

Long-tailed Duck

Clangula hyemalis

Category A

Very rare vagrant.

13 records

The main breeding population is in Fenno-Scandia and northern Russia. Winters around the coasts of western Europe, from Norway south to Morocco (Snow & Perrins, 1998).

An uncommon but regular passage migrant and winter visitor in Kent (KOS, 2020).

The first local record was a first-winter bird seen off Folkestone by R. S. Pitcher on the 20th October 1957 and this was quickly followed by a first-winter female seen off Folkestone by David Musson on the 1st December 1959 and an adult female seen there by the same observer on 1st February the following year.



Long-tailed Duck at Samphire Hoe (Ian Roberts)

David Musson (together with William Nevin) saw one on the Hythe Canal between the 25th December 1960 and the 12th January 1961 and the same observer saw yet another off the Dymchurch Redoubt on the 19th January 1961. William Nevin added a further record off Hythe on the 23rd December 1963 but after this run of six sightings it was not reported again until one was seen off the Dymchurch Redoubt on the 10th February 1991.

Paul Howe and H. G. Brown then saw one off Sandgate on the 2nd December 1995 and Dale Gibson watched one flying east past Copt Point with Common Scoters on the 16th April 2000, the first spring record.

After a gap of 13 years, a female was seen off Samphire Hoe by Mark Kennett and Ian Roberts on the 20th November 2013 and there were three records in consecutive years from 2017, with Marek Walford noting one in Folkestone Harbour on the 4th November 2017, Martin Collins and Barry Woolhouse seeing two flying east past Samphire Hoe on the 15th April 2018 and Ian Roberts watching one flying east past Mill Point on the 15th November 2019.

The records by year since 1985 are shown in figure 1.

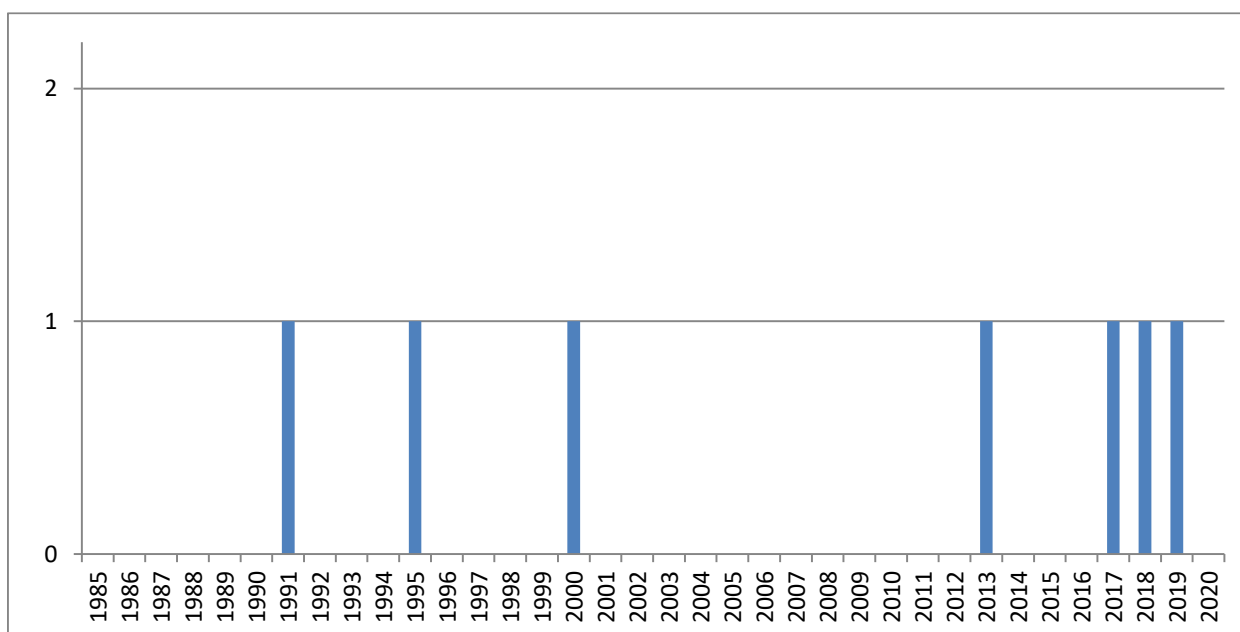


Figure 1: Long-tailed Duck records at Folkestone and Hythe since 1985

The records by week are given in figure 2. Apart from one on 20th October 1957 and spring migrants on the 16th April 2000 and 15th April 2018, all other records fall between 4th November (week 44) and 10th February (week 6).

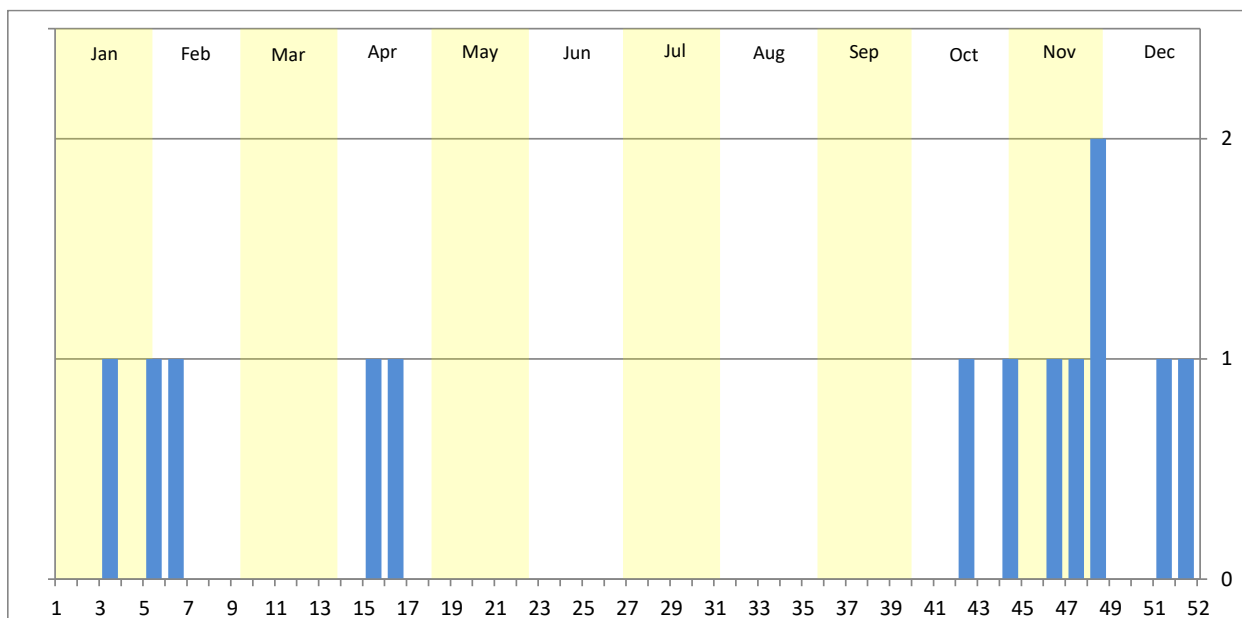


Figure 2: Long-tailed Duck records at Folkestone and Hythe by week

Figure 3 shows the distribution of records by tetrad. Recent records have been seen from coastal watchpoints or in Folkestone Harbour. Most early records have not been mapped due to a lack of sufficient details to identify the tetrad of occurrence.



Figure 3: Distribution of all Long-tailed Duck records at Folkestone and Hythe by tetrad

The full list of records is as follows:

- 1957** Folkestone, first-winter, 20th October (R. S. Pitcher)
- 1959** Folkestone, first-winter female, 1st December (D. F. Musson)
- 1960** Folkestone, adult female, 1st February (D. F. Musson)
- 1960** Hythe Canal, one, 25th December to 12th January 1961 (W. S. Nevin, D. F. Musson)
- 1961** Dymchurch Redoubt, one, 19th January (D. F. Musson)
- 1963** Hythe, one, 23rd December (W. S. Nevin)
- 1991** Dymchurch Redoubt, one, 10th February (reported)
- 1995** Sandgate, one, 2nd December (P. Howe, H. G. Brown)

2000 Copt Point, one flew east with Common Scoters, 16th April (D. A. Gibson)

2013 Samphire Hoe, female on the sea then flew west, 20th November, photo (M. D. Kennett, I. A. Roberts)

2017 Folkestone Harbour, one, 4th November (M. Walford)

2018 Samphire Hoe, two flew east, 15th April (M. Collins, B. Woolhouse)

2019 Mill Point, one flew east, 15th November (I. A. Roberts)

References

Kent Bird Reports. Kent Ornithological Society

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](#).



Long tailed Duck at Samphire Hoe (Ian Roberts)

