

Caspian Tern

Hydroprogne caspia

Category A

Very rare vagrant.

1 records

Breeds along the Baltic coasts of Estonia, Sweden and Finland to the head of the Gulf of Bothnia. To the east, there are fragmented populations from the Black Sea coast of Ukraine across the steppe-lake region of central Asia to Mongolia and China. Has declined recently, particularly in the western part of its range. European birds winter in western Africa to the Gulf of Guinea, Asian birds winter on coasts to the south of the breeding range. Also occurs in North America, South Africa and Australia (Snow & Perrins, 1998).

It is a rare but regular vagrant to Britain, with 323 records to the end of 2019, with a recent average of between four and five records per annum. 25 of these sightings were in Kent but it was formerly more regular, with around six records per decade between 1970 and 2000, but only two since, in 2013 and 2014. It was first noted in the county in 1935 when there were single birds in October and November, but all records since have been found between the 19th April and 6th August, with a peak in June (eight records).

The only area record involved one seen by Steve Broyd off Folkestone Warren on the 5th June 1988.

In addition a “huge” tern, possibly Caspian, was seen by Roger Norman flying up-channel past Hythe Ranges on the 19th May 1992.

The record by year is shown in figure 1.

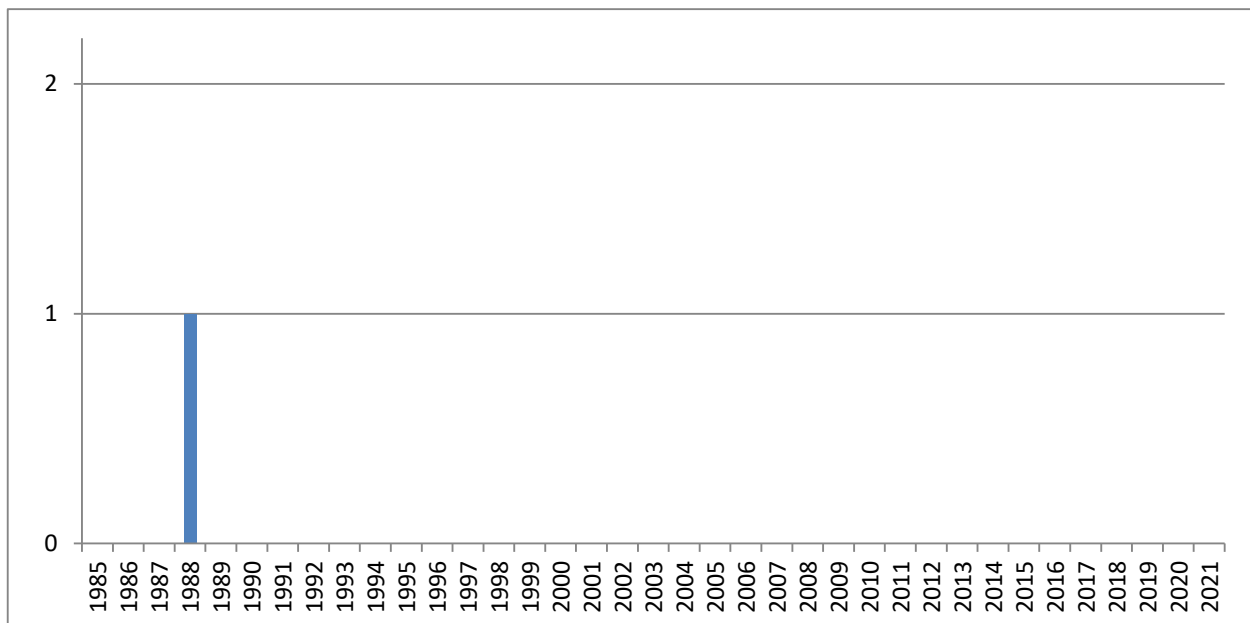


Figure 1: Caspian Tern records at Folkestone and Hythe

The record by week is given in figure 2

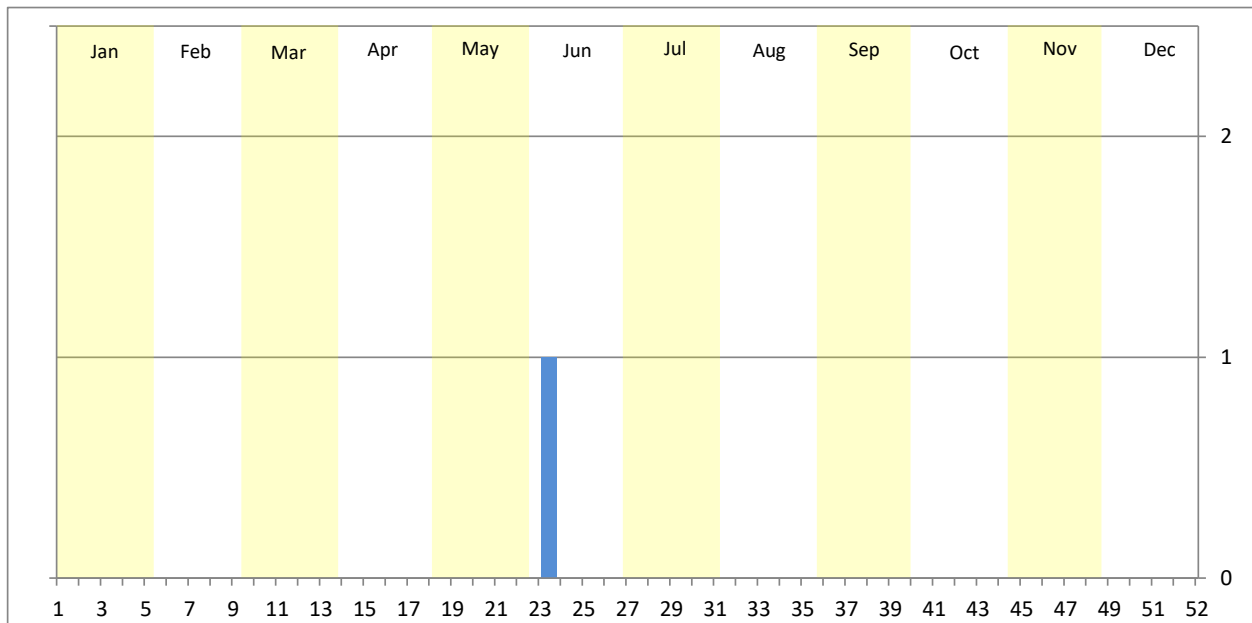


Figure 2: Caspian Tern records at Folkestone and Hythe by week

Figure 3 shows the distribution of records by tetrad.

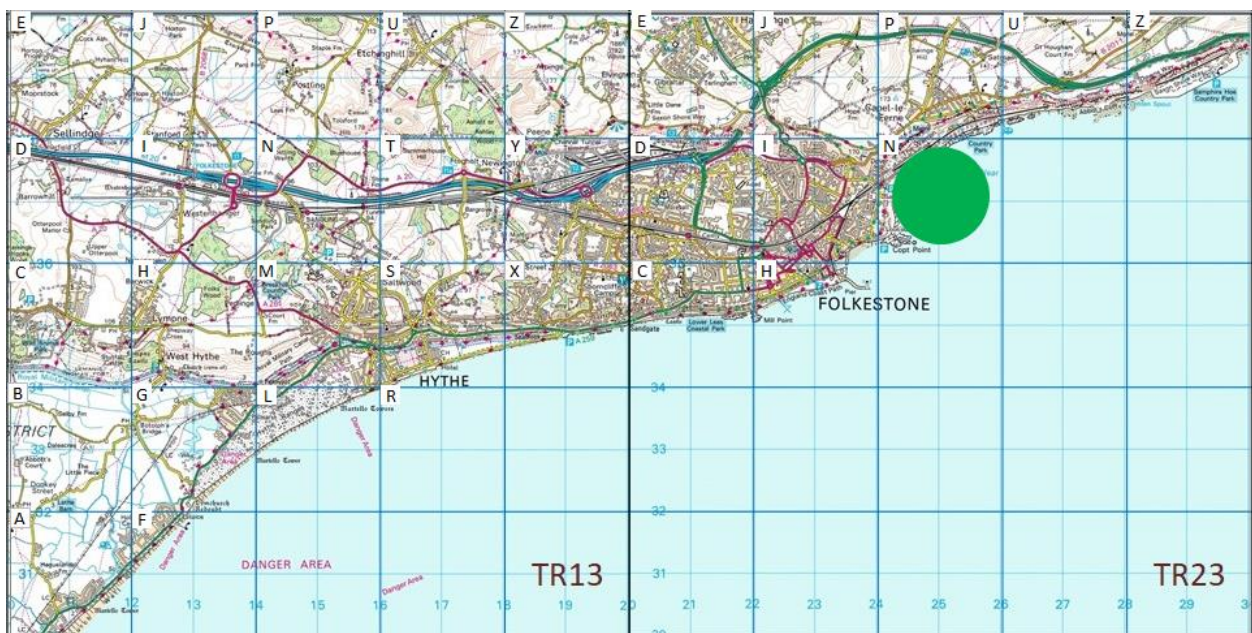


Figure 3: Distribution of all Caspian Tern records at Folkestone and Hythe by tetrad

Confirmation of the only area record is as follows:

1988 Folkestone Warren, one, 5th June (S. J. Broyd)

References

BBRC statistics: <https://www.bbrc.org.uk/main-information/statistics> (accessed 2021)

Kent Bird Reports. Kent Ornithological Society

KOS Kent list: <https://kentos.org.uk/kent-list> (accessed 2021)

Snow, D. & Perrins, C.M., 1998. *The Birds of the Western Palearctic*. Oxford University Press.

Acknowledgements

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