eight at Samphire Hoe, whilst there were also seven at the Willop Basin and 8 Wigeon, 12 Shelduck and 50 Common Scoter were seen off the Willop Outfall and a Great Skua and 30 Kittiwakes were seen off Mill Point.

December

After a fairly cool and settled start to the month, December was largely dominated by low pressure, bringing reasonably mild and unsettled conditions, but the year ended with drier and colder conditions although temperatures remained above zero.

The **Crag Martin** continued to delight observers at Samphire Hoe until the 2nd and the **Red-necked Phalarope** remained at Donkey Street until the 4th, whilst the influx of **White-fronted Geese** continued, with numbers increasing to six at Donkey Street and to 41 at the Willop Basin on the 1st, with 51 at the latter site the following day and varying numbers (between 2 and 46) seen daily there until the 10th. Two Purple Sandpipers remained at Hythe throughout.

A Black Redstart was seen at Samphire Hoe on the 1st and a Black-throated Diver was offshore there the next day, when a late Arctic Skua flew west past Seabrook, a Green Sandpiper was at Botolph's Bridge, three Corn Buntings were at Donkey Street and a male Blackcap was seen in a garden in Hythe. A **Great White Egret** and a Goosander were seen at Aldergate Bridge on the 3rd, when 1,005 Cormorants flew east past the Willop Outfall.

A Jack Snipe was seen at Donkey Street on the 4th, when a Brent Goose arrived at the Willop Basin (with up to two there until the 10th) and a Red Kite was at Round Down the following day, when a Shag flew east past Mill Point. A late Swallow reported at Botolph's Bridge on the 6th when 8 Siskins flew east at Samphire Hoe.

On the 7th an adult **Yellow-legged Gull** was at the Willop Basin, when a Shoveler, a Tufted Duck, 2 Pochard, 20 Razorbills and 140 Common Scoter were present offshore, and a drake Goosander was at the Aldergate Bridge on the 9th, when a Black Redstart was noted in a garden in Folkestone, a Corn Bunting flew east at Samphire Hoe and a Peregrine was at the Willop Basin.



Razorbill at Princes Parade (Elliot Ranford)

A Black-throated Diver was seen off Hythe on the 10th, when 50 Razorbills were seen off Folkestone Pier, 142 Lapwings were counted at the Willop Basin and at least 260 Linnets were feeding in a field near Oathill Cottages at Lympne. A first-winter **Caspian Gull** was at the Willop Basin the next day, when a Little Gull, a Red-breasted Merganser, 30 Red-throated Divers, 60 Common Scoters and 60 Razorbills were present offshore, the **Water Pipit** was seen again at Donkey Street and a Chiffchaff was at Lympne.

The 12th produced a **Slavonian Grebe**, 2 **Great Northern Divers**, 2 Brent Geese, 20 Kittiwakes, 25 Red-throated Divers, 34 Razorbills, 50 Gannets and 709 auk sp. flying past Samphire Hoe, whilst a Shag was present offshore, a Black-throated Diver was seen off Princes Parade, two Sandwich Terns were at the Willop Outfall, 20 Siskins were at Kiln Wood and 35 Yellowhammers and 150 Stock Doves were at Botolph's Bridge. A Purple Sandpiper was seen on the seawall at Samphire Hoe on the 13th when a Corn Bunting was near Oathill Cottages at Lympne, with 17 Yellowhammers there the following day.

Two late Sandwich Terns and 1,000 Cormorants were seen off the Willop Outfall on the 20th, when a Peregrine and 500 Lapwings were at the Willop Basin. A Bar-tailed Godwit was seen in Folkestone Harbour on the 22nd, when the Linnet flock near Lympne peaked at 300. 37 Brent Geese flew east past Hythe on the 24th, when 300 Gannets and thousands of Cormorants were present offshore. A flock of 20 Siskins were seen along the canal between Hythe and Palmarsh on the 28th.

On the 29th 31 Redwings and 200 Fieldfares were seen at West Hythe, a Blackcap was at Enbrook Park and two Brent Geese flew east at Hythe. Winter thrushes continued to increase the next day, when 28 Fieldfares and 57 Redwings were at Church Hougham and 130 Redwings were at Botolph's Bridge, whilst a Woodcock was seen at Kiln Wood. The year ended with a **Great Northern Diver** and 100 Gannets off Sandgate and a Shag in Folkestone Harbour.

Systematic list

The systematic list is based on the sequence, taxonomy and vernacular names contained within the International Ornithological Congress (IOC) World Bird List, as adopted by the British Ornithologists' Union from the 1st January 2018 (BOU, 2017). The status of each species is described with reference to its frequency of occurrence, as summarised in the table below, and the times of year when it usually occurs. Any significant changes in status over time are also highlighted.

Status	Frequency of occurrence
Very rare	Has occurred locally on between one and 15 occasions
Rare	Has occurred locally on between 16 and 50 occasions
Scarce	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), adapted to reflect the status of species locally, as follows:

Category	Description
A	Species recorded locally in an apparently natural state at least once since 1 January 1950
B	Species recorded locally in an apparently natural state at least once between 1800 and 1949, but have not been recorded subsequently
C1	Naturalised introduced: species that have occurred only as a result of introduction, e.g. Egyptian Goose
C2	Naturalised established: species with established populations resulting from introduction, but which also occur in an apparently natural state, e.g. Greylag Goose
C3	Naturalised re-established: species with populations successfully re-established in areas of former occurrence, e.g. Red Kite
C4	Naturalised feral: domesticated species with populations established in the wild, e.g. Rock Dove/Feral Pigeon
C5	Vagrant naturalised: species from established naturalised populations abroad. There are currently no species in category C5 that have occurred in Britain
C6	Former naturalised: species formerly placed in C1 whose naturalised populations are either no longer self-sustaining or are considered extinct
D	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 is on the local list is Great White Pelican
E	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 C1-6 populations (e.g. Red Kite).

The Folkestone and Hythe list comprises only those species in Categories A, B and C1-6. Species placed in Category D and E are not included in the species total.

Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>
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Breeding resident, possibly declining (C1)

The only records were again from the Romney Marsh area, where small numbers were noted at Haguelands Farm, Donkey Street and in the Aldergate Bridge/West Hythe dam area.

Pheasant

Phasianus colchicus

Breeding resident (C1)

As always very few counts of this species were received, with a peak of 50 in November at Kiln Wood, where it would appear that rearing is again taking place after an absence of several years.

Brent Goose

Branta bernicla

Winter visitor and passage migrant, rare in summer (A)

There were very few sightings in the early winter period and the only indications of early spring passage were two flying east past Mill Point on the 2nd January and seven flying east past the Willop Outfall the next day. The main spring passage commenced in late February, when 48 flew east past Seabrook on the 27th, whilst counts in March included 430 east past Mill Point on the 14th, 290 east there on the 24th and 260 east there on the 25th, whilst 230 flew east there on the 4th April. Passage continued into early May, and included 30 flying east past Samphire Hoe on the 4th May (there have only ever been two higher counts in this month), whilst the last was seen at the Dymchurch Redoubt on the 10th May. The overall spring total was just 1,734, which was the lowest since 2012 and well below the mean for the previous decade of 3,413.

Departure/Arrival	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Latest/Earliest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Brent Goose	10 th May	25 th Apr	15	4 th May	6	26 th May 1997*
Arrival	19 th Sep	20 th Sep	-1	22 nd Sep*	-3	11 th Sep 2014*

The first autumn arrival involved 25 flying east past the Willop Outfall on the 19th September and small numbers were noted regularly until the end of the year, whilst there was a noteworthy total of 343 off the Willop Outfall on the 3rd October (there have only ever been eight larger counts in autumn). One of the features of recent years has been an up-channel movement in December and 2020 saw counts of 37 past Hythe on the 24th December and two past Hythe Ranges on the 29th December.

Canada Goose

Branta canadensis

One pair usually breeds annually but formerly more numerous (between the late 1990s and 2004). Otherwise can be a visitor at any time of year (C1)

In January a flock of 15 flew over Nickolls Quarry on the 5th with perhaps the same flock (of 15) at Horton Park Lakes on the 8th. The breeding pair had returned to Nickolls Quarry by the 12th February and as usual nested on the small island in the main lake, with six fledglings noted from the 25th April and at least five young still present until late May. An additional five birds were present there on the 17th March, with an additional pair on the 10th and 29th April whilst on the 2nd June eight adults (but no young) were noted.

A pair also nested successfully at Horton Park Lakes, raising six young, whilst up to an additional 11 adults were present there during May. Elsewhere six flew over Haguelands on the 7th March, eight were present in a field near Barrowhill (Sellindge) on the 10th March, five flew west at Seabrook on the 8th April, 32 flew west there on the 5th June and one flew east there on the 7th June.

In the latter half of the year, 11 were seen at Botolph's Bridge on the 1st October, 13 were seen on the sea off the Willop Outfall on the 3rd October and 5 were seen at Nickolls Quarry on the 28th December.

Barnacle Goose	<i>Branta leucopsis</i>
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Rare migrant and winter visitor, with feral birds also recorded (A, C2, E)

A flock of nine flew west past Hythe on the 11th November (G. Tutton).

Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>
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Formerly a rare winter visitor and passage migrant but now frequently recorded throughout the year, with most birds thought to originate from an increasing introduced population. Has bred in recent years (A, C2, C4)

Three were present at Cock Ash Lake on the 6th January and a flock of 60 were found in a field adjacent to Folkestone Racecourse on the 8th February, the second largest count ever recorded locally (after 85+ seen off Copt Point on the 17th September 1996). This flock lingered in the Folkestone Racecourse/Barrowhill area for several weeks, slowly dwindling to 39 at the end of February, 18 on the 4th March and with the last two on the 10th March.

Spring migrants, or wanderers, involved one at Samphire Hoe on the 16th March, three flying east at Seabrook on the 22nd and 26th March, four flying west at Samphire Hoe on the 19th April, two flying east at Seabrook on the 22nd April, four flying west over West Hythe on the 3rd May, two flying over Hythe on the 21st May and two flying east at Seabrook on the 5th June.

Up to 11 were present at Cock Ash Lake between April and June, and bred successfully, with at least one pair bred raising five young. Elsewhere, up to nine were seen on several dates between March and May at Nickolls Quarry, two were present at Folkestone Racecourse on the 12th April, five were at Stanford Lake on the 3rd May and 19 were seen at Horton Park Lakes on the 13th May, but there were no indications of nesting at these sites. In the latter part of the year up to 23 were present at Cock Ash Lake between August and December, 21 were seen at Folkestone Racecourse on the 3rd October and one flew west over West Hythe dam on the 9th November.

Pink-footed Goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>
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Very rare vagrant (A)

One was present at Samphire Hoe on the 8th November before flying off east (M. D. Kennett), whilst it or another flew west at Seabrook the following day (P. Howe). These were the sixth and seventh area records and the first since 2012.

White-fronted Goose	<i>Anser albifrons</i>
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Rare migrant and winter visitor (A)

There were several sightings in late November and early December that were part of a large and widespread arrival into south-east England:

- A juvenile at Hythe Imperial golf course on the 29th November, with adult and juvenile there on the 30th November (P. Smith, I. A. Roberts)
- One at Samphire Hoe on the 29th November, with eight there on 30th November (L. Collins, P. Holt, P. Smith)
- An adult at Donkey Street on the 29th November, with three adults there on the 30th November and six birds on the 1st December (B. Harper, I. A. Roberts)
- Seven at the Willop Basin on the 30th November, increasing to 41 on the 1st December and 51 on the 2nd, with varying numbers (between 2 and 46) present daily until the 10th December (I. A. Roberts)

These were the 30th to 33rd area records and the first since 2016.

Breeding resident, perhaps also a winter visitor and occasional migrant (A, C2)

Numbers in the early winter period were very low, with a peak of just 20 at Donkey Street on the 11th January.

At least three pairs bred again, with two pairs along the Royal Military Canal (one at Seabrook and one at Palmarsh) and a pair near The Little Piece, on Donkey Street.

There were several sightings of birds seen offshore during the year, with four on the sea off Folkestone Harbour on the 19th February, four on the sea off Fisherman's Beach (Hythe) on the 27th April, four flying past Mill Point on the 8th May, one on the sea there the next day, one on the sea off Hythe on the 3rd August, singles (perhaps the same individual) on the sea off Sandgate and the Willop Outfall on the 18th October and one on the sea off the latter site on the 7th December. A flock of four that were seen flying east over Bargrove Wood on the 6th November and were tracked as far as Dover Hill were also of note.

As in 2019, there were again no counts of significance in the late winter period.



Barnacle Geese at Hythe (Glenn Tutton)



White-fronted Goose at Donkey Street (Brian Harper)

Rare migrant and winter visitor (A)

A flock of five flew west past Samphire Hoe at 11:30 on the 2nd January (S. Cutt), with presumably four of the same flock continuing west past Hythe 15 minutes later (D. Brown). The 19th area record.

Rare migrant (C1)

A flock of six flew east over the Willop Sewage Works on the 7th February (B. Harper, I. A. Roberts), whilst in April singles were seen at Nickolls Quarry on the 8th (B. Harper) and flying east at Seabrook on the 17th and 20th (P. Howe). The 13th to 16th area records. This was the first year to produce more than two sightings and there have now been records in nine of the last ten years as the species continues to slowly become established in the county. All records have occurred between January and May.

Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>
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Winter visitor and passage migrant, may have bred on at least one occasion prior to 2004 (A)

Up to four were seen off coastal sites on several dates in January and February.

Spring passage was noted from the 11th March, when four flew east past Mill Point, followed by a record spring count of 29 flying east there on the 14th March. Small numbers were noted on several further dates, with larger counts of 9 east past Mill Point on the 5th April and 9 east past Seabrook on the 26th April.

Away from the coast two were present at Nickolls Quarry on the 6th April and singles were seen there on the 25th April and the 3rd May (the last spring sighting). The spring total of 69 was the third highest in the last ten years and an improvement of the mean for the previous decade of 44.

One flying east past Samphire Hoe on the 28th September was the first of the autumn and up to three were seen irregularly until the end of the year, with a larger count of 12 passing east off the Willop Outfall on the 30th November.

Mandarin Duck	<i>Aix galericulata</i>
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Breeding resident (C1)

Small numbers were again noted at Chesterfield Wood and Folks' Wood during the year.

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

A drake was seen at Nickolls Quarry on the 1st January, with two drakes there on the 13th February (and one remaining until the following day), two drakes there on the 7th March, a pair on the 21st March and a pair on the 4th April. There was only one coastal record in spring, but it did involve the seventh largest movement in this season, when a total of 25 flew east past Mill Point on the 5th April.

In the latter part of the year three were seen at Donkey Street on the 27th October and one was on the sea off the Willop Outfall on the 7th December.

Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>
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Winter visitor and passage migrant (A, C2)

A pair were seen at Nickolls Quarry on the 6th February, a drake flew west past Mill Point on the 14th March, a pair were at Hoorne's Sewer on the 15th to 17th March and a pair were at Nickolls Quarry on the 22nd March.

The only record from the second half of the year involved a pair on the lake at Folkestone Racecourse on the 13th November.

Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i>
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Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

There were no sightings in the first half of the year for the first time since 1999 however the second half of the year produced the second highest total since 2012, including the earliest ever autumn arrival: an immature/female at Cock Ash Lake on the 20th August.

September produced 16 on the sea off the Willop Outfall on the 17th, whilst seven flew west there on the 19th. One flew east past Mill Point on the 2nd October, with 81 off the Willop Outfall the following day, three at Donkey Street on the 7th October and two there on the 27th October, and in November there were ten off the Dymchurch Redoubt on the 9th, four there on the 27th, 32 flying east past the Willop Outfall on the 29th and eight on the sea there on the 30th.

Mallard

Anas platyrhynchos

Breeding resident and winter visitor (A)

Counts included 20 at Horton Park Lakes on the 8th January, 31 at Radnor Park (Folkestone) on the 30th November, 50 at Donkey Street on the 11th September and 105 at Chesterfield Wood on the 4th November.

Pintail

Anas acuta

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

In spring two flew east past Samphire Hoe on the 7th March, five flew east past Mill Point on the 14th March and four flew east there on the 23rd March, whilst in autumn seven flew west past Hythe on the 3rd October.

This constituted a significant improvement on last year but the total of 18 was still well below the mean for the previous decade of 33.

Teal

Anas crecca

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

As usual, the largest counts in the early winter period were from the Donkey Street/Willop Basin area (where there was a peak of 80 on the 1st January) and Chesterfield Wood (where there was a peak of 20 on the 4th January). Elsewhere seven were at Folks' Wood on the 4th January and a female was at Cock Ash Lake on the 8th February.

A light spring passage involved a peak of just six flying east past Mill Point on the 5th. The first autumn arrival involved six at the Willop Outfall on the 25th August, whilst four flew east past Samphire Hoe on the 30th August. In September 14 were present in the Donkey Street/Willop Basin area, increasing to 20 in October and 60 from November, whilst two flew west past the Dymchurch Redoubt on the 9th November, and up to five were present at Folkestone Racecourse and up to eight were at Chesterfield Wood in November/December.



Mallard at Burmarsh Church (Ian Roberts)



Teal at Nickolls Quarry (Ian Roberts)

Pochard*Aythya ferina*

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

In the early winter period a drake was seen at Nickolls Quarry on the 1st January whilst up to four were present at Cock Ash Lake between January and mid-March.

In the latter winter period up to three were present on the lake at Folkestone Racecourse from early October and two were seen on the sea off the Willop Outfall on the 7th December.

Tufted Duck*Aythya fuligula*

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

The only site that produced regular records was Cock Ash Lake, where up to 18 were present during the year and a pair bred there, raising seven young.

Elsewhere singles were seen at Nickolls Quarry on the 1st January and 7th March, with a pair there on the 2nd June, three flew past Folkestone Harbour on the 5th January, four were at Horton Priory on the 6th January, two were at Hayton Lake on the 6th January (with one there on the 13th November), one was at Donkey Street on the 15th March, one flew west past the Dymchurch Redoubt on the 9th November and singles were seen off the Willop Outfall on the 30th November and 7th December.

Eider*Somateria mollissima*

Passage migrant and winter visitor, formerly summered (A)

Three drakes flew west past Mill Point on the 23rd March, a flock of nine (three drakes, six ducks) were seen on the sea off Mill Point on the 18th April before flying east past Samphire Hoe later the same day, and two immature/females flew east past the Willop Outfall on the 29th November.



Pochards at Cock Ash Lake (Ian Roberts)



Eiders at Mill Point (Ian Roberts)

Velvet Scoter*Melanitta fusca*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Two flew east past the Dymchurch Redoubt on the 1st January, 12 flew east past Mill Point on the 18th April and singles were on the sea off the Willop Outfall on the 30th September and 27th October.

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

Very few were noted in the early winter period and spring passage was poor, with the total of 699 being the lowest since 2011 and well below the mean for the previous decade of 1,330. The only three-figure counts involved 118 flying east past Mill Point on the 17th April and 106 flying east there on the 7th May, which was the last spring sighting.

Small numbers were again noted from July, with a larger count of 132 passing the Willop Outfall on the 3rd October. In the late winter period up to 70 were noted regularly off the Willop Outfall from the 16th November.

Very rare vagrant (A)

A female seen at Nickolls Quarry on the 19th April would be a new species for the area and the county should it be accepted by the relevant authorities (I. A. Roberts, B. Harper, R. Norman). Also see photograph on page 11 and refer to page 92 for a full account of this sighting.



Common Scoter at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)



Bufflehead at Nickolls Quarry (Brian Harper)

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

A drake was seen on the sea off the Dymchurch Redoubt on the 27th November. This was the 72nd area record, with an average of 1.3 sightings per annum in recent years.

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

One was seen at Nickolls Quarry on the 31st March. In the latter part of the year two 'red-heads' were present at the West Hythe dam on the 8th and 9th November, three 'red-heads' were at Botolph's Bridge on the 15th November (and at West Hythe dam the following day), a 'red-head' was seen between the Aldergate Bridge and West Hythe dam on the 3rd December and a drake was seen there on the 9th December.

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

There were no sightings in the early winter period but there was a reasonable spring passage involving a total of 19 birds, which was better than the mean for the previous decade of 13. The first flew east past Mill Point on the 5th March, with two east past Samphire Hoe on the 7th March, then a 'red-head' was seen fishing close inshore off the Willop Outfall on the 12th March (with probably the same bird off the Dymchurch Redoubt on the 17th), two flew past Mill Point on the 14th March and four flew east past Mill Point on the 24th March. In April four flew east past Mill Point on the 5th and 13th, and one flew east there on the 24th.

The latter part of the year produced one off the Willop Outfall on the 3rd October, one flying west past Mill Point on the 31st October and one flying west past the Willop Outfall on the 11th December.



Red-breasted Merganser at the Redoubt (Ian Roberts)



Goosanders at West Hythe dam (Ian Roberts)

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant (A)

The first, two seen arriving in off the sea at Seabrook on the 22nd April, were considerably earlier than last year but still very much in line with the mean arrival date over the last decade, and there were further April records on the 25th (two at Nickolls Quarry and three at Hythe) and 27th (two at Hythe). In May eight were seen arriving in off the sea on the 2nd and numbers then increased rapidly, with at least 20 across the area the following day and daily sightings thereafter.

The first three-figure counts came in early June, when 178 were at Nickolls Quarry on the 5th, when 550 flew west at Seabrook and 150 were seen at Seabrook and c.300 were in the Botolph's Bridge area on the 7th. Later that month 864 flew west at Seabrook on the 29th June and 871 were logged there on the 6th July.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	22 nd Apr	2 nd May	-10	23 rd Apr	-1	18 th Apr 2015
Departure	8 th Oct	15 th Sep	23	13 th Sep	25	16 th Nov 1957

The last three-figure count involved 100 flying east over Folkestone on the 17th July and small numbers were seen frequently throughout August and in September until the 7th. There were notably late sightings, perhaps involving the same individual, at Lympne on the 4th and 8th October (there have been later records in just four years).

Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>
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Declining breeding summer visitor and passage migrant (A)

One was present in the Nickolls Quarry area from the 18th April to the 14th June and breeding may have occurred. Elsewhere one was seen at the Aldergate Bridge on the 23rd April, two were reported at Botolph's Bridge on the 26th April and one was at Hayton Lake on the 27th April.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	18 th Apr	22 nd Apr	-4	20 th Apr	-2	27 th Mar 2001
Departure	14 th Jun	8 th Aug	-55	27 th Jul	-43	28 th Sep 1969

There were no sightings in autumn.

Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>
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Breeding resident (C4)

A common and widespread species but the only counts received involved 140 in the Hillhurst Farm area on the 16th November and 57 at Radnor Park on the 30th November.

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

The only double-figure count in the early part of the year involved 17 at Cock Ash Lake on the 8th February. There was little sign of spring passage although three flew east at Abbotscliffe on the 26th March and two flew east there on the 1st April.

In autumn small numbers were noted on passage on several dates in October, with a larger count of 51 flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 4th November. There was a significant accumulation in the Botolph's Bridge area from late November, when 55 were present, increasing to 77 on the 4th December and peaking at 150 on the 12th December.

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

There were no counts of note from the early winter period and the only indication of spring passage involved 95 flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 1st April, whilst in autumn there was a count of 335 flying west there on the 4th November. In the late winter period a "large scale, presumed post-roost movement, which must have been in the 1,000s" was observed at West Hythe on the 27th October.

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

Singles were 'purring' at Lower Cock Ash (near Monks Horton) on the 27th April and at West Hythe on several dates between 9th May and 3rd July. Further singles were seen in gardens in Lympe on the 13th May and on Cliff Road, Hythe (near the Sene Valley Golf Course) on the 23rd May, whilst on the 22nd June one was seen flying across the fields by Botolph's Bridge heading towards Donkey Street.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	27 th Apr	6 th May	-9	23 rd May	-24	10 th Apr 1993
Departure	3 rd Jul	-	-	20 th Aug	-48	24 th Oct 1981*



Swift at Hythe Roughs (Brian Harper)



Woodpigeon at Hythe (Ian Roberts)

Collared Dove

Streptopelia decaocto

Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

The largest count received was of 19 at the Willop Sewage Works on the 10th October.

Small numbers that are sometimes noted at coastal sites in spring and autumn are thought to either involve dispersal or perhaps continuing immigration from the continent. In 2020 these included one at Abbotscliffe on the 3rd April, eight at Samphire Hoe on the 13th August and four at Abbotscliffe on the 4th November.

Water Rail

Rallus aquaticus

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

In the early winter period birds were present at Nickolls Quarry (at least two), the canal at Seabrook (at least two) and Gibbin's Brook, whilst in the late winter period there were records from the Willop Basin, Nickolls Quarry, the canal at Seabrook and Beachborough Lakes.

Moorhen

Gallinula chloropus

Breeding resident (A)

There were widespread records but no counts of note.

Coot

Fulica atra

Breeding resident and winter visitor (A)

In the early part of the year there were up to 12 at Cock Ash Lake and up to 23 at Nickolls Quarry. Single pairs bred at the Willop Basin, the Willop Sewage Works and at Horton Park Lakes. There were up to 12 at Cock Ash Lake in the latter part of the year, but a peak of just nine at Nickolls Quarry.



Turtle Dove at Lympne (Phil Sharp)



Coot nest at the Willop Sewage Works (Ian Roberts)

Little Grebe

Tachybaptus ruficollis

Breeding resident and winter visitor (A)

A pair bred at Cock Ash Lake, raising at least one juvenile, and a pair may have bred at the Willop Sewer (where a pair was present in June and 'trilling' was heard). Elsewhere birds were seen outside of the breeding season at Donkey Street, West Hythe dam, Botolph's Bridge, Horton Priory, Folkestone Racecourse and Samphire Hoe.

Great Crested Grebe

Podiceps cristatus

Breeding resident and winter visitor (A)

The largest counts again occurred in January, when 111 were seen on the sea off Seabrook on the 5th, increasing to a peak of 352 on the 20th, whilst the only notable count from elsewhere involved 30 flying west past Mill Point on the 14th January. Movements of 13 east past Mill Point on the 27th February and 16 east there on the 20th March may have involved migrants or just birds moving between feeding sites.

Away from the coast there were two at Cock Ash Lake in March, three pairs that over-summered at Nickolls Quarry (although no evidence of breeding was noted), one on the canal at Seabrook on the 24th June and one on the lake at Folkestone Racecourse in November. In the late winter period smaller numbers were noted offshore with a peak count of just 30 off the Willop Outfall on the 3rd December.

Slavonian Grebe

Podiceps auritus

Rare migrant and winter visitor (A)

One flew west past Samphire Hoe on the 12th December (S. Cutt). The 50th area record.

Oystercatcher

Haematopus ostralegus

Breeding species, passage migrant and winter visitor (A)

In the early winter period up to three were seen regularly on the shore between the Dymchurch Redoubt and the Willop Outfall, whilst three flew past Samphire Hoe on the 2nd January. The first breeding bird had returned to Nickolls Quarry by the 4th March and a pair were present from the 18th March, with three noted on the 19th April. The pair appeared to be nesting on the small island in the lake, and sightings continued into early June, though no young were noted. This pair were probably accountable for several sightings between the Dymchurch Redoubt and Hythe during the spring and early summer.

Five flew past Samphire Hoe on the 16th March but most spring passage was noted between mid-April and early May, including counts of four passing Seabrook on the 16th April, eight passing Mill Point/Seabrook on the 17th April, five passing Mill Point on the 27th April and eight passing there on the 3rd May. On the 30th May a flock of nine were seen circling over Seabrook.

Autumn passage was noted from the 12th July, when two flew past Samphire Hoe and small numbers were seen into August, with larger counts of ten flying past Hythe on the 1st August and eight flying past Seabrook on the 4th August. In the latter winter period up to eight were present on the shore between the Dymchurch Redoubt and the Willop Outfall.

Avocet

<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>

Scarce passage migrant (A)

Four flew east past Mill Point on the 25th March and one flew east past Hythe on the 18th April. The 71st and 72nd area records and a welcome return after a blank year in 2019.

Lapwing

<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>

Occasional breeding species (most recently in 2018, formerly numerous), also a winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Numbers in the early winter period were low, with peak counts of just 20 at Hillhurst Farm in January and 40 at the Willop Basin in February.

The first returning bird flew west over Abbotscliffe on the 25th June and further records from the cliffs involved singles there on the 2nd September and 17th October. A flock of 20 were seen near Summerhouse Hill on the 2nd October, whilst at the Willop Basin numbers increased to 92 on the 7th November, 140 on the 15th November, 142 on the 10th December and peaked at 500 on the 20th December. 29 were also seen at Capel-le-Ferne on the 30th December.

Golden Plover

<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>

Declining winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

The only records involved two flying in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 3rd May, one flying east there on the 3rd October and one flying west over Princes Parade on the 5th October. This was a poor total, even by recent standards, and the lowest since 2008.

Grey Plover

<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>

Passage migrant and occasional winter visitor (A)

One was seen at the Willop Outfall on the 13th March, whilst spring passage comprised four flying east past Mill Point on the 18th April, eight flying east past Hythe on the 28th April and three flying east past Mill Point on the 6th May. One that flew east at Samphire Hoe on the 1st July was only the second to be recorded in that month.

Ringed Plover

<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>

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

In the early winter period the regular roost at Folkestone Beach held a peak of 16 birds in January. Spring migrants were noted at Hythe Ranges on the 27th March, flying east past Hythe on the 28th April, flying east past Mill Point on the 4th May and at the Dymchurch Redoubt on the 10th May. There was an unusual mid-summer record of five at Folkestone Beach on the 3rd June.

In autumn one flew past Hythe on the 13th August, one was at Copt Point on the 23rd August, 15 flew past the Willop Outfall on the 25th August and one was at Fisherman's Beach (Hythe) on the 31st August. At least ten were present at Folkestone Beach from late August, increasing to a peak of 18 in November, whilst two flew past the Willop Outfall on the 3rd October and 13 were at Hythe Ranges on the 9th November.

Little Ringed Plover

Charadrius dubius

Formerly a breeding summer visitor and scarce passage migrant. Now a very rare vagrant but bred again in 2018 and 2019, and possibly 2020 (A)

Two arrived at Nickolls Quarry on the 31st March and were seen displaying in early April. A third bird was also present on the 4th April but not seen subsequently. The pair remained until the 10th April but only one was noted thereafter. This individual remained until the end of May and it is possible that the other bird was sitting unseen on a nest but no young were seen and the area was increasingly heavily disturbed due to building works (B. Harper, I. A. Roberts).



Great Crested Grebe at Nickolls Quarry (Ian Roberts)



Little Ringed Plover at Nickolls Quarry (Ian Roberts)

Whimbrel

Numenius phaeopus

Passage migrant, mainly in spring (A)

The first, one flying east past Seabrook on the 27th March was the second earliest record and only the second to be recorded in March. There were no further sightings until the 15th April, when one flew east past Hythe, but almost daily sightings then until the end of the month, then less regular records until the 13th May. Spring passage involved a good total of 251, compared to the mean for the previous decade of 157, and counts included 73 flying east past Hythe/Mill Point on the 18th April, 35 flying east past Hythe on the 21st April, 18 flying east there on the 23rd, 30 flying east there on the 24th and 29 flying east past Mill Point on the 6th May.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference +/-	Prev. ten year mean	Difference +/-	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019				
Arrival	27 th Mar	12 th Apr	-16	12 th Apr	-14	25 th Mar 2011
Departure	12 th Oct	27 th Jul	77	25 th Aug	48	12 th Nov 2013

Autumn passage was typically light and involved singles flying inland over Copt Point on the 19th June, west over Hythe on the 17th July, west there on the 12th August, west past Copt Point on the 25th August and west past Samphire Hoe on the 26th August, whilst two late birds flew west past Samphire Hoe on the 12th October (there had only ever been one later record).

Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>
<p>Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)</p> <p>Up to two were seen regularly in the Willop Basin area between January and the 10th April. Spring passage involved a total of 17 heading east past coastal sites between the 22nd March and 6th May, with a peak of five passing Mill Point on the 4th May.</p> <p>The only autumn records involved one flying over Hythe Ranges on the 16th July and one flying west past Samphire Hoe on the 16th November. None were noted at the Willop Basin in the late winter period.</p>	
Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>
<p>Passage migrant, mainly in spring (A)</p> <p>A very poor spring passage involved 20 flying east past Mill Point on the 18th April and two flying east there on the 25th April. The total of just 22 was well below the mean for the previous ten years of 170 and the lowest since 2009.</p> <p>Autumn produced one flying west past the Willop Outfall and 12 flying west past Copt Point on the 25th August, whilst one was seen in Folkestone Harbour on the 22nd December.</p>	
Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>
<p>Rare passage migrant (A)</p> <p>A flock of four flew east past Mill Point on the 6th May (I. A. Roberts). The 33rd area record.</p>	
Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>
<p>Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)</p> <p>Birds were present in the early winter period at the Willop Outfall, Dymchurch Redoubt, Hythe, Battery Point and Folkestone Harbour with peak counts of 7 at Hythe in January and 14 at the Willop Outfall in February. There was a pronounced increase during April, which presumably included some migrant individuals, and counts of 16 at Hythe on the 7th and a very good total 61 at the Willop Outfall on the 9th were recorded. There have only been two larger counts, both of which were in November 2012.</p> <p>The only bird seen moving up-channel in spring flew past Mill Point on the 7th May. The same sites were occupied in the late winter period, with a peak of 11 at Hythe in November.</p>	
Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>
<p>Passage migrant (A)</p> <p>Two flew east past Mill Point on the 25th April, a very good total of 47 flew past the Willop Outfall on the 25th August and one flew past the Willop Outfall on the 3rd October. There have only been two larger counts (in February 2006 and May 2017).</p>	
Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>
<p>Rare migrant and winter visitor (A)</p> <p>One was seen at the Willop Sewage Works on the 27th August (B. Harper). The 34th area record.</p>	

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Up to 11 were seen regularly at the Willop Outfall between January and mid-April, with a larger count of 30 there on the 12th February. Spring migrants involved a record count of 100 at the Dymchurch Redoubt on the 11th April, five flying east past Hythe on the 28th April and three flying east past Mill Point on the 7th May. Small numbers were again noted at the Willop Outfall from mid-October.

The previous record count involved 83 at Hythe Ranges on the 17th April 2011.

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

There were no sightings from the early winter period but there was a reasonable spring passage, including 17 flying east past Mill Point on the 20th March, 10 flying east there on the 18th April, 19 flying east past Hythe on the 28th April and 22 flying east past Mill Point on the 4th May. The total of 71 was a little above the mean for the previous decade of 62.

In August five flew east past Samphire Hoe on the 30th August, six flew west past the Willop Outfall on the 17th September, one was seen at Samphire Hoe on the 27th September, two were at the Willop Basin on the 15th November and five flew west past the Willop Outfall on the 30th November.

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

In the early winter period up to three were frequenting the rock groynes between Hythe and Battery Point until the 24th April, see photograph on page 6.

Departure/Arrival	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Departure	24 th Apr	18 th May	-24	6 th May	-12	18 th May 2019
Arrival	30 th Oct	8 th Nov	-9	31 st Oct	-1	30 th Sep 1984

Up to two were again between Hythe and Battery Point from the 30th October, two were seen on the East Pier at Folkestone Harbour on the 14th November and one was seen on the seawall at Samphire Hoe on the 14th December.



Turnstone at Hythe (Ian Roberts)



Purple Sandpiper at Hythe (Elliot Ranford)

Woodcock

Scolopax rusticola

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

In the early winter period there was a single at Thorn Wood and up to two at Folks' Wood and Castle Hill.

An autumn migrant was seen at Abbotscliffe on the 5th November but the only wintering record involved one in Kiln Wood in late December.

Jack Snipe

Lymnocyrtus minimus

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

At least one was present at the Willop Basin in the early winter period and three were seen there in the late winter period. Elsewhere one was seen at Donkey Street on the 4th December.

Snipe

Gallinago gallinago

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

The largest numbers were, as usual, in the Willop Basin area, where was a peak of 50 in early January. Elsewhere counts of 9 at Abbotscliffe in January and ten at Nickolls Quarry in March were of note.

In autumn three were seen arriving in off the sea on the 27th September. In the late winter period there were up to 65 at the Willop Basin and small numbers at Donkey Street, Nickolls Quarry and Folkestone Racecourse.

Red-necked Phalarope

Phalaropus lobatus

Very rare vagrant (A)

A juvenile was present at a private site near Donkey Street from the 29th November to the 4th December (I. A. Roberts, B. Harper). The second area record, following a juvenile seen off Folkestone on the 29th August 2009.

Common Sandpiper

Actitis hypoleucos

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

The first arrival was on the 18th April, when there was one at Samphire Hoe and six at Nickolls Quarry, decreasing to three there the next day and one on the 20th. Further singles were seen at Botolph's Bridge and the Dymchurch Redoubt on the 23rd, with four at the latter site the next day. Up to three were then noted at Nickolls Quarry on several dates between the 25th April and the 12th May. The spring total of 29 bird/days was a significant improvement on the previous year (five) and mean for the previous decade (13).

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	18 th Apr	28 th Apr	-10	19 th Apr	-1	4 th Mar 2013*
Departure	22 nd Sep	10 th Oct	-18	23 rd Sep*	-1	Several wintered

Autumn passage by contrast was rather light, with singles on the canal at Seabrook on the 6th July, at Donkey Street on the 7th July and at Samphire Hoe on several dates between the 16th August and 22nd September.

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

At least one was wintering in the Nickolls Quarry area in January and February, also visiting a small pool on Hythe Ranges. Up to four were present at Nickolls Quarry from mid-March, increasing to five on the 3rd April, six on the 4th April and peaking at seven on the 10th April, before numbers dwindled and the last was noted on the 26th April.

Returning migrants in July involved singles flying over Samphire Hoe on the 12th July and over Hythe and Westenhanger on the 31st July.

At least two were wintering in the Donkey Street/Botolph's Bridge/Nickolls Quarry area from October until the end of the year.



Red-necked Phalarope at Donkey Street (Brian Harper)



Common Sandpiper at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

In the early winter period at least two were present at Folkestone Harbour and up to eight were at Willop Basin. Spring passage involved singles at Nickolls Quarry on the 31st March and 4th April, three flying east past Mill Point on the 18th April and one at Hythe Ranges on the 16th May.

At the latter end of the year there were up to four at the Willop Basin and six at Folkestone Harbour.

Rare passage migrant (A)

One was heard calling as it flew over Nickolls Quarry in the early hours of the 22nd May (I. A. Roberts). The 23rd area record.

Scarce passage migrant (A)

One was seen at Nickolls Quarry on the 16th April, two flew east past Mill Point on the 4th May and one flew west past Hythe on the 18th August. A fairly typical year; the mean for the last decade is 2.8 birds.

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Only small numbers were noted in the early winter period, with a peak of just 22 off Samphire Hoe on the 27th January. A light spring passage included counts of 11 east past Mill Point on the 27th February, 10 east there on the 5th April and 20 east there on the 7th May.

Numbers were again low in the late winter period, with counts of 40 west past Mill Point on the 31st October, 25 west past Seabrook on the 13th November and 20 west past Samphire Hoe on the 12th December.



Redshank at Folkestone Harbour (Phil Smith)



Kittiwake at Folkestone Harbour (Elliot Ranford)

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Large numbers were present in the early winter period but no noteworthy counts were received. Spring passage was noted between mid-March and early May, with counts of 77 east past Mill Point on the 23rd March, a very good total of 603 east past Hythe Ranges on the 27th March and 112 east past Hythe on the 23rd April. The peak count was the second largest ever spring movement (after 650 east past Mill Point on the 10th May 1991). There were no counts of note from the latter half of the year.

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

There were no sightings in the early winter period. Spring passage comprised two east past Mill Point on the 24th March, one east there on the 18th April and one east there on the 28th April. The only sighting in the latter half of the year involved one flying west past the Willop Outfall on the 11th December. A poor year compared to mean for the previous decade of 21 birds.

Increasing winter visitor and passage migrant, scarce in summer (A)

Large numbers were present as normal in the early winter period but the only significant count came from Nickolls Quarry where there were 300 on the 3rd January. There was a pronounced spring passage between the 20th March and the 7th May, with at least 91 logged heading east, including a count of 33 past Hythe on the 23rd April.

As usual very few were noted between mid-May and the end of June before numbers began to build again. The first three figure count involved 350 at Copt Point on the 16th July, whilst “far above 500, maybe up to 1,000” were present there on the 22nd July. It was estimated that over 4,000 individuals visited Copt Point over between the 29th August and the 2nd September, based on the proportions of colour-ringed birds noted in the flocks over this five day period, whilst 1,000 were present there on the 5th September.

Large numbers remained at Copt Point until the end of the year, whilst elsewhere at least 557 were seen in the Hythe area on the 25th September, 384 flew past the Willop Outfall on the 3rd October, 1,350 flew over West Hythe dam on the 24th October and 340 were at Hythe on the 22nd December.

Colour-ringed birds from at least eight countries were noted during the year.

Common Gull

Larus canus

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Large numbers were present in the early winter but the only notable count received was of 230 in the Summerhouse Hill area on the 24th January. Up-channel passage was noted between mid-March and late April, with counts including 48 past Mill Point on the 20th March, 30 east there on the 22nd March, 35 east there on the 23rd March, 61 east past Hythe Ranges on the 27th March and 71 east past Hythe on the 23rd April. Large numbers were also present in the late winter period but no notable counts were received.



Mediterranean Gulls at Folkestone Harbour (Phil Smith)



Common Gulls at Cock Ash Lake (Ian Roberts)

Great Black-backed Gull

Larus marinus

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

The only counts of note involved 21 at Samphire Hoe on the 1st July and 50 flying east there on the 22nd August.

Glaucous Gull

Larus hyperboreus

Rare migrant and winter visitor (A)

A first-winter individual was seen along the seafront at Hythe on the 13th and 14th November (S. McMinn, I. A. Roberts). The 29th area record.

Herring Gull

Larus argentatus

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Large numbers were present across the area throughout the year, but no notable counts were received.

The two areas that were identified during the roof-nesting gull survey last year as holding the greatest concentration of breeding birds were again visited in 2020. The numbers of apparently occupied nests recorded at these sites suggested that the population continues to increase: 114 nests at the Channel Tunnel Terminal (compared to 87 in 2019) and 135 nests at the Park Farm Industrial Estate (compared to 106 in 2019).

Caspian Gull

Larus cachinnans

Rare visitor, mostly in winter (A)

A juvenile was seen at Folkestone Beach on the 30th August (T. Donegan) and a first-winter was at the Willop Basin on the 11th December (B. Harper, I. A. Roberts). The 16th and 17th area records, all of which have occurred since 2006.

Yellow-legged Gull

Larus michahellis

Rare migrant (A)

An adult was seen at the Willop Basin on the 7th December (I. A. Roberts). The 27th area record.

Lesser Black-backed Gull

Larus fuscus

Breeding species, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Small numbers were noted in January and February before an increase was noted in March and April, but few counts were received.

The two areas that were identified during the roof-nesting gull survey last year as holding the greatest concentration of Herring Gulls were again visited in 2020, and this revealed three apparently occupied Lesser Black-backed Gull nests at the Channel Tunnel Terminal (compared to four in 2019) and four at the Park Farm Industrial Estate (compared to one in 2019). At least one other pair was thought to be nesting locally (in the Hythe area).

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

Sandwich Tern

Thalasseus sandvicensis

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

The first sighting was relatively late (the latest arrival since 2016), but did involve a total of 23 flying east past Mill Point on the 20th March. The only other records in March involved one off Hythe and four off Mill Point on the 28th. In April there were almost daily sightings from the 3rd and counts included 18 flying east past Mill Point on the 4th, 180 flying east past Hythe/Mill Point on the 5th, 87 flying east past Mill Point on the 6th, 62 flying east there on the 17th and 18th, 36 flying east past Hythe on the 23rd and 54 flying east past Mill Point on the 27th. Passage continued into early May, with 27 flying east past Mill Point on the 4th and 32 east there on the 7th.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference +/-	Prev. ten year mean	Difference +/-	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019				
Arrival	20 th Mar	2 nd Mar	18	9 th Mar	11	13 th Jan 2018
Departure	20 th Dec	16 th Nov	34	20 th Oct	61	27 th Dec 1955

Autumn counts were very modest, with 27 flying west past Samphire Hoe on the 29th July, 21 flying west there on the 26th August and 28 flying past the Willop Outfall on the 3rd October. Small numbers persisted into November, with ones and twos on several dates, and even into December, when two were seen at the Willop Outfall on the 12th and 20th. There had only ever been two previous records in this month: one at Mill Point on the 6th December 1989 and one at Hythe on the 27th December 1955. It does appear to be becoming more regular in the winter months, with 44% of the sightings between December and February having been logged in the last four years.

Little Tern

Sternula albifrons

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

One flew east past Mill Point on the relatively early date of the 17th April and one was seen off Hythe on the 30th April. May produced four flying east past Hythe/Mill Point on the 6th and five off Hythe/Princes Parade on the 11th.

The total of 11 was an improvement on the single sighting last year but still considerably short of the mean for the previous decade of 26.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	17 th Apr	25 th Apr	-8	26 th Apr	-9	11 th Apr 2016
Departure	-	-	-	-	-	16 th Sep 1999

Common Tern

Sterna hirundo

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

The first, one off Seabrook on the 29th March, was the earliest ever and only the second March record (after four were seen off Seabrook on the 30th March 2018). The next sighting involved three off Hythe on the 7th April and larger numbers were noted from mid-April, with 24 flying east past Mill Point on the 17th April, 237 Common/Arctic Terns flying east there on the 18th April and 85 Common/Arctic Terns flying east there on the 6th May.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	29 th Mar	1 st Apr	-3	10 th Apr	-12	29 th Mar 2020
Departure	3 rd Oct	27 th Oct	-24	27 th Sep	6	30 th Oct 2007

Only small numbers were noted in autumn, with the last two passing the Willop Outfall on the 3rd October.

Arctic Tern

Sterna paradisaea

Passage migrant (A)

The only confirmed record related to eight flying east past Mill Point on the 18th April, although the largest *sterna* tern movements of the spring on the 18th April and 6th May comprised a significant proportion of birds only able to be identified as Common/Arctic Terns due to the difficulties of identification at distance. There were no records in autumn.

Great Skua

Stercorarius skua

Passage migrant (A)

In January singles were seen off Mill Point on the 2nd and Samphire Hoe on the 5th. Spring passage comprised a total of just seven birds: two on the sea off Mill Point on the 27th April, two east past Hythe/Mill Point on the 28th April and singles flying east past Mill Point on the 29th April, 3rd May and 7th May.

In the latter half of the year five flew west past Mill Point on the 31st October and one flew west there on the 30th November. After two very good years, 2020 saw a return to a more normal level of records.

Arctic Skua

Stercorarius parasiticus

Passage migrant (A)

The only records in spring involved two flying east past Mill Point on the 18th April, one east past Hythe on the 25th April, two east past Mill Point on the 28th April, two east past Hythe on the 30th April and two east past Mill Point on the 4th May. The total of nine was an improvement on last year but still below the mean for the previous decade of 13.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference +/-	Earliest/Latest ever
	2012	2019	+/-			
Arrival	18 th Apr	4 th Apr	14	15 th Apr	3	14 th Mar 2016*
Departure	2 nd Dec	15 th Nov	17	17 th Oct	46	2 nd Dec 2020

In autumn singles were seen off Copt Point on the 25th August and Samphire Hoe on the 26th, 29th and 30th August, with two off the Willop Outfall on the 3rd October, two off Samphire Hoe on the 12th October and the latest ever sighting of one flying west past Seabrook on the 2nd December. This was the first record in this month, with the previous latest sighting being one flying west past Copt Point on the 21st November 2002. The autumn total of nine was less than half of the mean for the previous ten years of 19.

Guillemot

Uria aalge

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Numbers in the early winter period were low with a peak of just 150 Guillemots/Razorbills flying west past Mill Point on the 14th January and the same was true in the late winter period, with the exception of 709 Guillemots/Razorbills flying west past Samphire Hoe on the 12th December.

Razorbill

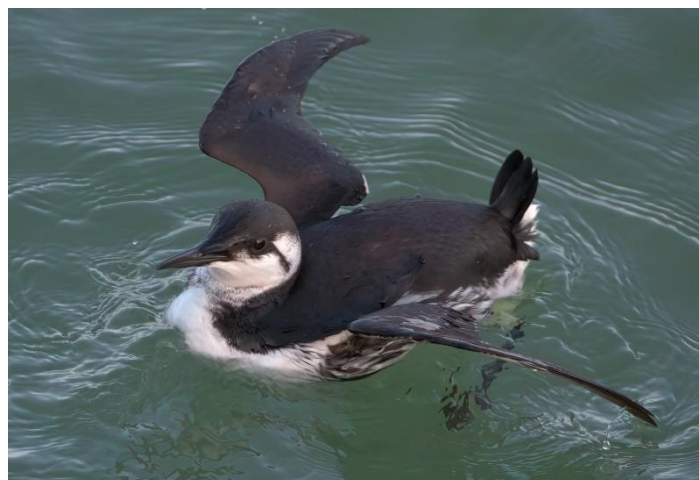
Alca torda

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Small numbers were noted on several dates in January and February with a larger count of 40 flying west past the Willop Outfall on the 31st January. Small numbers were noted again from October, with larger counts of 30 off Mill Point on the 30th November, 20 off Sandgate on the 7th December, 50 off Folkestone Pier on the 10th December and 60 flying west past the Willop Outfall on the 11th December.



Glaucous Gull at Hythe (Phil Smith)



Guillemot at Folkestone Harbour (Elliot Ranford)

Red-throated Diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>
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Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Movements in the early winter period included 70 flying east past Hythe on the 2nd January, 148 flying west past Seabrook on the 3rd January, 260 flying west past Hythe on the 5th January and 83 flying west past Seabrook on the 8th January.

A light spring passage between early March and mid-May including counts of 24 flying east past Samphire Hoe on the 7th March, 24 flying east past Mill Point on the 20th March, 40 flying east there on the 23rd March, 22 east there the next day and 22 east there on the 5th April.

Departure/Arrival	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Latest/Earliest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Departure	14 th May	25 th Apr	19	2 nd May	12	6 th June 2006
Arrival	17 th Sep	22 nd Sep	-5	4 th Oct	-17	7 th Sep 1997

Counts in the latter half of the year were low, with 30 flying west past the Willop Outfall on the 11th December, 25 flying west past Samphire Hoe on the 12th December and 32 flying east there on the 13th December being of note.

Black-throated Diver	<i>Gavia arctica</i>
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Scarce passage migrant, mainly in spring, and occasional winter visitor (A)

In the early winter period one was seen off Samphire Hoe on the 5th January, whilst the only spring migrant involved one flying east past Mill Point on the 5th April. In the late winter period one was seen off Samphire Hoe on the 2nd December and singles, perhaps the same individual, were seen off Hythe on the 10th December and Princes Parade on the 12th December. The total of five was slightly less than the mean for previous ten years of 6.2.

Great Northern Diver	<i>Gavia immer</i>
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Rare migrant and winter visitor (A)

Singles were seen flying west past Samphire Hoe on the 12th December (S. Cutt) and off Sandgate on the 31st December (B. Harper *et al*) , with this latter bird lingering into 2021. The 37th and 38th area records.

Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>
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Breeding visitor and passage migrant (A)

Birds had begun to arrive back at the cliffs from late 2019 and three or four pairs bred at both Capel-le-Ferne and Samphire Hoe.

Spring passage was light and the only double-figure count involved 30 flying east past Mill Point on the 20th March.

Very few were noted in summer but small numbers were seen regularly again from August and birds began to return to the colonies in December.

Sooty Shearwater	<i>Ardena grisea</i>
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Rare passage migrant (A)

Two flew west past the Willop Outfall on the 25th August (B. Harper) and one flew west past Mill Point on the 31st October (I. A. Roberts). The 48th and 49th area records.

Manx Shearwater

<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>

Scarce passage migrant (A)

Six flew east past Mill Point on the 29th April, three flew west past Samphire Hoe on the 29th July and one flew west there on the 2nd October. An additional six shearwaters, thought probably to be Manx, flew west past Samphire Hoe on the 29th July.

Balearic Shearwater

<i>Puffinus mauretanicus</i>

Rare passage migrant (A)

One flew east past Samphire Hoe on the 22nd August 2020 (S. Cutt) and two flew west there on the 30th August (S. Cutt). The 39th and 40th area records.

White Stork

<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>

Very rare vagrant (A)

One was reported flying north-east over Lympe on the 26th April (per RBA). The 13th area record.

Gannet

<i>Morus bassanus</i>

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

The largest count from the early winter period was 54 off Samphire Hoe on the 5th January and spring produced movements of 85 east past Mill Point on the 27th February, 100 east there on the 5th April, 180 east there on the 18th April and 92 east there on the 7th May.

Small numbers were noted between June and September, before an increase was noted in October, with 52 flying west Seabrook on the 6th October, 157 flying west there on the 11th October and 580 flying west past Mill Point on the 31st October. November produced counts of 100 west past on the 13th November, 75 west past Folkestone Pier the following day and 100 off Samphire Hoe on the 22nd November, whilst in December 150 flew east past Samphire Hoe on the 13th, 300 were feeding off Samphire Hoe on the 24th and 100 were seen off Seabrook on the 31st.



Red-throated Diver at Folkestone Pier (Ian Roberts)



Gannet at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)

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

Up to two were seen regularly at Samphire Hoe during January, whilst two were seen off Mill Point on the 23rd January. One was seen off Seabrook on the 20th, 21st and 26th March, whilst four were on the sea off Mill Point on the 4th April, with one there on the 17th April and two there on the 18th April, and two off Sandgate on the 19th April. In May one was seen off Seabrook on the 17th.

There were no sightings in June or July, but in August one flew west past Samphire Hoe on the 22nd and three flew west there on the 26th and 30th August. One was seen at Samphire Hoe on several dates between September and December, whilst one flew east past Mill Point on the 5th December and one flew west past Folkestone Harbour on the 31st December.

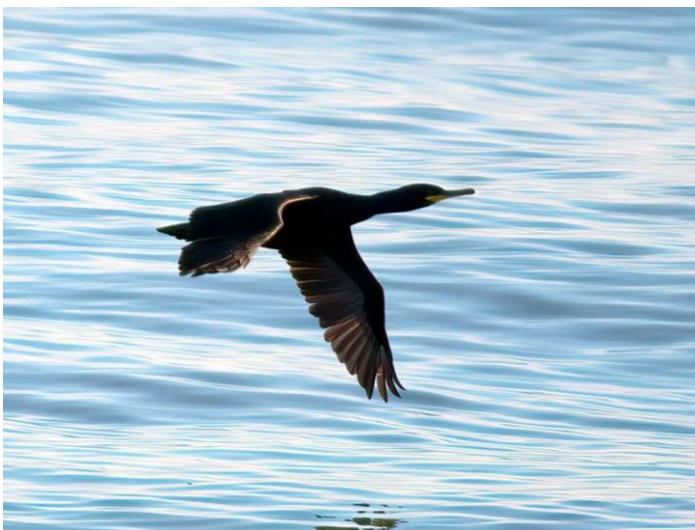
Cormorant

Phalacrocorax carbo

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

Large numbers were again present in the early winter period, including 2,700 flying east past the Dymchurch Redoubt on the 1st January and 800 flying west past Samphire Hoe on the 25th January.

Numbers increased again towards the end of the year, with 1,005 flying east past the Willop Outfall on the 3rd December, 1,000 passing the Willop Outfall on the 20th December and “thousands moving in both directions” off Hythe on the 24th December.



Shag at Folkestone Harbour (Elliot Ranford)



Cormorant at Samphire Hoe (Martin Collins)

Spoonbill

Platalea leucorodia

Very rare vagrant (A)

One flew east past Mill Point on the 3rd May (C. Gillard). The 13th area record.

Night Heron

Nycticorax nycticorax

Very rare vagrant (A)

An adult seen at Princes Parade on the 3rd and 4th June (M. Whybrow, I. A. Roberts, B. Harper *et al*) was the third area record.

Cattle Egret*Bubulcus ibis*

Very rare vagrant (A)

Two flew east past Copt Point on the 27th April (D. Featherbe). The third area record.

Grey Heron*Ardea cinerea*

Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

There were 12 occupied nests at Lympne Park Wood.

There was some evidence of passage, including one seen arriving in off the sea at Seabrook on the 4th March and one flying east a long way offshore from Mill Point on the 23rd March. In the latter half of the year one arrived in off the sea at Seabrook on the 7th July, two arrived in off the sea there on the 22nd July and two flew high to the west there on the 30th August. Further singles arrived in off the sea at Capel Battery on the 11th September and were seen flying west past Seabrook on the 25th September and 30th September.



Night Heron at Princes Parade (Russ Blackman)



Grey Heron at West Hythe dam (ian Roberts)

Great White Egret*Ardea alba*

Rare migrant and winter visitor (A)

The only record from the first half of the year involved one seen at West Hythe on the 19th February (I. & M. Marshall).

In autumn singles were seen arriving in off the sea at Capel Battery on the 11th September (D. A. Gibson) and at Abbotscliffe on the 12th October (I. A. Roberts, P. Edmondson), whilst one flew east over the Aldergate Bridge on the 7th October, with presumably the same individual at Donkey Street on the 10th October. Three were seen near Abbot's Court Farm on the 16th October, with presumably one or more of these noted at Botolph's Bridge, Donkey Street and Selby Farm area intermittently during November and December (B. Harper, C. Gillard, I. A. Roberts).

Little Egret*Egretta garzetta*

Non-breeding visitor at any time of year, now regular in winter and on passage (A)

In the early winter period there were singles at Botolph's Bridge, Nickolls Quarry, Broadmead Village and Samphire Hoe, with two at Samphire Hoe on the 4th January, five at Nickolls Quarry on the 15th March and an excellent count of 11 at the Aldergate Bridge on the 26th January (this was the second largest total, following 12 flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 5th July 2017).

Singles were seen at Abbotscliffe and Donkey Street in May, whilst three flew east at Abbotscliffe on the 1st June. Singles were noted at Hythe, Seabrook, Copt Point and Samphire Hoe in July/August, with two at Abbotscliffe on the 29th July.

In the late winter period ones and twos were present at West Hythe dam, Botolph's Bridge, the canal at Palmarsh, Hythe, Broadmead Village, Mill Point and Abbotscliffe, with larger counts of three at West Hythe and Donkey Street, four at the Aldergate Bridge and five at Samphire Hoe.



Great White Egret at Botolph's Bridge (Ian Roberts)



Little Egret at Hythe (Glenn Tutton)

Osprey

Pandion haliaetus

Scarce passage migrant (A)

One was seen flying east and then out to sea at Hythe on the 14th July. There have now been 87 sightings since 1990 (an average of 2.8 per year), but only four of these were in the month of July.

Honey Buzzard

Pernis apivorus

Scarce passage migrant (A)

Singles were seen arriving in off the sea at Folkestone Warren on the 25th May, flying west over at Samphire Hoe on the 13th June, flying east over Lympne on the 26th June and flying over Cheriton on the 12th July, whilst one lingered at Horn Street between the 11th and 13th August.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	25 th May	18 th Jun	-24	25 th May	0	3 rd May 2013
Departure	11 th Aug	21 st Sep	-41	7 th Sep	-25	15 th Oct 1995

A total of 137 have now been recorded in the area years since 1990 (with a mean of 4.5 per year), so the total of five was fairly typical.

Sparrowhawk

Accipiter nisus

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Ones and twos were seen at many sites throughout the year, see photograph on page 15. The only the suggestion of any migration related to three passing over Joyes Road, Folkestone on the 4th April, a day of marked raptor passage.

Very rare vagrant (A/C3)

One was seen flying high over the southern end of Brockhill Country Park on the 4th April, a day of marked raptor passage (S. McMinn). This was only the 14th area record but there have now been seven in the last ten years.



Honey Buzzard at Samphire Hoe (Jamie Partridge)



Sparrowhawk at Hythe (Glenn Tutton)

Passage migrant and winter visitor. Possibly bred in 2020 (A)

The first record of the year was at Samphire Hoe, where one was watched arriving in off the sea on the 5th February. At Nickolls Quarry an adult male roosted on the 15th March, with presumably the same bird seen departing from its roost site on the 18th March. A female was the seen hunting over the site on the 27th March and a pair were present on the 31st March. This pair remained until the end of May and engaged in courtship behaviour, food-passing and apparent nest building in a small reed-bed.

On the 22nd May one appeared to be carrying food into the reed-bed, however no young were seen and no birds at all were noted after the end of May. There were active construction works at the site at the time, increasingly close to the presumed nest site and it seems likely that they were disturbed and deserted, or more unlikely perhaps departed unseen with fledged young. This pair were also seen at Botolph's Bridge, Donkey Street and Willop Basin in April and May.

Elsewhere one flew over Joyes Road, Folkestone on the 4th April, an immature/female was at Horton Priory on the 20th August, a male was hunting at Abbot's Court Farm on the 18th October and an immature/female flew over Samphire Hoe on the 6th November.

Scarce migrant and winter visitor (A)

A 'ring-tail' was seen at Abbotscliffe on the 1st September (M. D. Kennett) and a male flew in off the sea at Copt Point on the 22nd October (D. A. Gibson). The 50th and 51st area records. Despite its national decline there have now been sightings in the last 11 consecutive years.

Regular non-breeding visitor, mainly in spring (A, C3)

The first sighting of the year involved two flying north over Folkestone on the 19th February, whilst in March one flew over West Hythe on the 25th and two were seen over Cheriton on the 27th March. April produced a series of records from the 4th, with sightings on nine dates in the month, mostly singles but with three flying east over Park Farm (Folkestone) on the 10th, two at Lympne on the 23rd and three that lingered for some time in the Copt Point/Folkestone Warren area on the 24th.

There were records on six further dates in May, with up to 12 noted across the area on the 9th, whilst in early June four were seen over Hythe Roughs on the 1st and an excellent total of up to 18 flew east over Hythe on the 2nd, when smaller numbers were noted over Folkestone.

Another was seen flying east over Folkestone on the 26th June but the latter half of the year produced just six singles: one flying east over Palmarsh on the 10th July, one at Stanford North on two dates in July, one at Abbotscliffe on the 11th August, one at Horton Priory on the 20th August and one at Round Down on the 5th December.

The total of 37 sightings, which excludes any obvious duplicates, was the highest to date.



Red Kite at Folkestone Warren (Ian Roberts)



Marsh Harrier at Donkey Street (Ian Roberts)

Very rare vagrant (A, C3)

An immature flew north over Hythe on the 30th (I. A. Roberts), having earlier passed over Littlestone and being seen at Sandwich Bay the following day, see photograph on page 10. It was known to not to have originated from the Isle of Wight reintroduction programme (as all of these birds are fitted with satellite transmitters) and thought to have been of continental origin, with unusually high numbers also being noted in northern France at this time. The fourth area record.

Very rare vagrant (A)

One was seen at Folkestone Racecourse on the 10th April (P. Sharp). The 15th area record.

Formerly scarce, but has bred since 2001 and continues to increase, also a passage migrant (A)

There were widespread records throughout the year. Some indication of passage migration was evident in spring, including three flying east over Seabrook on the 6th March, one arriving in off the sea there on the 20th March, five passing over there on the 23rd March, five over Hythe on the 2nd April and good numbers on the 4th April, a day of marked raptor passage across the area, with three over Folkestone, seven over Brockhill Country Park and a total of 13 along Hythe Roughs.

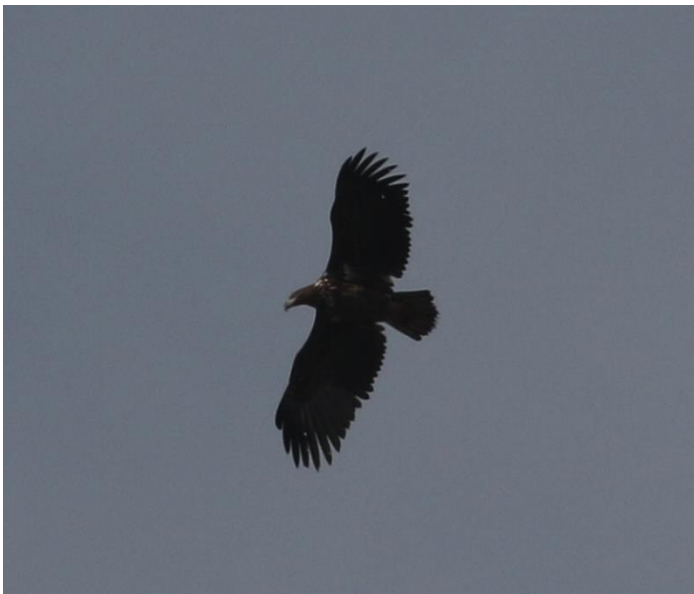
There was little suggestion of passage in autumn, although six flew west over Horn Street on the 10th September and three flew west over Seabrook on the 12th September.

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

All records came from the Abbot's Court Farm/Aldergate Bridge area, where there were singles on the 12th February, 3rd March, 22nd and 27th September and 2nd and 25th November.

Breeding resident (A)

There were records from numerous woodland sites. The only sighting of note involved fledged young seen at Folks' Wood in June.



White-tailed Eagle at Hythe (Ian Roberts)



Barn Owl at Abbots Court Farm (Brian Harper)

Declining resident breeding species (C)

There were records from the Willop Sewage Works, Selby Farm, the Summerhouse Hill area and Church Hougham during the year.

Rare passage migrant, has bred on at least one occasion (A)

The breeding pair from last year were again present at the undisclosed site in January and February but were not able to be looked for subsequently. There was also a record again from Nickolls Quarry, where one was roosting in the hedge adjacent to Botolph's Bridge Road on the 27th March (I. A. Roberts).



Tawny Owl at Folks Wood (Phil Sharp)



Little Owl at Selby Farm, Lower Wall Road (Brian Harper)

Passage migrant (A)

Singles were seen near Selby Farm on the 6th February, Samphire Hoe on the 30th March, Donkey Street on the 27th August, Abbotscliffe on the 6th September and Princes Parade on the 28th October. The total of five was a little lower than the mean for the previous 10 years of 7.

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

Resident birds were recorded from various points along the canal between the Aldergate Bridge and Seabrook, and also from the canal cutting between the West Hythe dam and the seawall. The only sightings elsewhere were singles in Folkestone Harbour on the 6th September and at the Willop Basin on the 29th November.

Formerly bred, now a rare passage migrant (A)

One was seen at Abbotscliffe on the 8th May (P. Edmondson, I. A. Roberts), whilst there were up to three in autumn: singles at Abbotscliffe on the 6th to 7th September (I. A. Roberts, P. Holt, P. Smith *et al*), see photograph on page 18, on the 10th September (possibly the same individual) (P. Edmondson) and on the 29th September (P. Edmondson). There have now been 28 records since 1980 and the total of four is the highest since 1984 (which also produced four).

Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

Widely recorded but there were no notable counts received of resident birds. Autumn passage comprised up to 21 birds, all singletons apart from two seen arriving in off the sea at Capel Battery on the 11th September, two at Abbotscliffe on the 13th September, three at Nickolls Quarry on the 21st September and three seen arriving in off the sea at Copt Point on the 11th October.



Short-eared Owl at Abbotscliffe (Ian Roberts)



Wryneck at Abbotscliffe (Phil Smith)

Breeding resident (A)

Widely recorded, but with no counts or occurrences of note received.

Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

Widely recorded. No counts of note were received and there were no obvious indications of passage.

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant (A).

The only record from the first half of the year related to one seen at Hythe seafront on the 11th February. In the latter half singles were seen flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 28th September, hunting Skylarks at Donkey Street on the 4th October (with perhaps the same bird at Selby Farm on the 6th October), at West Hythe on the 24th and 31st October, flying west along Hythe seafront on the 3rd November and at Seabrook on the 25th November.

The previous decade saw a mean of 6.7 records per year so the total of eight was a little above average.

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

There were no records in April for only the second time since 2008 and the first sightings were not until the 8th May, when one was seen at Westenhangar and two were seen along the Aldington Road.

Further singles were seen in May at Nickolls Quarry on the 10th, Seabrook on the 16th, Lympe Park Wood on the 17th, flying north over Hythe on the 21st and at Nickolls Quarry on the 24th, whilst two were seen arriving in off the sea on the 26th.

A pair bred again at Lympe Park Wood, where a juvenile was seen on the 28th August, and these birds were probably responsible for most of the summer records on the marsh and adjacent areas. There were also regular sightings in the Horn Street/Seabrook area where breeding has been suspected in recent years.

Elsewhere singles were seen at Park Farm, central Folkestone and Church Hougham in June and Hythe and Samphire Hoe in July.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference +/-	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019				
Arrival	8 th May	25 th Apr	13	23 rd Apr	15	9 th Apr 1998
Departure	1 st Oct	13 th Sep	18	1 st Oct	0	22 nd Oct 2001

Autumn records involved one seen flying in off the sea at Princes Parade on the 30th August and at Abbotscliffe on the 1st and 2nd September. The last was seen near Lympe Church on the 1st October.

Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
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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 and a pair bred at Samphire Hoe, where at least one juvenile was seen in July, whilst another pair probably bred at Capel-le-Ferne but no young were noted. Away from the cliffs there were singles at several sites on the marsh between January and March, at Seabrook on the 26th March, at Hythe Ranges on the 4th April, at Hythe on the 5th April, at Seabrook on the 17th April and at Lympe on the 22nd April.

One was seen carrying prey over Cheriton on the 21st April and 10th May was perhaps nesting nearby and one was seen at Hythe on the 1st June.

In the latter half of the year, there were singles near Etchinghill on the 14th September, at Seabrook on the 7th October and at Lympe on two dates in December, whilst singles were noted again on the marsh, with two at the Willop Basin on the 18th October.



Hobby at Nickolls Quarry (Stuart Gonsalves)



Peregrine at Lympe (Phil Sharp)

Rare visitor (C1, E)

Two were seen flying over Cheriton on the 8th May (D. Clarke) and one flew over Hythe on the 27th May (P. Trodd). These were only the 27th and 28th area records but it has now been recorded in the last seven consecutive years.

Red-backed Shrike

Lanius collurio

Formerly bred, now a very rare vagrant (A)

A female was seen at Samphire Hoe on the 25th May (P. Holt), a male was seen at Hythe Roughs on the 30th May (B. Harper, I. A. Roberts, J. King) and first-winter birds were seen at Abbotscliffe between the 31st August and 2nd September, see photograph on page 17 (P. Edmondson, I. A. Roberts, M. D. Kennett *et al*) and at Capel Battery on the 7th September (D. A. Gibson). There had only been nine records since 1980 before the total of four in 2020, which was the highest total since the cessation of breeding and only the second year in modern times to produce records in spring and autumn.



Red-backed Shrike at Samphire Hoe (Paul Holt)



Red-backed Shrike at Hythe Roughs (Ian Roberts)

Jay

Garrulus glandarius

Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

Resident birds were widely recorded. Presumed migrants involved one flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 9th October, five arriving in off the sea at Copt Point on the 11th October and one at Abbotscliffe on the 15th October.

Magpie

Pica pica

Breeding resident (A)

Record numbers were present in November, with 46 counted at Botolph's Bridge on the 15th and 51 seen leaving the tall trees along the canal by the Aldergate Bridge between 07:10 and 07:25 on the 25th and flying off towards Donkey Street.

Jackdaw

Corvus monedula

Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

The only counts of note involved c.500 at West Hythe on the 28th January and a flock of around 1,000 flying north to roost over Botolph's Bridge on the 2nd November.

Rook*Corvus frugilegus*

Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

There were no counts of note.



Jay at Cheriton (Dave Clarke)



Magpie at Mill Point (Ian Roberts)

Carrion Crow*Corvus corone*

Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

The only count of note received involved 38 at Botolph's Bridge on the 12th April.

Raven*Corvus corax*

Formerly a rare vagrant but now a scarce resident, with breeding recommencing in 2016 after an absence of 125 years (A)

Pairs bred again at the regular cliff sites at Capel-le-Ferne and Samphire Hoe, whilst breeding was confirmed for the first time from inland nest sites. At Lympne a pair nested in a large conifer near the church and hatched five young, with four surviving, and a pair bred near Beachborough Park, raising three young. The Lympne nest was closely monitored and it is known that the young hatched on the (relatively late date of) 8th April and fledged on the 17th May. A local gardener in Lympne reported how he caught moles and left the dead animal on an area of lawn and the adult Ravens learnt to come and collect them.

There were records from numerous other sites, including Abbot's Court Farm, the Aldergate Bridge, West Hythe, Hayton Lake, Nickolls Quarry, Folks' Wood, Pedlinge, Hythe Roughs, Etchinghill, Seabrook, Creteway Down and Abbotscliffe.

Coal Tit*Periparus ater*

Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

Widely recorded but no noteworthy counts of resident birds were received.

Marsh Tit*Poecile palustris*

Breeding resident (A)

There were records from the usual haunts of Folks' Wood, Kiln Wood and Chesterfield Wood during the year.

Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

No counts of note were received.



Raven at Lympne (Nick Hollands)



Marsh Tit at Chesterfield Wood (Ian Roberts)

Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

No counts of note were received.

Rare migrant (A)

Two flew west over Donkey Street on the 10th October (I. A. Roberts) and one was seen arriving in off the sea at Copt Point on the 4th November (D. A. Gibson). These were only the 36th and 37th area records but the 17th in the last nine years.

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Numbers in the early winter period were unremarkable with the only noteworthy count received being 13 at Abbotscliffe on the 20th January.

There was no indication of spring passage but autumn migration was more marked than last year, with counts including ten arriving in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 9th October, 50 there on the 15th October, a very good count of 152 arriving in off the sea at Seabrook on the 16th October (there have only ever been two larger autumn movements) and 14 arriving in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 4th November.

In the late winter period counts included ten at Hillhurst Farm on the 16th November, 36 at Abbotscliffe on the 23rd November and 20 at Donkey Street on the 8th December.

Passage migrant, formerly a breeding summer visitor (A)

The first arrival was at Nickolls Quarry on the 31st March. Spring passage was typically light, with two arriving in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 7th April, one in off the sea at Capel Battery on the 8th April, up to three at Nickolls Quarry on several dates between the 13th and 25th April, one flying east at Samphire Hoe on the 4th May, two arriving in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 8th May and six at Nickolls Quarry on the 13th May.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	31 st Mar	10 th Mar	21	2 nd Apr	-2	5 th Mar 1995
Departure	4 th Nov	30 th Sep	35	7 th Oct	28	4 th Nov 1963

Autumn passage was also light, with peak counts of 48 flying east at Seabrook on the 12th July and 11 at Lympe on the 9th October. The last, one flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 4th November, equaled the latest ever sightings (singles at Hythe in 1963 and West Hythe 1981).

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant (A)

The first two were seen at Nickolls Quarry on the 31st March. The next sightings were on the 5th April, when singles flew east at Hythe, Seabrook and Mill Point, whilst on the 7th there were records from the Willop Outfall, Hythe, Copt Point and Abbotscliffe, with almost daily sightings thereafter. Counts included 20 at Nickolls Quarry on the 13th April, 25 there on the 25th April, 30 there on the 28th April, 30 at Abbotscliffe on the 2nd May and 12 flying east at Mill Point on the 4th May.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	31 st Mar	2 nd Mar	29	22 nd Mar	9	2 nd Mar 2019
Departure	6 th Dec	15 th Nov	21	15 th Nov	21	8 th Dec 1955

Autumn passage included counts of 400 flying east at Hythe and 1,475 flying east at Seabrook on the 29th September, c.1,000 at Abbotscliffe on the 9th October, 602 flying east at Seabrook on the 17th October and a good late count of 245 at West Hythe dam on the 27th October. There were several sightings in early November, with six flying west at Seabrook on the 3rd, four flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 4th, one at Botolph's Bridge on the 7th and two at Abbotscliffe on the 8th, and an isolated report in December of one at Botolph's Bridge on the 6th (there has only ever been one later record, at Princes Parade on the 8th December 2015).



Skylark at Hoe (Phil Smith)



Swallow at Hythe (Ian Roberts)

Very rare vagrant (A)

A first-winter bird seen at Samphire Hoe from the 28th November to the 2nd December (having first been seen at Kingsdown) would be a new species for the area and the county should it be accepted by the relevant authorities (M. Collins, B. Woolhouse *et al*). Also see photographs on the front cover and page 22 and refer to page 94 for a full account of this sighting.

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant (A)

One flew in off the sea at Capel-le-Ferne Café on the 7th April, with one at Crete Road West on the 9th April and three at Nickolls Quarry on the 13th April. There were regular sightings from mid-April and counts included ten at Nickolls Quarry on the 18th April, increasing to 18 the next day, 13 at Abbotscliffe on the 2nd May, 20 at Samphire Hoe on the 4th May and 25 at Abbotscliffe on the 8th May. Breeding was again noted at Samphire Hoe, Risborough Barracks and Honeywood Cottages (Sandling) but nests were not counted.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference +/-	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-			
Arrival	7 th Apr	5 th Apr	2	7 th Apr	0	7 th Feb 2004
Departure	4 th Nov	6 th Nov	-2	5 th Nov	-1	2 nd Dec 1974

Autumn passage included counts of 427 flying west at Seabrook on the 25th September, 650 flying east at Princes Parade on the 29th September, 200 at Nickolls Quarry on the 3rd and 4th October, and 200 at Abbotscliffe on the 9th October. Numbers decreased during October and the last three-figure count involved 120 flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 12th, whilst the last double-figure count was 40 there on the 15th October. Few were seen thereafter, but there were three records in early November: four at Lympe on the 2nd, seven at Cheriton on the 3rd and six at Abbotscliffe on the 4th.

Not recorded until 1981 but now well-established as a breeding resident though remains vulnerable to population decline in colder winters (A)

Present throughout the year, with territorial males widely recorded on the marsh: at Haguelands Farm, the Willop Basin, Donkey Street, West Hythe dam, West Hythe, Botolph's Bridge, Nickolls Quarry (three), Cinderella Farm; and along the canal with one at Palmarsh and three between Hythe and Seabrook.

One was also reported from Copt Point on the 14th June.

Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

The largest count of resident birds recorded related to 25 at Chesterfield Wood on the 12th December. There were no signs of any passage this year.

Rare migrant (A)

Singles were seen in trees behind the Newbeach Holiday Park on the 1st October (B. Harper), at Horn Street on the 23rd October (P. Howe) and at Samphire Hoe on the 6th November (I. A. Roberts). To hear a sound recording of the Newbeach bird visit: www.folkestonebirds.com/SoundFiles/ybw.mp3

This species had only been recorded four times prior to 2003 but has occurred in 16 of the 18 years since, with the last five years having produced half of all records to date. The November sighting was the latest to date.

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

The first was singing in a garden on Aldergate Lane on the 8th April, quickly followed by one at Asholt Wood the next day. Another was singing in a garden in Folkestone on the 13th April, with singles at Nickolls Quarry on the 17th and 18th April, and at Samphire Hoe on the 29th April. Three were singing at Abbotscliffe on the 2nd May, with the last of the spring at Copt Point on the 6th May. The total of ten was well below the mean for the previous ten years of 28 and the lowest spring tally since 2003.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	8 th Apr	2 nd Apr	6	6 th Apr	2	26 th Mar 1960
Departure	10 th Sep	17 th Sep	-7	22 nd Sep	-10	19 th Oct 1986

The first returning bird was seen at Nickolls Quarry on the 21st July and counts in autumn included 16 at Abbotscliffe on the 29th July and 15 at Nickolls Quarry on the 13th August. The last was seen at Abbotscliffe on the 10th September.

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).

Wintering birds were recorded from the Willop Sewage Works (2), Donkey Street (2), Enbrook Park (2), Cock Ash Lake and a garden at Ingles Manor in Folkestone

The first apparent arriving migrant was seen at Samphire Hoe on the 2nd March, with two there on the 4th and newly-arrived birds at Hythe and the Willop Basin (2) on the 7th. Arrivals gathered pace from the 12th, when singles were seen at Nickolls Quarry and Mill Point, with singles at Harringe Brooks Wood and Foord Road (Folkestone) the next day and Hythe Roughs on the 14th. Six were present at Samphire Hoe on the 16th March and subsequent counts included 11 there on the 19th March and ten at Nickolls Quarry on the 5th April.

Autumn passage was noted mainly in September and October, with counts including 25 at Nickolls Quarry on the 11th September, 21 at Abbotscliffe on the 21st September, 30 at Nickolls Quarry, 32 at Samphire Hoe and 14 trapped and ringed in a garden in Folkestone on the 22nd September and 20 along the canal at Palmarsh on the 27th September. October saw 40 at Copt Point on the 3rd, 14 at Abbotscliffe and 20 at Nickolls Quarry on the 9th October and 22 at Copt Point on the 11th October. Small numbers were noted in November, with the last apparent migrant at Abbotscliffe on the 5th. Wintering birds were present at Lypne and the Willop Sewage Works at the end of the year.

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant (A)

The first arrival, one at Nickolls Quarry on the 4th April, was slightly earlier than the mean arrival date, with the next at Donkey Street on the 10th April, when numbers increased to four singing males at Nickolls Quarry and to nine singing males there on the 12th April. At least seven territorial males were still present at the end of April (with at least some breeding successfully), whilst one singing male remained at Donkey Street and a pair bred successfully at the Willop Basin.

Elsewhere one was seen at Samphire Hoe on the 27th April, a male was singing from a small bramble bush at Abbotscliffe on the 2nd May and two males were singing along the canal between Hythe and Seabrook on the 17th May.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	4 th Apr	16 th Apr	-12	10 th Apr	-6	1 st Apr 2017
Departure	7 th Oct	5 th Sep	32	20 th Sep	17	15 th Oct 1996

There were no records from the cliffs in the autumn but birds remained at Nickolls Quarry until late September and the last was seen at the Willop Sewage Works on the 7th October.



Crag Martin at Samphire Hoe (Phil Sharp)



Chiffchaff at the Willop Sewage Works (Brian Harper)

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant (A)

The first arrival, one at Nickolls Quarry on the 6th April, was slightly earlier than the mean arrival date, with the next along the canal between Hythe and Seabrook the following day and two there on the 9th April. Two singing males were at Nickolls Quarry on the 12th, increasing to six singing males on the 29th April, with 18 counted between Hythe and Seabrook on the 7th May and smaller numbers scattered across the marsh. The only record away from the marsh related to a singing male at Abbotscliffe on the 27th May, a typical late spring migrant occurrence.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	6 th Apr	18 th Apr	-12	11 th Apr	-5	3 rd Apr 2016
Departure	7 th Oct	29 th Aug	39	26 th Sep	11	24 th Nov 2018

The only autumn migrant at the cliffs involved one at Abbotscliffe on the 3rd August but birds remained at Nickolls Quarry until early September, with relatively late records at Botolph's Bridge on the 1st October and the Willop Sewage Works on the 7th October.

Marsh Warbler

<i>Acrocephalus palustris</i>

Rare summer visitor and passage migrant (A)

A male was singing at an undisclosed location from the 21st May until at least the 14th June, with a second singing male there on the 1st and 2nd June (I. A. Roberts, B. Harper, R. K. Norman), see photograph on page 13. The first occurrence since 2015.



Sedge Warbler at Nickolls Quarry (Ian Roberts)



Marsh Warbler at undisclosed site (Brian Harper)

Grasshopper Warbler

<i>Locustella naevia</i>

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

The only record related to a 'reeling' male at the Aldergate Bridge on the 8th April.

There were no records again in autumn for the only the second time since 2001.

Blackcap

<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>

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

In the early winter period there were up to three (a female and 2 males) along the canal at Seabrook, a pair in a garden at Ingles Manor in Folkestone, a male in a garden at East Cliff Gardens in Folkestone and a male at Samphire Hoe, and some of these males began singing in March.

Birds which appeared to be new arrivals were seen at the Aldergate Bridge and in a garden in Ormonde Road in Hythe on the 22nd March, at Enbrook Park (Sandgate) and in the Enbrook Valley (Cheriton) on the 24th March, at Lympne Park Wood on the 25th March, along the canal at Palmarsh on the 27th March and at Holy Well on the 31st March. Arrival continued in April, with a peak count of six along the canal between Hythe and Seabrook on the 9th April.

Counts in autumn included 15 at Abbotscliffe on the 1st September, 11 there and 20 at Nickolls Quarry on the 7th September, 12 at Nickolls Quarry on the 22nd September, 14 there on the 9th October and 10 at Copt Point on the 11th October. Numbers dwindled thereafter and one at Samphire Hoe on the 6th November was probably the last migrant.

The first winter arrival was noted in a garden at Ingles Manor in Folkestone on the 16th November and there were also records in the late winter period from a garden in Prospect Road in Hythe and at Enbrook Park.

Garden Warbler

Sylvia borin

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

Singles were singing at Enbrook Park on the 17th April, Princes Parade on the 6th May, Westenhanger Castle on the 27th May and at Folks' Wood on the 13th June, whilst in autumn there were singles at Nickolls Quarry on the 5th August and Pond Hill Road in Cheriton on the 9th August.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	17 th Apr	24 th Apr	-7	27 th Apr	-10	10 th Apr 2001
Departure	9 th Aug	9 th Sep	-31	8 th Sep	-28	6 th Nov 1981

Lesser Whitethroat

Sylvia curruca

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant (A)

The first two were seen at Abbotscliffe on the relatively early date of the 12th April, with another there on the 18th April and there was a widespread arrival in the last week of the month, with sightings from Cock Ash Lake, Gibbin's Brook, Nickolls Quarry, Stanford North, Copt Point and Samphire Hoe, with further arrivals into May.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	12 th Apr	17 th Apr	-5	15 th Apr	-3	8 th Apr 2007
Departure	21 st Sep	27 th Oct	-36	1 st Oct	-10	3 rd Nov 1994

Autumn passage was noted from late July, when nine were at Abbotscliffe on the 29th, and counts in August included ten at Abbotscliffe on the 11th and 11 there on the 13th. Small numbers were noted into September, with the last at Abbotscliffe on the 21st.

Whitethroat

Sylvia communis

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant (A)

The first arrivals were noted at Donkey Street, Nickolls Quarry and Folkestone Racecourse on the 10th April, with one at Scene Wood the next day and four at Abbotscliffe on the 12th April. There were almost daily records thereafter as arrival continued through April, with a peak count of six at Samphire Hoe on the 29th. An unusually late migrant was singing in a garden in St. Hilda's Road in Hythe on the 27th May.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	10 th Apr	8 th Apr	2	9 th Apr	1	30 th Mar 2002
Departure	21 st Sep	13 th Oct	-22	5 th Oct	-12	19 th Oct 2016

Autumn passage was noted from late July, when 18 were at Abbotscliffe on the 29th, and counts in August included 12 at Nickolls Quarry on the 4th, 15 there on the 6th, 19 at Abbotscliffe on the 10th and 13 there on the 23rd. Ten were still present at Abbotscliffe on the 2nd September, decreasing to eight on the 7th and five on the 10th, with the last two there on the 21st September.

Dartford Warbler

<i>Sylvia undata</i>

Rare migrant and winter visitor (A)

One was seen at Abbotscliffe on the 4th November (P. Edmondson). The 37th area record.



Whitethroat at Nickolls Quarry (Ian Roberts)



Dartford Warbler at Abbotscliffe (Paul Edmondson)

Firecrest

<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>

Passage migrant and winter visitor, bred in 2012 (A)

In the early winter period there were records from West Hythe, Nickolls Quarry, Chesterfield Wood, Hythe (two), Princes Parade, Enbrook Park, Mill Point and Samphire Hoe (up to three). There was little sign of spring passage but one was at Abbotscliffe on the 7th April and was at Enbrook Park on the 11th April. A pair were observed in copulation at Little Dibgate Wood in late March but were not reported subsequently.

The first autumn migrant was seen at Hythe Roughs on the 31st August, with one at Crete Road West on the 23rd September and several records in October, including two at Saltwood on the 4th, two at Samphire Hoe on the 21st and three at Copt Point on the 28th, and November, including four on the 7th (one trapped and ringed in a garden at Ingles Manor in Folkestone, one along the canal at Palmarsh and two at Enbrook Park).

Goldcrest

<i>Regulus regulus</i>

Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

Resident birds were widely recorded throughout the year. There was a very light spring passage, with a peak of four at Samphire Hoe on the 19th March.

Autumn passage was noted between mid-September and early November, with counts including 15 at Abbotscliffe on the 15th October, 12 at Folkestone Warren on the 17th October, 10 at Samphire Hoe on the 6th November, at least 30 across the area on the 7th November (including 12 at Enbrook Park and 15 along the canal at Palmarsh).

Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

Widely recorded but there no counts of note.



Goldcrest at Samphire Hoe (Shelagh Wright)



Wren at Samphire Hoe (Martin Collins)

Breeding resident (A)

There were records from Port Lympne, Horton Priory, Chesterfield Wood, the American Garden, Bargrove Wood and Asholt Wood.

Breeding resident (A)

There were widespread sightings from the usual haunts. One at Nickolls Quarry on the 16th August was only the second record for the site.

Very rare vagrant (A)

One, thought probably to be a first-summer individual, was present in a private garden near Tram Road (Folkestone) on the 5th and 6th June (A. & M. Fletcher). See photograph on page 14. The second area record, following a juvenile at Samphire Hoe in September 2012.

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

The only counts of note from the early winter period comprised c.750 at the Willop Sewage Works on the 7th February and a pre-roost murmuration of 255 at Folkestone on the 1st March.

Autumn passage included counts of 450 arriving in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 9th October, 345 in off the sea there on the 12th October, 250 in off the sea there on the 16th October, 500 in off the sea at Mill Point and 540 flying west at West Hythe dam on the 31st October, 330 in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 4th November, 320 at the Willop Sewage Works on the 9th November and 410 in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 23rd November.

Passage migrant, typically more numerous in autumn (A)

The individual last seen in December 2019 reappeared at Samphire Hoe on the 3rd February and was noted on several dates until at least the 16th March, becoming the first ever over-wintering record locally, see photograph on page 8. The first spring migrant was seen at Abbotscliffe on the 7th April, with singles there on the 9th and 12th April, three on the 14th April and one on the 16th, whilst two were at Samphire Hoe on the 18th April, with one the next day. The spring total of ten bird/days was slightly over the mean for the previous decade of eight.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	7 th Apr*	9 th Apr	-2	11 th Apr	-4	9 th Mar 1997*
Departure	8 th Nov	27 th Oct	12	4 th Nov	4	26 th Nov 2005*

The first of the autumn involved three flying east at Crete Road East on the 20th September, with three at Abbotscliffe on the 29th and 30th September. Up to three were noted between Copt Point and Samphire Hoe on several dates in the first half of October, with a peak count of 15 in the area (5 at Samphire Hoe and 10 Abbotscliffe) on the 15th, but just three remained the next day, with one on the 17th and 18th. One was also noted at the Willop Basin on the 18th October and the last was at Abbotscliffe on the relatively late date of 8th November. The autumn total of 51 bird/days was somewhat below the mean for the previous decade of 91.

Blackbird

Turdus merula

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

There were no notable counts from the early winter period and little evidence of spring or autumn passage, although there was a peak of 15 at Abbotscliffe on the 12th October and six flew in off the sea there on the 17th October.

Fieldfare

Turdus pilaris

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Numbers in the early winter period were very low, with peaks of just 10 at Cock Ash Lake on the 10th March and 55 at Shrine Farm on the 25th January, and the last was at West Hythe on the 11th April.

Departure/Arrival	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Departure	11 th Apr	22 nd Apr	-11	15 th Apr	-4	5 th Jun 2016
Arrival	11 th Oct	12 th Oct	-1	12 th Oct	-1	21 st Sep 2018

The first autumn sightings on the 11th October, when one came in off the sea at Abbotscliffe, 13 flew in off at Copt Point and 29 flew north-west over Folkestone Rugby Club, were accompanied by a large arrival of Redwings. After a couple of singles, there was a more substantial arrival of 120 flying in/west at Abbotscliffe on the 14th October and 17 flew in off the sea there on the 17th October. These birds appeared to have continued inland as there were very few sightings thereafter until numbers began to increase during November, with 38 in the Cock Ash/Horton Park area on the 13th, 26 at the Aldergate Bridge on the 25th, 73 near Folks' Wood on the 26th and 65 at Donkey Street on the 29th. There were regular sightings of up to 40 during December, with a larger count of 200 at West Hythe on the 29th.

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

Numbers in the early winter period were very low, with a peak of just 20 at Cock Ash Lake on the 6th January. Spring passage appeared to be predominately nocturnal, and was particularly on the nights of the 10th March when there was “a large movement” over Hythe, with “hundreds, probably thousands, over at least a 2 hour period” and on the following night where there was “a huge movement” over Hythe, with “constant calls”, including a “sample count of c.250 calls in 10 minutes”, with an estimate of “probably at least 2,000 birds passing over in an hour”, but this “stopped abruptly as the weather cleared”. The last three of the winter were at Nickolls Quarry on the 7th April.

Departure/Arrival	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019				
Departure	7 th Apr	18 th Apr	-11	5 th Apr	2	4 th May 1981
Arrival	28 th Sep	2 nd Oct	-4	2 nd Oct	-4	7 th Sep 2016

The first autumn birds were seen at Lympne and Samphire Hoe on the 28th September, with one at Abbotscliffe the next day. Only small numbers were noted in early October but there was a significant arrival on the 11th, when 450 flew north-west over Folkestone Rugby Club, 1,100 flew in/west at Abbotscliffe and 1,250 flew in off at Copt Point. These birds appeared to have continued inland as relatively few were seen during the rest of the month, with a peak count of just 40 at Abbotscliffe on the 15th October, and numbers remained low in November, with peak counts of just 35 at Cock Ash Lake and 40 at Horton Priory. There was an increase however at the end of the year, when 31 were seen at West Hythe on the 29th December and 57 were at Church Hougham, with 130 at Botolph's Bridge, the following day.



Starling at Seabrook (Paul Howe)



Fieldfare at Abbotscliffe (Ian Roberts)

Song Thrush

Turdus philomelos

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

There were no counts of note in the early winter period or any evidence of spring passage. In autumn 17 at Copt Point on the 11th October, 15 at Abbotscliffe and 23 at Samphire Hoe the next day, and 25 at Abbotscliffe on the 15th October were noteworthy.

Mistle Thrush

Turdus viscivorus

Breeding resident (A)

There were no counts of note but two that arrived in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 17th October were at least local migrants.

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

There were no spring records for the first time since 2002.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	-	21 st May	-	13 th May	-	19 th Apr 1961
Departure	6 th Oct	12 th Sep	24	24 th Sep	12	11 th Oct 1999

Autumn passage however was only slightly below average. The first was seen at Nickolls Quarry on the 14th August, whilst on the 31st August there were singles at Brockhill Country Park and Hythe Roughs, with three at Folks' Wood. September produced singles at Abbotscliffe on the 2nd, Nickolls Quarry on the 6th, Abbotscliffe on the 10th and Nickolls Quarry on the 21st, with two at Lympe on the 9th September, and there was one in October, at West Hythe on the 6th. The total was 13 bird/days compared to the mean for the previous decade of 15.

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

There were no counts of note in the first half of the year but in autumn there was a record count of 200+ in the Copt Point/Creteway Down area on the 3rd October, when a further 30 were at Abbotscliffe, whilst there were 40 at Copt Point on the 11th October and 23 at Samphire Hoe on the 13th October.



Spotted Flycatcher at Hythe Roughs (Brian Harper)



Robin at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)

Very rare vagrant (A)

A male was seen at Samphire Hoe on the 24th March (P. Holt). The fifth area record and the first since 2013.

Declining breeding summer visitor and passage migrant (A)

Single males were singing at Nickolls Quarry on the 25th April, Stanford North from the 25th to 27th April and Round Hill from the 8th to 10th May, but there were no indications of breeding.

There were annual records until 2007 but it has only been recorded in eight of the last 13 years. Its continued status as a breeding species appears to be tenuous.

Scarce passage migrant, mainly in autumn (A)

Two at Abbotscliffe on the 10th August marked the start of an excellent arrival, with one at Nickolls Quarry, one at Samphire Hoe and two at Abbotscliffe on the 13th August, a total of three in gardens in Folkestone on the 16th August (one at East Cliff Gardens and two at Ingles Manor) and one at Abbotscliffe on the 2nd September.

The total of ten bird/days was a significant improvement on the mean for the previous decade of 4 and the best since 2014.



Bluethroat at Samphire Hoe (Paul Holt)



Pied Flycatcher at Folkestone (John Tomlinson)

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

At Samphire Hoe one was present during January and February, with a pair there from early March and these birds bred successfully raising at least one brood (with two juveniles seen in July). Three were still present at the end of August, with up to two from September to November, and one in December.

The only records elsewhere occurred in the latter half of the year, with four in October: singles at Nickolls Quarry on the 3rd, Lympne Church from the 9th to the 11th, and Abbotscliffe on the 15th and 18th, and one in December: in a garden off Pavilion Road in Folkestone on the 9th.

Passage migrant, mainly in autumn (A)

There were no sightings in spring but autumn produced singles at Abbotscliffe on the 29th August, Hythe Roughs on the 31st August and at Abbotscliffe on the 1st and 2nd September, with two there on the 10th September.

One was seen at Copt Point on the 21st September, with one at Nickolls Quarry on the 21st and 22nd September, one at Samphire Hoe on the 28th September and one at Copt Point on the 3rd October.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference +/-	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019				
Arrival	-	9 th Apr	-	15 th Apr	-	12 th Mar 1960
Departure	3 rd Oct	6 th Oct	-3	3 rd Oct	0	27 th Oct 1999

The total for the year of 11 bird/days was a little below the mean for the previous decade of 12.3.



Black Redstart at Samphire Hoe (Steve Ashton)



Restart at Abbotscliffe (Ian Roberts)

Whinchat

Saxicola rubetra

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

Two sightings in spring, singles at Abbotscliffe on the 27th April and 7th May, were the first since 2017.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference +/-	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019				
Arrival	27 th Apr	-	-	2 nd May	-5	11 th Apr 2011
Departure	3 rd Oct	9 th Oct	-6	7 th Oct	-4	10 th Nov 2009

An early returning migrant was seen at Abbotscliffe on the 24th July but overall autumn passage was disappointing, with a peak of just four at Abbotscliffe on the 2nd September. The last records were at Creteway Down and Abbotscliffe (two) on the 3rd October. The total of 28 bird/days was less than half of the mean for the previous ten years of 57.

Stonechat

Saxicola rubicola

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 sightings from Selby Farm, the Willop Sewage Works area (two) and Princes Parade (two), whilst up to ten were at Samphire Hoe. Up to eight pairs nested at Samphire Hoe, whilst two pairs probably bred at Hythe Roughs and one pair nested successfully at Abbotscliffe, with an additional territorial male there (which may have bred).

In autumn singles were seen at Princes Parade on the 29th September and at Copt Point on the 1st October, with a peak ten at Abbotscliffe on the 9th and 15th October, five at Copt Point on the 16th October, one at Donkey Street and two at the Willop Sewage Works on the 23rd October and one at West Hythe on the 27th October.

In the late winter period there were two in the Willop Sewage Works area, two at Nickolls Quarry, two at Stanford Lake, two at Hythe Ranges, one at Princes Parade, up to seven at Abbotscliffe and several at Samphire Hoe.



Whinchat at Abbotscliffe (Paul Holt)



Stonechat at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)

Wheatear

Oenanthe oenanthe

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

The first, three at Samphire Hoe on the 16th March, were slightly early but then there were no further records until one was seen there on the 5th April and another was at Battery Point on the 16th April. A flurry of sightings then ensued, with singles at Abbotscliffe and Samphire Hoe on the 18th April, singles at Abbotscliffe, Folkestone Pier and Mill Point and two at Samphire Hoe the next day, four at Samphire Hoe on the 20th, one at the Hythe Imperial Golf Course on the 21st and two at Donkey Street on the 22nd. Ones and twos were then noted into early May, with the last at Mill Point on the 6th. The spring total of just 31 bird/days was well below the mean for the previous ten years of 72 and the lowest tally since 2009.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	16 th Mar	20 th Mar	-4	18 th Mar	-2	8 th Mar 2015
Departure	30 th Oct	27 th Oct	3	31 st Oct	-1	4 th Dec 2016

Autumn passage was noted between the 15th July and the 27th October and was also below par with a total of 56 bird/days, compared to the mean for the previous decade of 183. The peak count was just six at Samphire Hoe on the 8th September and the last was seen at the Dymchurch Redoubt from the 27th to the 30th October.

House Sparrow

Passer domesticus

Declining breeding resident (A)

There were no noteworthy counts received. At Samphire Hoe, where the species is unusual, one was present on the 9th October and on the same day ten were seen on the coast at Abbotscliffe.

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

The only records were in October, when three flew west at Abbotscliffe on the 9th, seven flew west there the following day and four flew east at Nickolls Quarry on the 18th.

Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

There was an increase at coastal sites in the autumn, indicative of passage, with a peak of 12 at Abbotscliffe on the 3rd October.

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant (A)

The first arrival, a pair at Donkey Street on the 8th April, were on the same date as last year and very close to the mean arrival date over the last decade. A pair remained in this area into the summer and may have bred. Coastal migrants involved singles arriving in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 12th April, Princes Parade on the 26th April and Mill Point and Samphire Hoe on the 27th April, whilst in May two flew in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 2nd, one flew in off the sea at Mill Point, one flew in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 8th and two arrived in off the sea there on the 16th May.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference +/-	Prev. ten year mean	Difference +/-	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019				
Arrival	8 th Apr	8 th Apr	0	7 th Apr	1	21 st Mar 2018
Departure	10 th Oct	1 st Oct	9	2 nd Oct	8	20 th Oct 1984

One flying west over Hythe on the 1st August marked the start of a light return passage, with up to four at numerous sites and larger counts of five at Abbotscliffe on the 1st September, eight flying west there on the 2nd September, five there on the 13th September and six flying east over Princes Parade on the 29th September. The last was at the Willop Sewage Works on the relatively late date of 10th October (there have only ever been six later records).



Wheatear at Princes Parade (Ian Roberts)



Yellow Wagtail at Abbotscliffe (Paul Holt)

Breeding resident and passage migrant (A)

Small numbers were present at various sites in the early winter period, including the Willop Sewage Works, Willop Basin, Hythe, Beachborough Park, Enbrook Park, Holy Well and Folkestone. The only suggestion of spring passage involved one flying east over Abbotscliffe on the 30th March.

A pair were discovered nesting in the partially demolished Royal Victoria Hospital in Folkestone in April, whilst pairs were also present at Turnpike Hill, Hythe and Seabrook and may have bred, whilst singles were also noted at Pond Hill Road and Folkestone in summer.

A light autumn passage in September and October included a peak of three flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 11th October. Small numbers were again wintering at numerous sites at the latter end of the year.

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 count of note from the early winter period related to Pied Wagtails at 19 at the Willop Sewage Works area in February.

A light spring passage began with single White Wagtails at Samphire Hoe on the 12th February and 11th March, and three at the Hythe Imperial Golf Course on the 25th March. The peak counts were three Pied/White Wagtails flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 30th March and four flying east there on the 1st April.

Autumn passage of Pied/White Wagtails was noted from late September and included counts of six flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 28th September, 19 at Church Hougham on the 1st October, six flying west at Hythe on the 7th October and at Abbotscliffe on the 9th October, ten flying in/west at Abbotscliffe on the 11th October, ten arriving in off the sea there on the 16th October and eight flying east there on the 17th October.



White Wagtail at Hythe Imperial GC (Ian Roberts)



Pied Wagtail at Botolph's Bridge (Ian Roberts)

Rare passage migrant (A)

One flew east at Abbotscliffe on the 5th November (I. A. Roberts). The 19th area record.

Meadow Pipit

Anthus pratensis

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

The highest count in the early winter period came from the Willop Sewage Works area, where at least 50 were present in January. A light spring migration included seven arriving in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 6th March, six in off the sea there on the 16th March, ten in off the sea there on the 30th March and seven in off the sea there on the 1st April.

Autumn passage was noted from early September, when numbers at Abbotscliffe increased to 30, whilst movements included 30 flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 6th September, 47 flying east there on the 21st September, 25 flying east at Hythe on the 21st and 29th September, 91 flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 3rd October, 25 flying west at Hythe on the 7th October and 40 flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 10th October.

Tree Pipit

Anthus trivialis

Scarce passage migrant, mainly in autumn (A)

The only records were in autumn, when two were at Abbotscliffe on the 23rd August, singles were seen there on the 2nd and 7th September, two flew east there on the 28th September, one flew west at Hythe on the 7th October and three flew west at Abbotscliffe on the 9th October.

Arrival/Departure	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Arrival	-	-	-	27 th Apr	-	26 th Mar 1965
Departure	9 th Oct	5 th Sep	34	23 rd Sep	16	20 th Oct 2001

The total of ten was a significant improvement on the single seen last year and better than the mean for the previous decade of 7.4.

Water Pipit

Anthus spinoletta

Very rare vagrant (A)

The wintering bird from 2019 remained in the Donkey Street area until at least 15th March 2020 (B. Harper, I. A. Roberts) and one, perhaps the same returning individual, was seen there from the 30th October into December (B. Harper, I. A. Roberts). The 8th area record.

Rock Pipit

Anthus petrosus

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)

The highest numbers in the early winter period were as usual at Samphire Hoe, where up to nine were present, whilst elsewhere one was seen at the Willop Outfall on two dates in January and up to two were seen in the Folkestone Harbour area. At Samphire Hoe at least one bird of the *littoralis* form was noted in early April. At least two pairs were present along the foot of the cliffs between Abbotscliffe and Shakespeare Cliff and probably bred.

Autumn passage comprised one flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 28th September, two on the rock groyne opposite the Hotel Imperial at Hythe on the 29th September and singles at the Willop Outfall on the 1st and 18th October. In the late winter period at least two present in the Folkestone Harbour area and there was a peak count at Samphire Hoe of 21 on the 25th November.

Chaffinch

Fringilla coelebs

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

The only count of note from the early winter period came from Cock Ash Lake where there were 30 on the 6th January. Spring passage was noted from the 6th March when 67 flew east at Abbotscliffe and there were further counts of 1,570 flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 16th March, a total of 1,484 flying east over Abbotscliffe/Seabrook on the 26th March, 1,845 flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 30th, 1,640 flying east there the following day and 970 flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 1st April. The spring total of 7,775 was significantly higher than the mean for the previous ten years of 2,925 and the best since 2016.

Autumn passage was poor again, with the clear exception of an arrival of 2,875 in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 9th October (which was the fourth largest autumn movement).

Brambling

Fringilla montifringilla

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

The only records from the first half of the year involved singles flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 30th March and at Nickolls Quarry on the 7th April.

Departure/Arrival	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Departure	7 th Apr	28 th Mar	10	31 st Mar	7	23 rd Apr 1958
Arrival	28 th Sep	27 th Oct	-29	16 th Oct	-18	21 st Sep 1996

Autumn produced one flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 28th September, one at West Hythe on the 6th October, four flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 11th October, two in off the sea there the following day, one in a garden at Ingles Manor in Folkestone on the 13th October and singles at Abbotscliffe on the 15th and 17th October. November saw further singles at Chesterfield Wood on the 4th and Abbotscliffe on the 5th, with ten flying north over Lympe on the 9th.

Hawfinch

Coccothraustes coccothraustes

Rare migrant and winter visitor (A)

Singles were seen in Burmarsh Churchyard on the 3rd March (B. Harper) and at Copt Point on the 22nd September (D. A. Gibson). These were only the 17th and 18th records but there have now been seven sightings in the last four years.

Bullfinch

Pyrrhula pyrrhula

Breeding resident (A)

There were records of resident birds from numerous sites whilst singles at Abbotscliffe on the 4th and 5th November may have been at least local migrants.

Greenfinch

Carduelis chloris

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

Low numbers were noted in the early winter period. A light spring passage comprised one flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 3rd March, four flying east there on the 26th March, one flying east at Hythe Ranges on the 27th March, four flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 1st April and one at Samphire Hoe on the 5th April.

In autumn four flew east at Abbotscliffe on the 28th September, one flew west there on the 11th October and six flew east there on the 17th October.

Linnet

<i>Linaria cannabina</i>

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

There were no counts of note in the early winter period. Spring passage was noted in March and April and included counts of 22 flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 30th March, 23 flying in/west there on the 2nd April, 20 flying east at Mill Point on the 5th April and 20 flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 19th April.

Autumn passage included counts of 110 flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 28th September, 120 flying west at Hythe on the 7th October, 105 flying in/west at Abbotscliffe on the 9th October, 45 flying east there on the 11th October, 40 flying east there on the 16th October and 46 flying in/west there on the 4th November.

A flock of 260 were found in a field near Oathill Cottages, Lympne on the 10th December and this flock remained until the end of the year, increasing to a record winter count (and third largest ever count) of 300 on the 22nd December.



Meadow Pipit at Samphire Hoe (Martin Collins)



Hawfinch at Burmarsh Churchyard (Brian Harper)

Lesser Redpoll

<i>Acanthis cabaret</i>

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

There were no records from the first half of the year but the first of a record autumn passage were seen at Castle Hill and Lympne (four) on the 23rd September, with a count of 28 flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 28th September. October produced counts of 23 at Hope Farm on the 4th, 62 flying east over Horn Street on the 5th, 58 flying in/west at Abbotscliffe on the 9th, 33 flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 11th, 90 flying east there on the 15th, 66 flying east there on the 16th, 104 flying east there on the 17th and a record count of 255 flying east at the Willop Outfall on the 18th October (the previous record involved 201 flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 27th October 2012). Only small numbers were noted in the rest of October and in November until the 19th.

Crossbill

<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>

Passage migrant, with occasional summer irruptions, rare in winter (A)

Seven flew east at Abbotscliffe on the 1st April, 12 flew north-east over Lympne on the 8th May, five flew over Hythe on the 30th May, 11 flew east over Abbotscliffe on the 1st June, 20 flew south-west over Lympne on the 6th July, one flew over there on the 12th July and up to nine were seen there on the 17th July, whilst one flew east at Abbotscliffe on the 11th August.

September produced seven flying west at Copt Point on the 21st, a record count of 53 flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 28th and four flying east at Seabrook on the 29th, whilst in October a total of 120 were recorded, including counts of 12 east at Horn Street on the 5th, 35 east at Abbotscliffe on the 14th, 23 east there on the 16th and 25 east there on the 17th. The final records were one flying over Nickolls Quarry on the 8th November and nine flying over Lympe on the 19th November. The total of 260 was the second-best ever after 343 were logged in 2012.

Goldfinch

Carduelis carduelis

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

The only count of note from the early winter period came from Cock Ash Lake, where 30 were present in January. A light spring passage involved a peak of 40 flying in/east at Abbotscliffe on the 19th April.

An excellent autumn passage included counts of 360 flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 11th October, a record count of 2,410 flying east there on the 14th October, 760 flying east there on the 15th October, 970 flying east there on the 16th October and 505 flying east on the 17th October. The autumn total of around 5,650 was the second-highest ever (after the total of around 9,270 logged in autumn 2015).

Siskin

Carduelis spinus

Winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

The only record from the early winter period was at Cock Ash Lake where one was seen on the 6th January. Spring passage was noted from mid-March and counts included 39 flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 16th March, 46 flying east there on the 26th March, 54 flying east there on the 30th March, 24 flying east at Samphire Hoe on the 31st March and 30 flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 1st April. Late singles were seen flying over Mill Point on the 18th April, Abbotscliffe on the 19th April and Abbotscliffe on the 16th May.

Departure/Arrival	Date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest/Latest ever
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Departure	16 th May	28 th Mar	49	10 th Apr*	36	29 th May 2000*
Arrival	1 st Sep	1 st Oct	-30	20 th Sep*	-19	2 nd Sep 1997*

There was an unusual mid-summer record of one flying over Samphire Hoe on the 12th July (there had been records in this month in just three previous years). Autumn passage was noted from the 1st September, with counts of 58 flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 10th September and at least 240 flying over Lympe on the 25th September before a record total of 3,175 flew east at Abbotscliffe on the 28th September (which was a minimum day total as several hundred were noted at three other coastal sites). October produced counts of 131 flying in/east at Abbotscliffe on the 9th, 152 flying east there on the 14th, 105 flying east there on the 16th and 102 flying east there the next day.

Decreasing numbers were noted in November, including 70 flying east at Samphire Hoe on the 6th, into early December. Late winter counts included 20 at Kiln Wood and the canal at Palmars in December.

Lapland Bunting

Calciarius lapponicus

Scarce passage migrant, mainly in autumn, occasionally overwinters (A)

The only record involved one reported from West Hythe on the 10th January.

Snow Bunting

Plectrophenax nivalis

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

One flew in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 4th November, three flew west there on the 23rd November and one flew west there 26th November.

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

In the early winter period several were present at the Willop Sewage Works in January, with a peak of 16 there (the highest count since 2016) on the 4th January, whilst one was seen near Abbot's Court Farm on the 3rd March.

Singing males were present in spring at Donkey Street and Abbotscliffe, with a pair at the latter site in May and singles at Abbot's Court Farm and Botolph's Bridge in July.

In the late winter period up to three were seen at the Willop Sewage Works and Donkey Street, with two at Abbotscliffe and one near Oathill Cottages at Lympe, whilst one flew east at Samphire Hoe on the 9th December.



Linnets at Lympe (Philip Sharp)



Corn Bunting at Abbotscliffe (Ian Roberts)

Breeding resident (A)

In the early winter period there were peak counts of 6 at the Willop Sewage Works, 10 at Donkey Street, 15 at Haguelands and 10 at Abbotscliffe. At Samphire Hoe where the species is unusual a male was singing on the cliff face on the 31st March.

At Abbotscliffe nine that flew east on the 17th October were at least local migrants. Counts in the late winter period included 9 at Hillhurst Farm, 17 near Oathill Cottages at Lympe and 35 at Botolph's Bridge.

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant (A)

The peak count from the early winter period was 14 at the Willop Sewage Works in January. Spring migrants included singles at Abbotscliffe and Samphire Hoe on the 2nd March, flying east at the Dymchurch Redoubt on the 27th March, at Seabrook on the 28th March, at Samphire Hoe on the 30th March and at Abbotscliffe on the 2nd April.

Breeding records included three or four pairs at Nickolls Quarry, whilst three males were holding territory in oilseed rape fields near Stanford Lake.

One was seen at Abbotscliffe on the 29th July, with a light autumn passage noted from late September, involving ones and twos at coastal sites, with peak counts of ten flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 9th October and seven flying west there on the 11th October. There were no counts of note in the late winter period.

Category E species

Indian Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>
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Escapee (E)

A semi-feral flock of up to four that originate from Saltwood Castle were seen on several dates in the Saltwood area.

Cackling Goose	<i>Branta hutchinsii</i>
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Escapee (E)

One seen offshore from the Willop Outfall with a flock of 13 Canada Geese on the 3rd October was presumably of captive origin (B. Harper). See photograph on page 20.



Indian Peafowl at Saltwood (Ian Roberts)



Cackling Goose at the Willop Outfall (Brian Harper)

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 of summer migrants was earlier than last year for 15 species and later for 8 species, with one arriving on the same date. The earliest ever Common Tern and the second earliest Whimbrel were of particular note.

Arrival dates of summer migrants

Species	Arrival date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest ever arrival
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Swift	22 nd Apr	2 nd May	-10	23 rd Apr	-1	18 th Apr 2015
Cuckoo	18 th Apr	22 nd Apr	-4	20 th Apr	-2	27 th Mar 2001
Turtle Dove	27 th Apr	6 th May	-9	23 rd May	-24	10 th Apr 1993
Whimbrel	27 th Mar	12 th Apr	-16	12 th Apr	-14	25 th Mar 2011
Common Sandpiper	18 th Apr	28 th Apr	-10	19 th Apr	-1	4 th Mar 2013*
Sandwich Tern	20 th Mar	2 nd Mar	18	9 th Mar	11	13 th Jan 2018
Little Tern	17 th Apr	25 th Apr	-8	26 th Apr	-9	11 th Apr 2016
Common Tern	29 th Mar	1 st Apr	-3	10 th Apr	-12	29 th Mar 2020
Arctic Skua	18 th Apr	4 th Apr	14	15 th Apr	3	14 th Mar 2016*
Honey Buzzard	25 th May	18 th Jun	-24	25 th May	0	3 rd May 2013
Hobby	8 th May	25 th Apr	13	23 rd Apr	15	9 th Apr 1998
Sand Martin	31 st Mar	10 th Mar	21	2 nd Apr	-2	5 th Mar 1995
Swallow	31 st Mar	2 nd Mar	29	22 nd Mar	9	2 nd Mar 2019
House Martin	7 th Apr	5 th Apr	2	7 th Apr	0	7 th Feb 2004
Willow Warbler	8 th Apr	2 nd Apr	6	6 th Apr	2	26 th Mar 1960
Reed Warbler	6 th Apr	18 th Apr	-12	11 th Apr	-5	3 rd Apr 2016
Sedge Warbler	4 th Apr	16 th Apr	-12	10 th Apr	-6	1 st Apr 2017
Garden Warbler	17 th Apr	24 th Apr	-7	27 th Apr	-10	10 th Apr 2001
Lesser Whitethroat	12 th Apr	17 th Apr	-5	15 th Apr	-3	8 th Apr 2007
Whitethroat	10 th Apr	8 th Apr	2	9 th Apr	1	30 th Mar 2002
Ring Ouzel	7 th Apr*	9 th Apr	-2	11 th Apr	-4	9 th Mar 1997*
Spotted Flycatcher	-	21 st May	-	13 th May	-	19 th Apr 1961
Nightingale	25 th Apr	6 th May	-11	25 th Apr	0	10 th Apr 1981
Redstart	-	9 th Apr	-	15 th Apr	-	12 th Mar 1960
Whinchat	27 th Apr	-	-	2 nd May	-5	11 th Apr 2011
Wheatear	16 th Mar	20 th Mar	-4	18 th Mar	-2	8 th Mar 2015
Yellow Wagtail	8 th Apr	8 th Apr	0	7 th Apr	1	21 st Mar 2018
Tree Pipit	-	-	-	27 th Apr	-	26 th Mar 1965

Departures of summer migrants were fairly evenly balanced with 11 leaving earlier and 13 later. The latest ever Arctic Skua, the equal latest Sand Martin, the second latest Whimbrel and Sandwich Tern, and equal second latest Swallow were of particular note.

Departure dates of summer migrants

Species	Departure date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Latest ever departure
	2020	2019				
Swift	8 th Oct	15 th Sep	23	13 th Sep	25	16 th Nov 1957
Cuckoo	14 th Jun	8 th Aug	-55	27 th Jul	-43	28 th Sep 1969
Turtle Dove	3 rd Jul	-	-	20 th Aug	-48	24 th Oct 1981*
Whimbrel	12 th Oct	27 th Jul	77	25 th Aug	48	12 th Nov 2013
Common Sandpiper	22 nd Sep	10 th Oct	-18	23 rd Sep*	-1	Several wintered
Sandwich Tern	20 th Dec	16 th Nov	34	20 th Oct	61	27 th Dec 1955
Little Tern	-	-	-	-	-	16 th Sep 1999
Common Tern	3 rd Oct	27 th Oct	-24	27 th Sep	6	30 th Oct 2007
Arctic Skua	2 nd Dec	15 th Nov	17	17 th Oct	46	2 nd Dec 2020
Honey Buzzard	11 th Aug	21 st Sep	-41	7 th Sep	-25	15 th Oct 1995
Hobby	1 st Oct	13 th Sep	18	1 st Oct	0	22 nd Oct 2001
Sand Martin	4 th Nov	30 th Sep	35	7 th Oct	28	4 th Nov 1963
Swallow	6 th Dec	15 th Nov	21	15 th Nov	21	8 th Dec 1955
House Martin	4 th Nov	6 th Nov	-2	5 th Nov	-1	2 nd Dec 1974
Willow Warbler	10 th Sep	17 th Sep	-7	22 nd Sep	-10	19 th Oct 1986
Reed Warbler	7 th Oct	29 th Aug	39	26 th Sep	11	24 th Nov 2018
Sedge Warbler	7 th Oct	5 th Sep	32	20 th Sep	17	15 th Oct 1996
Garden Warbler	9 th Aug	9 th Sep	-31	8 th Sep	-28	6 th Nov 1981
Lesser Whitethroat	21 st Sep	27 th Oct	-36	1 st Oct	-10	3 rd Nov 1994
Whitethroat	21 st Sep	13 th Oct	-22	5 th Oct	-12	19 th Oct 2016
Ring Ouzel	8 th Nov	27 th Oct	12	4 th Nov	4	26 th Nov 2005*
Spotted Flycatcher	6 th Oct	12 th Sep	24	24 th Sep	12	11 th Oct 1999
Redstart	3 rd Oct	6 th Oct	-3	3 rd Oct	0	27 th Oct 1999
Whinchat	3 rd Oct	9 th Oct	-6	7 th Oct	-4	10 th Nov 2009
Wheatear	30 th Oct	27 th Oct	3	31 st Oct	-1	4 th Dec 2016
Yellow Wagtail	10 th Oct	1 st Oct	9	2 nd Oct	8	20 th Oct 1984
Tree Pipit	9 th Oct	5 th Sep	34	23 rd Sep	16	20 th Oct 2001

Four winter visitors departed earlier than last year and three were later. In autumn all species arrived earlier than last year. A summer record of Siskin has been excluded from the analysis.

Departure dates of winter migrants

Species	Departure date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Latest ever departure
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Brent Goose	10 th May	25 th Apr	15	4 th May	6	26 th May 1997*
Purple Sandpiper	24 th Apr	18 th May	-24	6 th May	-12	18 th May 2019
Red-throated Diver	14 th May	25 th Apr	19	2 nd May	12	6 th June 2006
Fieldfare	11 th Apr	22 nd Apr	-11	15 th Apr	-4	5 th Jun 2016
Redwing	7 th Apr	18 th Apr	-11	5 th Apr	2	4 th May 1981
Brambling	7 th Apr	28 th Mar	10	31 st Mar	7	23 rd Apr 1958
Siskin	16 th May	28 th Mar	49	10 th Apr*	36	29 th May 2000*

Arrival dates of winter migrants

Species	Arrival date		Difference	Prev. ten year mean	Difference	Earliest ever arrival
	2020	2019	+/-		+/-	
Brent Goose	19 th Sep	20 th Sep	-1	22 nd Sep*	-3	11 th Sep 2014*
Purple Sandpiper	30 th Oct	8 th Nov	-9	31 st Oct	-1	30 th Sep 1984
Red-throated Diver	17 th Sep	22 nd Sep	-5	4 th Oct	-17	7 th Sep 1997
Fieldfare	11 th Oct	12 th Oct	-1	12 th Oct	-1	21 st Sep 2018
Redwing	28 th Sep	2 nd Oct	-4	2 nd Oct	-4	7 th Sep 2016
Brambling	28 th Sep	27 th Oct	-29	16 th Oct	-18	21 st Sep 1996
Siskin	1 st Sep	1 st Oct	-30	20 th Sep*	-19	2 nd Sep 1997*



Raven nest at Lymgne (Phil Sharp)

Year list

January

1	Pheasant	1 st Jan
2	Mute Swan	1 st Jan
3	Shelduck	1 st Jan
4	Shoveler	1 st Jan
5	Mallard	1 st Jan
6	Teal	1 st Jan
7	Pochard	1 st Jan
8	Tufted Duck	1 st Jan
9	Velvet Scoter	1 st Jan
10	Common Scoter	1 st Jan
11	Feral Pigeon	1 st Jan
12	Stock Dove	1 st Jan
13	Woodpigeon	1 st Jan
14	Collared Dove	1 st Jan
15	Water Rail	1 st Jan
16	Moorhen	1 st Jan
17	Coot	1 st Jan
18	Little Grebe	1 st Jan
19	Great Crested Grebe	1 st Jan
20	Oystercatcher	1 st Jan
21	Lapwing	1 st Jan
22	Purple Sandpiper	1 st Jan
23	Jack Snipe	1 st Jan
24	Snipe	1 st Jan
25	Green Sandpiper	1 st Jan
26	Redshank	1 st Jan
27	Black-headed Gull	1 st Jan
28	Mediterranean Gull	1 st Jan
29	Common Gull	1 st Jan
30	Great Black-backed Gull	1 st Jan
31	Herring Gull	1 st Jan
32	Guillemot	1 st Jan
33	Razorbill	1 st Jan
34	Red-throated Diver	1 st Jan
35	Gannet	1 st Jan
36	Cormorant	1 st Jan
37	Grey Heron	1 st Jan
38	Little Egret	1 st Jan
39	Buzzard	1 st Jan
40	Great Spotted Woodpecker	1 st Jan
41	Green Woodpecker	1 st Jan
42	Kestrel	1 st Jan
43	Peregrine	1 st Jan
44	Jay	1 st Jan
45	Magpie	1 st Jan
46	Jackdaw	1 st Jan
47	Rook	1 st Jan
48	Carrion Crow	1 st Jan
49	Raven	1 st Jan
50	Blue Tit	1 st Jan
51	Great Tit	1 st Jan

52	Skylark	1 st Jan
53	Cetti's Warbler	1 st Jan
54	Long-tailed Tit	1 st Jan
55	Chiffchaff	1 st Jan
56	Goldcrest	1 st Jan
57	Wren	1 st Jan
58	Starling	1 st Jan
59	Blackbird	1 st Jan
60	Song Thrush	1 st Jan
61	Robin	1 st Jan
62	Stonechat	1 st Jan
63	House Sparrow	1 st Jan
64	Dunnock	1 st Jan
65	Grey Wagtail	1 st Jan
66	Pied Wagtail	1 st Jan
67	Meadow Pipit	1 st Jan
68	Water Pipit	1 st Jan
69	Rock Pipit	1 st Jan
70	Chaffinch	1 st Jan
71	Bullfinch	1 st Jan
72	Greenfinch	1 st Jan
73	Goldfinch	1 st Jan
74	Corn Bunting	1 st Jan
75	Yellowhammer	1 st Jan
76	Reed Bunting	1 st Jan
77	Brent Goose	2 nd Jan
78	Bewick's Swan	2 nd Jan
79	Woodcock	2 nd Jan
80	Kittiwake	2 nd Jan
81	Great Skua	2 nd Jan
82	Kingfisher	2 nd Jan
83	Coal Tit	2 nd Jan
84	Firecrest	2 nd Jan
85	Turnstone	3 rd Jan
86	Mandarin Duck	4 th Jan
87	Long-eared Owl	4 th Jan
88	Marsh Tit	4 th Jan
89	Treecreeper	4 th Jan
90	Redwing	4 th Jan
91	Linnet	4 th Jan
92	Canada Goose	5 th Jan
93	Ringed Plover	5 th Jan
94	Sanderling	5 th Jan
95	Black-throated Diver	5 th Jan
96	Fulmar	5 th Jan
97	Shag	5 th Jan
98	Blackcap	5 th Jan
99	Nuthatch	5 th Jan
100	Mistle Thrush	5 th Jan
101	Black Redstart	5 th Jan
102	Greylag Goose	6 th Jan
103	Curlew	6 th Jan
104	Lesser Black-backed Gull	6 th Jan
105	Siskin	6 th Jan
106	Sparrowhawk	10 th Jan

107	Lapland Bunting	10 th Jan
108	Fieldfare	25 th Jan

February

109	Ring Ouzel	3 rd Feb
110	Marsh Harrier	4 th Feb
111	Gadwall	6 th Feb
112	Short-eared Owl	6 th Feb
113	Egyptian Goose	7 th Feb
114	Merlin	11 th Feb
115	Barn Owl	12 th Feb
116	Great White Egret	19 th Feb
117	Red Kite	19 th Feb

March

118	Hawfinch	3 rd Mar
119	Red-breasted Merganser	5 th Mar
120	Pintail	7 th Mar
121	Grey Plover	13 th Mar
122	Wheatear	16 th Mar
123	Tawny Owl	18 th Mar
124	Dunlin	20 th Mar
125	Sandwich Tern	20 th Mar
126	Red-legged Partridge	22 nd Mar
127	Eider	23 rd Mar
128	Little Gull	24 th Mar
129	Bluethroat	24 th Mar
130	Avocet	25 th Mar
131	Whimbrel	27 th Mar
132	Common Tern	29 th Mar
133	White-tailed Eagle	30 th Mar
134	Brambling	30 th Mar
135	Goosander	31 st Mar
136	Little Ringed Plover	31 st Mar
137	Little Owl	31 st Mar
138	Sand Martin	31 st Mar
139	Swallow	31 st Mar

April

140	Crossbill	1 st Apr
141	Goshawk	4 th Apr
142	Sedge Warbler	4 th Apr
143	Reed Warbler	6 th Apr
144	House Martin	7 th Apr
145	Willow Warbler	8 th Apr
146	Grasshopper Warbler	8 th Apr
147	Yellow Wagtail	8 th Apr
148	Rough-legged Buzzard	10 th Apr
149	Whitethroat	10 th Apr
150	Lesser Whitethroat	12 th Apr
151	Greenshank	16 th Apr
152	Little Tern	17 th Apr

153	Garden Warbler	17 th Apr
154	Cuckoo	18 th Apr
155	Bar-tailed Godwit	18 th Apr
156	Common Sandpiper	18 th Apr
157	Arctic Tern	18 th Apr
158	Arctic Skua	18 th Apr
159	Bufflehead	19 th Apr
160	Swift	22 nd Apr
161	Knot	25 th Apr
162	Nightingale	25 th Apr
163	White Stork	26 th Apr
164	Turtle Dove	27 th Apr
165	Cattle Egret	27 th Apr
166	Whinchat	27 th Apr
167	Manx Shearwater	29 th Apr

May

168	Golden Plover	3 rd May
169	Spoonbill	3 rd May
170	Black-tailed Godwit	6 th May
171	Wryneck	8 th May
172	Hobby	8 th May
173	Ring-necked Parakeet	8 th May
174	Marsh Warbler	21 st May
175	Wood Sandpiper	22 nd May
176	Honey Buzzard	25 th May
177	Red-backed Shrike	25 th May

June

178	Night Heron	3 rd Jun
179	Rose-coloured Starling	5 th Jun

July

180	Osprey	14 th Jun
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August

181	Pied Flycatcher	10 th Aug
182	Wigeon	20 th Aug
183	Balearic Shearwater	22 nd Aug
184	Tree Pipit	23 rd Aug
185	Sooty Shearwater	25 th Aug
186	Ruff	27 th Aug
187	Redstart	29 th Aug
188	Caspian Gull	30 th Aug
189	Spotted Flycatcher	31 st Aug

September

190	Hen Harrier	1 st Sep
191	Lesser Redpoll	23 rd Sep

October

192	Yellow-browed Warbler	1 st Oct
193	Tree Sparrow	9 th Oct
194	Woodlark	10 th Oct

November

195	Dartford Warbler	4 th Nov
196	Snow Bunting	4 th Nov
197	Richard's Pipit	5 th Nov
198	Pink-footed Goose	8 th Nov
199	Barnacle Goose	11 th Nov
200	Glaucous Gull	13 th Nov
201	Goldeneye	27 th Nov
202	Crag Martin	28 th Nov
203	White-fronted Goose	29 th Nov
204	Red-necked Phalarope	29 th Nov

December

205	Yellow-legged Gull	7 th Dec
206	Slavonian Grebe	12 th Dec
207	Great Northern Diver	12 th Dec



Linnets at Lympne (Phil Sharp)

New species for Folkestone and Hythe in 2020

Bufflehead and Crag Martin were added to the Folkestone and Hythe list in 2020, subject to acceptance by the relevant authorities, which would increase it to 302 species. Account of these records is given below.

Bufflehead at Nickolls Quarry 19th April 2020

(Ian Roberts, Brian Harper, Roger Norman)

Status:

Breeds in North America from southern Alaska east to Ontario, south through Canada to adjacent areas of the north-west USA. Most withdraw from the breeding range to winter from the Aleutian Islands, Alaskan Peninsular, British Columbia, northern Montana, the Great Lakes and Canadian Maritime Provinces south to Baja California, Mexico, the Gulf States and northern Florida, with the main concentrations in coastal states (Snow & Perrins, 1998).

It is a vagrant to Britain and Europe, with 17 accepted British records to the end of 2019, 14 of which have occurred since 1994. Birds have been found in most months of the year, with singles in January and February, three in March, two in each of April, May and June, one in July, two in October and three in November (BBRC, 2020, RBA, no date).

There are several records from north and west Scotland and south-west England but several have occurred in central and eastern England. It had not previously been recorded in Kent.

Circumstances of the find:

On the morning of the 19th April 2020 I had chosen to use my daily exercise walk to visit Nickolls Quarry. I had just about finished my circuit of the site and was scanning the main lake one last time when I noticed a small duck towards the back of the lake, silhouetted in the glare of the sun off the water (it was, by the way, the only duck on the lake). It looked to be roughly Teal-sized and I almost dismissed it as such as there had been a drake Teal on site a few days previously. However there was something odd about it, the head shape in particular did not look right.

I decided to head round to the opposite side of the lake to get a view in better light, which meant losing sight of the bird for a while. When I arrived at the footpath on the eastern side I could not find it at first but then noticed it had moved closer to where I had previously been watching. With the sun at a better angle it appeared to be mostly dark with a prominent white patch on the head and I was certain it was a female Bufflehead.



Bufflehead at Nickolls Quarry (Ian Roberts)



Bufflehead at Nickolls Quarry (Brian Harper)

Immediately I rang Brian Harper as he lives nearby and I was certain he would be on his own exercise walk on a Sunday morning. He confirmed that was the case and he was already nearby. About 15 minutes later he called me back to say he was watching it from the opposite side of the lake, where I had first noticed it. He agreed with the identification.

I continued to watch from the eastern path and the bird gradually got a little closer, presumably moving away from the new arrival on the western bank. I had taken up a position in the shade of a couple of poplar trees hoping to be inconspicuous and it did approach close enough for me to manage a couple of record shots, though it kept its distance and seemed to be rather wary. It wing-flapped a couple of times and the wings appeared to be in good condition, however it never approached close enough for the legs to be visible.

When I arrived home I rang Roger Norman who is also a regular watcher to the site and, having been busy in the morning, was due a walk so visited in the late afternoon when the bird was still present, and was mainly asleep, however when I returned the following morning it could not be located and had presumably departed overnight.

I also contacted the county recorder to seek advice on what to do about the sighting and it was confirmed that unfortunately the news could not be broadcast more widely due to concerns around encouraging unnecessary travel during the Covid-19 lockdown, in line with KOS and government policy.



Bufflehead at Nickolls Quarry (Brian Harper)

Description of the bird:

Size and shape: A very small, teal-sized duck with a proportionately larger head.

Head: Dark, grey-brown head with a narrow white oblong patch extending backward from behind the eye.

Upperparts: Dark, grey-brown back and wings. When wing-flapping exposed a small white rectangle formed by the inner secondaries on otherwise dark wings.

Underparts: Slightly paler grey flanks.

Behaviour:

It certainly appeared to be wary and would swim away when it appeared to notice anyone on the lakeside. It was not seen to dive so did not appear to be feeding, and was resting much of the time. It gave the impression from this behaviour of being a bird pausing on migration and I was not surprised it had moved on the next day. The site had been covered the previous day, and most days before, that so it was definitely a one day stayer.

Origin:

Although it is accepted that a number of wild individuals have occurred in Britain, birds that are known to have been escapes have also occurred. Most recently escaped (ringed) females had been present in Northamptonshire and Leicestershire from June 2017 to mid-March 2020 and in in Yorkshire from April 2019 to early February 2020 (RBA, no date).

A similar record of a female seen at Hanningfield Reservoir (Essex) on the 21st April 2019 was not admitted by BBRC to the list, as they concluded that its origin was uncertain or thought not to be wild (Holt *et al*, 2020).

**Crag Martin at Samphire Hoe
28th November to 2nd December 2020**

(Martin Collins, Barry Woolhouse *et al*)

Status:

Breeds across the Iberian Peninsula north to southern Germany and eastwards through the Mediterranean into central Asia and northern China (Snow & Perrins, 1998). It was first recorded in Britain in Cornwall in June 1988, with a further 13 sightings to 2020, including four in the last three years. The Crag Martin expanded its breeding range in the 1980s, colonising several new countries including Switzerland, Austria, Bulgaria and Romania and that decade also saw the first records for Sweden and Finland, followed in the 1990s by the first in Belgium, the Netherlands and Denmark.

Despite its spread it remains extremely rare in Britain, perhaps because the population in Europe appears to be mainly sedentary, though birds from the nearest breeding areas, in southern France and southern Germany, move south after the breeding season. Returning birds may lead to the occasional spring overshoot (and the five records between April and June appear to conform to that pattern) but some Asian breeders are migratory and the five records in October/November may perhaps have their origins in that continent (BBRC, 2020, Holt *et al*, 2020).

Circumstances of the find:

On the morning of the 28th November 2020 Martin Collins and Barry Woolhouse arrived at Samphire Hoe with the intention of surveying the colour-ringed Stonechats that are present on site. At around 08:28, very soon after reaching the 'back track' that runs along the foot of the cliffs, they noticed a hirundine flying around the cliff by 'gate scrub'. Alarm bells sounded immediately but Martin waited until the tail spots had been clearly noted before concluding on the identification as a Crag Martin. He immediately put the news out via Twitter and birders quickly began to arrive.

It was soon established that this was the same individual that had previously been present at Kingsdown from the 21st November and had been seen there at 07:40 on the 28th November, when it flew south, and was found at Samphire Hoe 48 minutes later. It performed well for an admiring crowd throughout the day until it flew off high to the north-east at 15:30, later arriving to roost at Kingsdown. It repeated this behaviour from the 29th November to the 2nd December, feeding for a time at Samphire Hoe before returning to Kingsdown.

Description of the bird:

Size and shape: A chunky hirundine, larger, and with a bulkier body, than House or Sand Martin and with broader wings. The tail was only had a slight fork, which was noticeable when the tail was closed.

Head: The head was mostly dark brown, with a paler throat. The short bill and eye were black.

Upperparts: The mantle was also brown but a shade paler than the head. The wing coverts were darker brown with paler fringes and the remiges were darker brown with paler inner webs. The tail was dark brown with around four distinctive white spots either side of the plain central tail feathers, about midway down the tail.

Underparts: The underparts were pale brown, with blackish underwing coverts and the underside of the tail largely matched the patterning above.



Crag Martin at Samphire Hoe (Steve Ashton)



Crag Martin at Samphire Hoe (Steve Ashton)



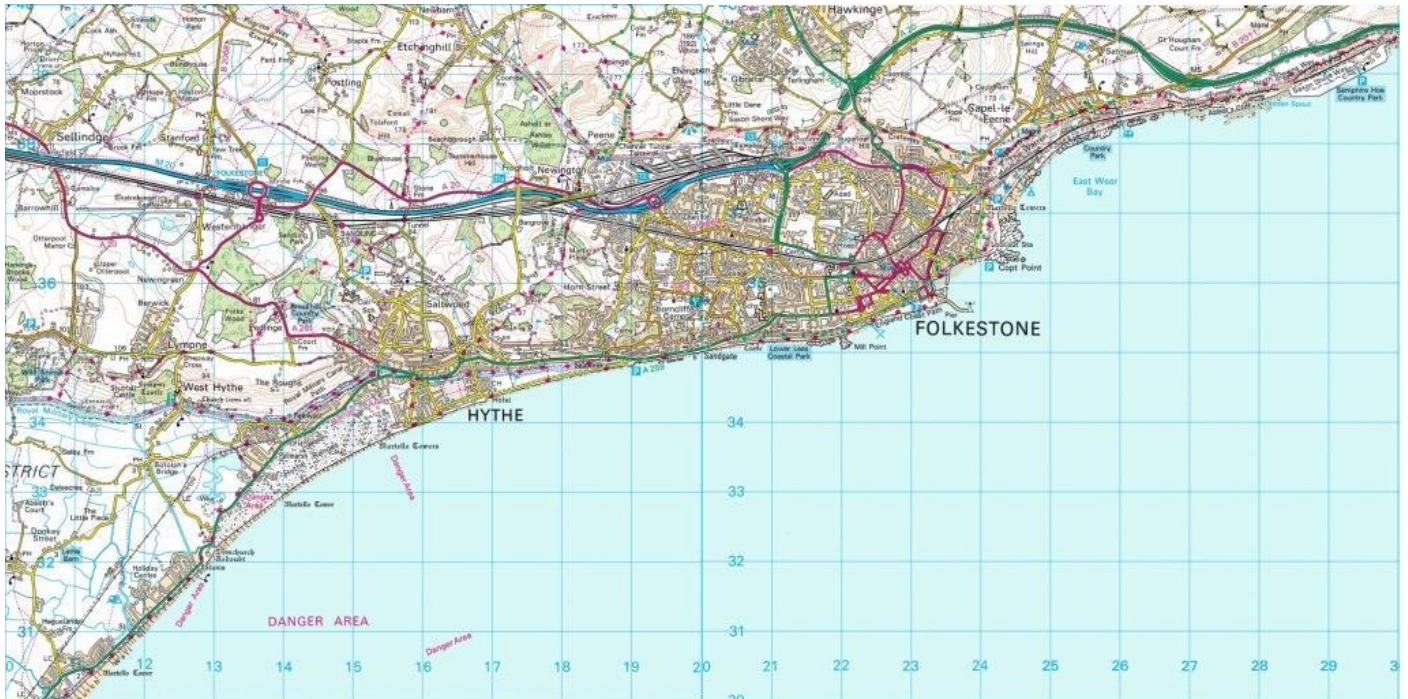
Crag Martin at Samphire Hoe (Mike Buckland)



Crag Martin at Samphire Hoe (Steve Ashton)

The Folkestone and Hythe area

The Folkestone & Hythe area comprises the 10km squares TR13 and TR23 as shown by the map below. The tetrad layouts are also provided for ease of reference.



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.

Site	Tetrad
Abbotscliffe	TR23 U/TR23 Z
Abbots Court Farm	TR13 B
Aldergate Bridge	TR13 C
Aldington Road	TR13 H/TR13 M
American Garden	TR13 N
Asholt Wood	TR13 T/TR13 U
Bargrove Wood	TR13 T
Barrowhill (Sellindge)	TR13 D
Battery Point (Seabrook)	TR13 X
Beachborough Lakes	TR13 T
Beachborough Park	TR13 U
Botolph's Bridge	TR13 G
Broadmead Village	TR23 D
Brockhill Country Park	TR13 M
Burmarsh	TR13 A/TR13 B
Burmarsh Church	TR13 B
Capel-le-Ferne	TR23 P
Capel Battery (Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site)	TR23 N/TR23 P
Castle Hill	TR23 D
Channel Tunnel Terminal	TR13 Y
Cheriton	TR13 Y/TR23 D
Cheriton Hill	TR13 Z
Chesterfield Wood (Saltwood)	TR13 N
Church Hougham	TR23 U
Cinderella Farm	TR13 G
Cliff Road (Hythe)	TR13 S
Cock Ash Lake (near Sellindge)	TR13 E
Copt Point	TR23 N
Crete Road East	TR23 I/TR23 J
Crete Road West	TR23 E
Creteway Down	TR23 J
Donkey Street	TR13 B
Dymchurch Redoubt	TR13 G (/TR13 F for records on sea)
East Cliff Gardens (Folkestone)	TR23 I
Enbrook Park (Sandgate)	TR23 C
Enbrook Valley (Cheriton)	TR23 D
Etchinghill	TR13 U
Fisherman's Beach (Hythe)	TR13 L
Folkestone	TR23 C/TR23 D/TR23 H/TR23 I
Folkestone Beach	TR13 H

Site	Tetrad
Folkestone Harbour	TR13 H/TR13 I
Folkestone Leas	TR23 C/TR23 H
Folkestone Pier	TR23 H
Folkestone Racecourse (Westenhanger)	TR13 I
Folkestone Rugby Club	TR13 T
Folkestone Warren	TR23 N/TR23 P
Folks' Wood (Pedlinge)	TR23 H
Foord Road (Folkestone)	TR23 I
Gibbin's Brook	TR13 E
Golden Valley (Cheriton)	TR13 Y
Haguelands Farm	TR13 A
Harringe Brook Woods	TR13 C
Hayton Lake (Stanford)	TR13 J
Hillhurst Farm (Westenhanger)	TR13 I
Holy Well	TR23 J
Honeywood Cottages	TR13 N
Hoorne's Sewer	TR13 B
Hope Farm	TR23 J
Horn Street	TR13 X/TR13 Y
Horton Park Lakes	TR13 J
Horton Priory	TR13 E
Hythe	TR13 M/TR13 S
Hythe Imperial hotel and golf course	TR13 S
Hythe Ranges	TR13 G/TR13 L
Hythe Roughs	TR13 H/TR13 M
Hythe Seafront	TR13 S
Ingles Manor (Folkestone)	TR23 C
Joyes Road (Folkestone)	TR23 I
Kiln Wood	TR13 I
Little Dibgate Wood	TR13 T
Lower Cock Ash	TR13 E
Lower Wall Road	TR13 B
Lympne	TR13 H
Lympne Park Wood	TR13 C/TR13 H
Mill Point	TR23 C/TR23 H
New Beach Holiday Park	TR13 F
Nickolls Quarry	TR13 G
Oathill Cottages (Lympne)	TR13 H
Ormonde Road (Hythe)	TR13 S
Palmarsh	TR13 G
Park Farm/Park Farm Industrial Estate	TR23 D
Pavilion Road (Folkestone)	TR23 I
Pond Hill Road	TR13 Y
Port Lympne	TR13 C
Postling	TR13 P
Princes Parade	TR13 S/TR13 X

Site	Tetrad
Prospect Road (Hythe)	TR13 S
Radnor Park (Folkestone)	TR23 I
Risborough Barracks	TR13 Y
Round Down	TR23 Z
Round Hill	TR23 E
Royal Victoria Hospital (Folkestone)	TR23 I
Saltwood	TR13 M
Samphire Hoe	TR23 Z
Sandgate	TR23 C
Scene Wood	TR13 S
Seabrook	TR13 X
Selby Farm	TR13 B
Sene Valley golf course	TR13 S
Scene Wood	TR13 S
Shrine Farm (Postling Wents)	TR13 N
St. Hilda's Road (Hythe)	TR13 M
Stade Street (Hythe)	TR13 S
Stanford North	TR13 J
Stanford Lake	TR13 E/TR13 J
Summerhouse Hill	TR13 T
The Little Piece (Donkey Street)	TR13 B
Thorn Wood	TR13 N
Tram Road (Folkestone)	TR23 I
Turnpike Hill (Hythe)	TR13 M
West Hythe	TR13 H
West Hythe dam	TR13 C
Westenhanger	TR13 I
Westenhanger Castle	TR13 I
Willop Basin	TR13 A
Willop Outfall	TR13 A
Willop Sewer	TR13 A/TR13B
Willop Sewage Works	TR13 A/TR13 B

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Red-necked Phalarope at Donkey Street (Brian Harper)



Glaucous Gull at Hythe (Ian Roberts)



Short-eared Owl at Abbotscliffe (Ian Roberts)