

# Caspian Tern

Scientific name Category A

Very rare vagrant. 1 record

World/British distribution (Snow & Perrins 1998):

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.

Kent status (KOS 2021):

Rare vagrant.

British (BBRC) records to end 2020: 326

Kent (KOS) records to end 2020: 25

It is a rare but regular vagrant to Britain, with a recent average of between four and five records per annum, which is considered to be stable following a decrease (BBRC no date; Holt *et al.* 2021). It was also formerly more regular in Kent, with around six records per decade between 1970 and 2000, but only three since, in 2013, 2014 and 2021. The first county records in 1935 occurred in October and November, but all records since have been found between the 19<sup>th</sup> April and 6<sup>th</sup> August, with a peak in June (nine records) (KOS no date).

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

The record by year is shown in figure 1.

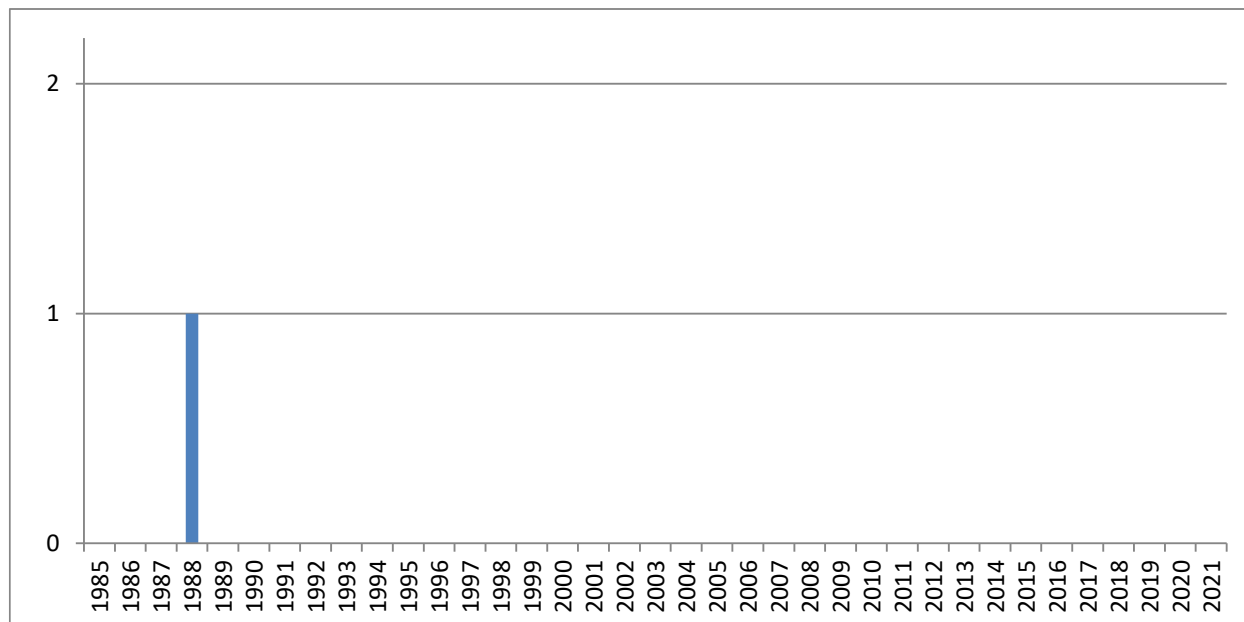


Figure 1: Caspian Tern records at Folkestone and Hythe

The record by week is given in figure 2.

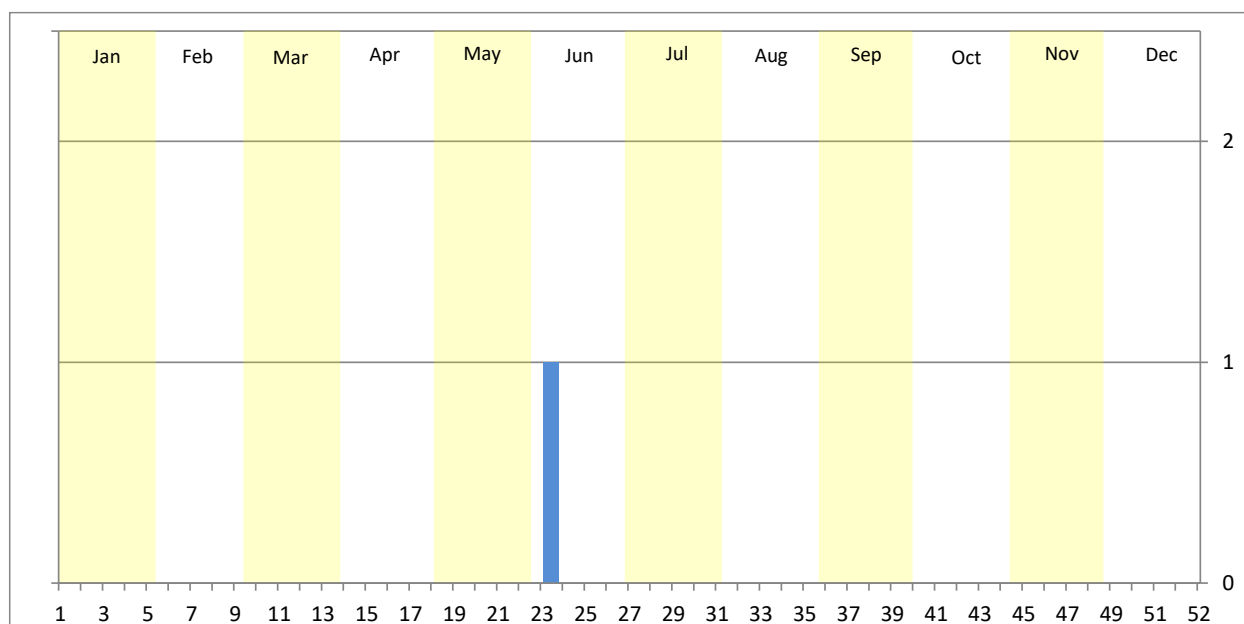


Figure 2: Caspian Tern records at Folkestone and Hythe by week

Figure 3 shows the location of the record 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, 5<sup>th</sup> June (S. J. Broyd).

In addition, a “huge tern” (possibly a Caspian) was seen by Roger Norman flying up-channel past Hythe Ranges on the 19<sup>th</sup> May 1992 (Norman 2006).

## References

British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC). Statistics. [www.bbrc.org.uk/main-information/statistics](http://www.bbrc.org.uk/main-information/statistics) (accessed 2022).

Holt, C., French, P. & the Rarities Committee 2021. Report on rare birds in Great Britain in 2020. *British Birds* 114: 570-628.

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Kent Ornithological Society (KOS). The Kent List. <https://kentos.org.uk/index.php/recording/the-kent-list> (accessed 2022).

Norman, R. K. 2006. Some observations of birds on Hythe Ranges since 1950. <https://folkestonebirds.com/where-to-watch> (see "Further Information" section).

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](#).