

Serin

<i>Serinus serinus</i>	Category A
Rare passage migrant.	27 records, 27 birds

World/British distribution (Snow & Perrins 1998, Holling et al. 2009):

Breeds across central and southern Europe from France eastwards to the Baltic States, and south to the northern coast of Africa and Israel. Southern and western populations are largely sedentary, but most birds vacate the northern and eastern parts of the range to winter further south and west, although small numbers may remain to overwinter.

There was a major, mainly northward, expansion of its range which began in the nineteenth century and continued into the twentieth, reaching northern France in the 1950s. This led to an increase in records in Britain after 1960 and it first bred in 1967, but only ever sporadically (with up to two pairs breeding per annum until 2003) and did not become established. It appears to show a reluctance to cross open water, also being very scarce in Fenno-Scandia.

Kent status (KOS 2022, Holling et al. 2009):

It is a scarce but regular coastal passage migrant in Kent, which has bred on occasion, most recently in 1996.

Kent (KOS) records to end 2020: 527

The Serin was first recorded in Britain in Sussex in 1859, whilst the first county record (one caught on Dover Cliffs in January 1879) was the sixth national record (Naylor 2021). Ticehurst (1909) noted a further record of two caught near Dover Castle in November 1904, but Harrison (1953) had noted no more and there had still only been 28 British records by that time.

Taylor *et al.* (1981) were able to include 20 authenticated records in the county during their review period (1952-76), with it having been noted in all but four years since 1961, with 85% in spring and the others in autumn. This reflected a marked increase in national records, with a mean of 10 per annum in the 1960s, increasing to 19 per annum in the 1970s, 39 per annum in the 1980s and peaking at 69 per annum in the 1990s (White & Kehoe 2022), and it was removed from the species that the British Birds Rarities Committee considered as a national rarity at the end of 1982, when 473 had been logged (Grant *et al.* 1982).

It was during this time that it occasionally bred in Kent (with the last occurrence in 1996) and that the first local records occurred, when Dale Gibson saw one flying north-west over Capel Battery on the 12th April 1993 and this was soon by three further sightings in the same spring (one flying in off the sea at Copt Point on the 24th April and singles flying west at Copt Point and Mill Point on the 10th May) and one in autumn of that year (at Abbotscliffe on the 22nd October). The total of five remains the record in one year to date.

It was then noted annually until 1998 by which time 15 records had been accrued, with three more in 2000, but has become less frequent since, with just nine further records.

This reflected a national decline to 51 per annum in the 2000s and 42 per annum in the 2010s and would appear to reflect a decrease in the breeding population across Europe of 42% since 1980, which includes a sharp decline in the Netherlands (PECBMS 2017).

The records by year are shown in figure 1.

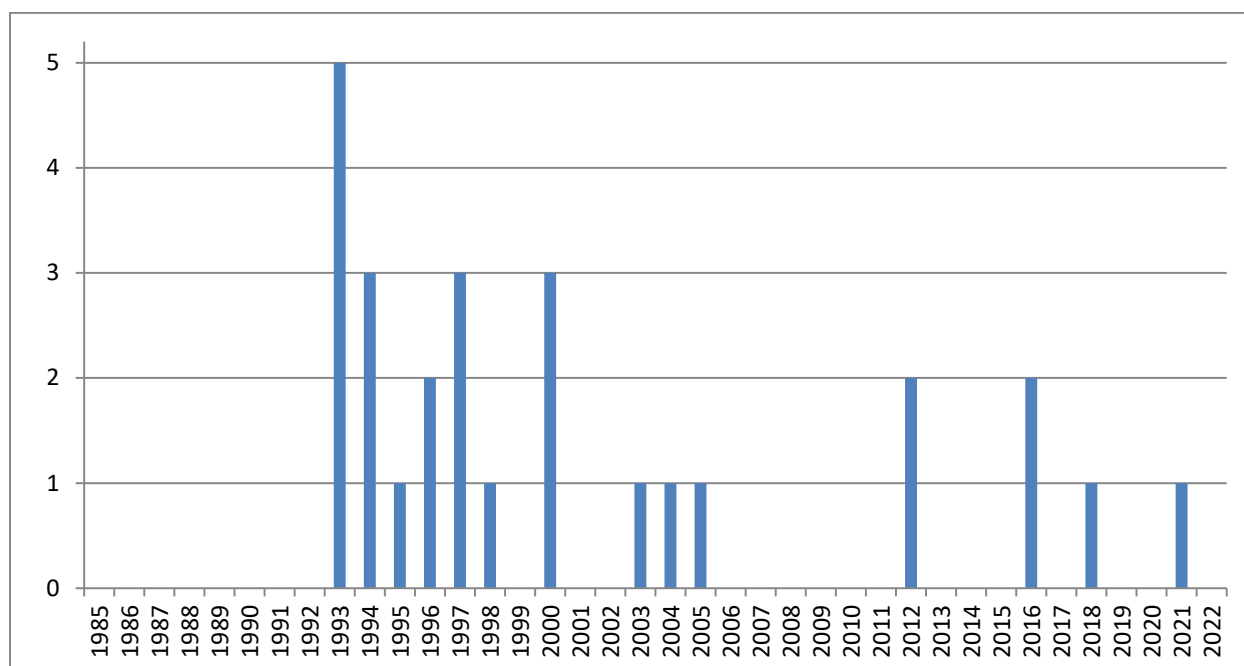


Figure 1: Serin records at Folkestone and Hythe

The records by week are given in figure 2. The majority (78%) of records have been in spring or early summer, between the 3rd April (week 14) and the 1st June (week 22). There has been one mid-summer record (on the 25th July 2012), with the others being noted in autumn, between the 22nd October (week 43) and 21st November (week 47).

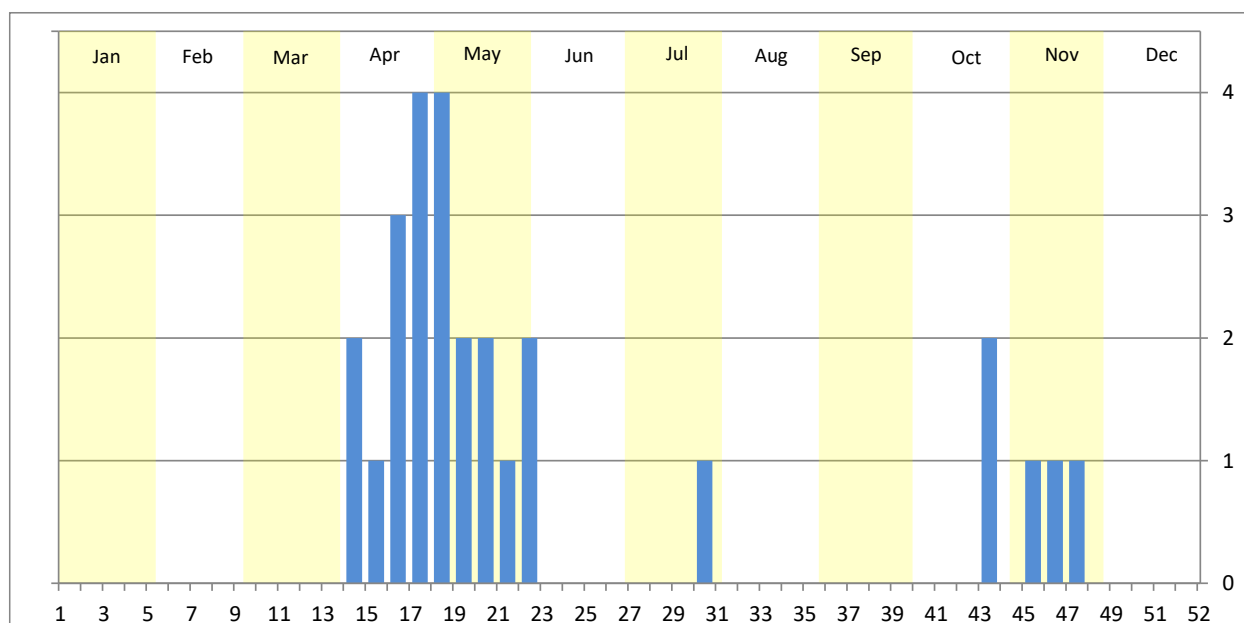


Figure 2: Serin records at Folkestone and Hythe by week

Figure 3 shows the distribution of records by tetrad. Fifteen records have been at the cliffs, between Capel Battery and Abbotscliffe, with a further six at Copt Point and two at Samphire Hoe. The other sightings relate to singles at Folkestone Harbour, Mill Point, Cheriton and Hythe.

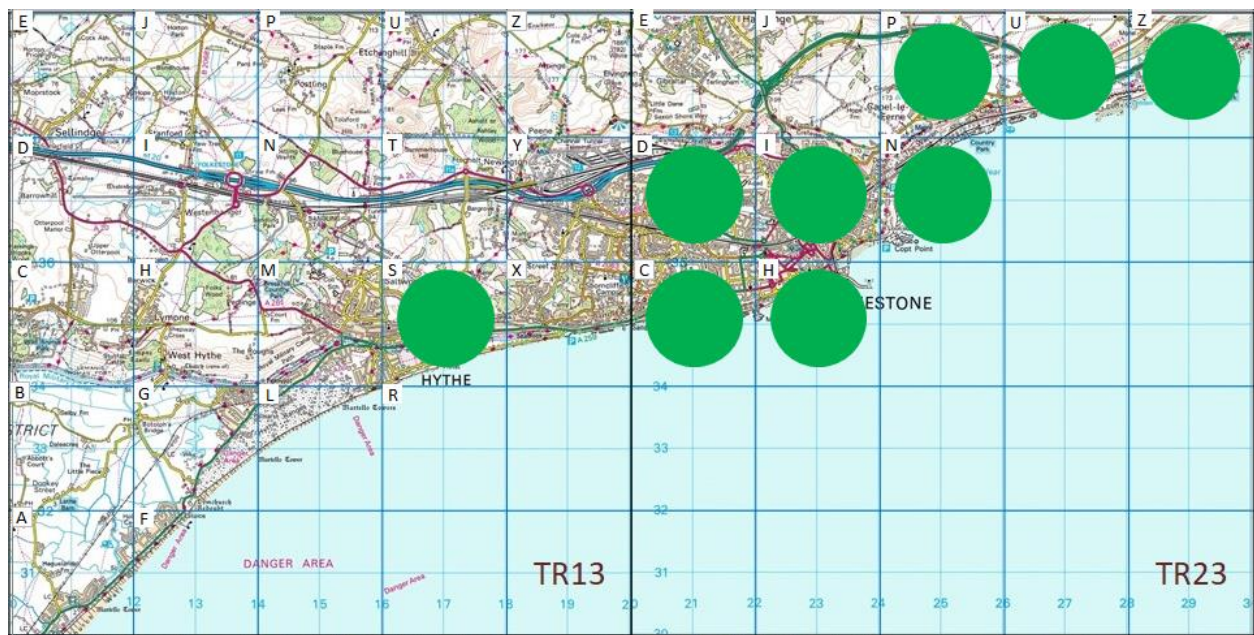


Figure 3: Distribution of all Serin records at Folkestone and Hythe by tetrad

The full list of records is as follows:

- 1993** Capel Battery, one flew north-west, 12th April (D. A. Gibson)
- 1993** Copt Point, female flew in off the sea, 24th April (D. A. Gibson)
- 1993** Mill Point, one flew west, 10th May (I. A. Roberts)
- 1993** Copt Point, one flew west, 10th May (D. A. Gibson), different to above based on times of observation
- 1993** Abbotscliffe, one, 22nd October (D. A. Gibson)
- 1994** Capel-le-Ferne, male, 29th April (D. A. Gibson)
- 1994** Capel-le-Ferne, one flew east, 1st May (D. A. Gibson)
- 1994** Capel Battery, one flew west, 1st June (D. A. Gibson)
- 1995** Copt Point, male flew in off the sea, 14th May (D. A. Gibson)
- 1996** Capel-le-Ferne, one flew west north-west, 8th November (D. A. Gibson)
- 1996** Copt Point, one flew west, 21st November (D. A. Gibson)
- 1997** Abbotscliffe, female, flew north-west, 3rd April (D. A. Gibson)
- 1997** Capel-le-Ferne Café, one flew in/west, 8th April (I. A. Roberts)
- 1997** Copt Point, male flew in off the sea, 3rd May (D. A. Gibson, I. A. Roberts)
- 1998** Abbotscliffe, one flew in/east, 27th April (I. A. Roberts)
- 2000** Samphire Hoe, one, 16th May (P. Holt)
- 2000** Abbotscliffe, one flew in off the sea, 20th May (D. A. Gibson, I. A. Roberts)
- 2000** Samphire Hoe, one, 27th May (P. Holt)
- 2003** Abbotscliffe, one, 15th November (I. A. Roberts)
- 2004** Copt Point, one flew east, 27th April (I. A. Roberts)
- 2005** Capel-le-Ferne, male singing briefly near Royal Oak pub, 30th April (I. A. Roberts)
- 2012** Cheriton, one flew north, 25th July (D. A. Gibson)
- 2012** Abbotscliffe, one flew east, 24th October (I. A. Roberts)
- 2016** Abbotscliffe, one flew east, 17th April (I. A. Roberts)
- 2016** Hythe, one flew in/west, 5th May (S. McMinn)
- 2018** Folkestone Harbour, singing male, 19th April (reported)
- 2021** Abbotscliffe, one flew east, 19th April (I. A. Roberts)

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Acknowledgements

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