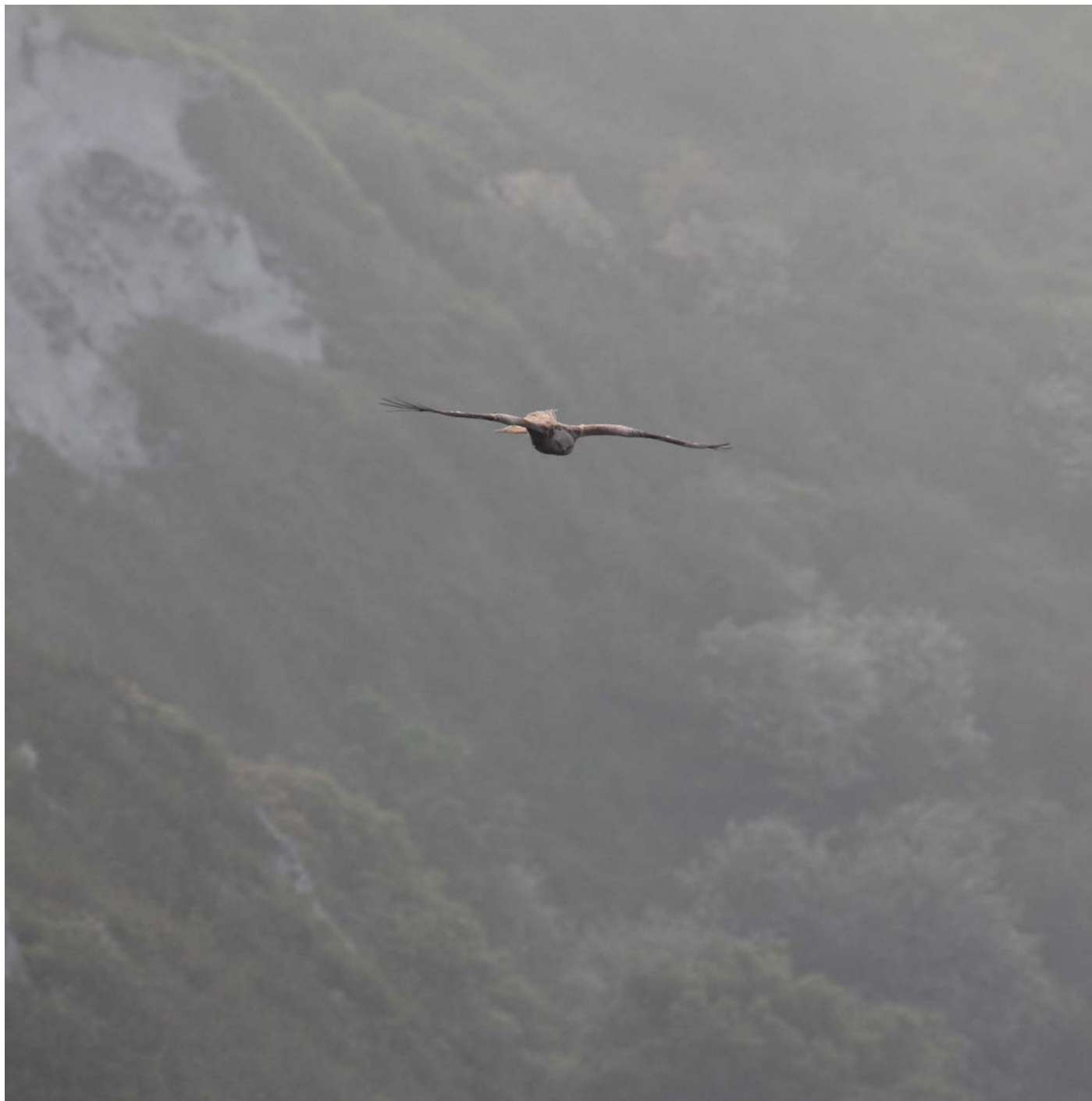


2012



Folkestone and Hythe Bird Report



Contents

Introduction	2
List of contributors	3
Review of the year	4
Systematic list	25
Escaped species	82
First and last dates for selected migrants	83
The 2012 year list	84
The Atlas	89
New species for Folkestone and Hythe in 2012	92
Ringing recoveries in 2012	98
The Folkestone and Hythe area	103

Introduction

Welcome to the Folkestone and Hythe Bird Report for 2012. This first annual report is part of the continuing progress in the documentation of the area's birdlife and wider natural history. Recent years have seen the launch of the website (in July 2003), production of annual bird and non-avian reviews (since 2003), completion of the BTO/KOS Atlas survey fieldwork (2007 to 2012) and establishment of a Twitter account to broadcast sightings (in March 2011).

Detailed accounts of all the 296 species currently on the Folkestone and Hythe list are in development, and have been completed for 128 of the rarer species. Now that the BTO/KOS Atlas fieldwork has finished, maps of the breeding and wintering distribution are available for all of the species that were recorded. Work to produce complete reports for the more regular species will continue. The accounts are available on the website, by following the link to the Folkestone and Hythe list, then the hyperlinks for the species. The accounts include photographs whenever they have been taken of the species locally, even though they might be of varying quality, and the image archive now contains 222 (75%) of species recorded at Folkestone and Hythe.

In early 2012 the Folkestone and Hythe butterfly list was published on the website and production of a draft list of macro moths is in development. Any information on *Lepidoptera* or other taxa would be gratefully appreciated. Similarly I would be very thankful to receive any bird records from the local area that have not been included within this report. The boundaries of the local area can be found on page 103 and my contact details are given at the bottom of this page.

The year 2012 proved to be ideal for the launch of the Folkestone and Hythe Bird Report as it saw a very good total of 203 species recorded (no previous year had produced a greater variety), three new sightings for the area, several record counts or influxes, and a host of other rare and scarce birds.

The highlights of the year included the first area records of Asian Desert Warbler, Short-toed Treecreeper and Rose-coloured Starling, whilst a Kumlein's Gull seen in February was the first occurrence of this Nearctic form. There were also the second area records of White-tailed Eagle and Barred Warbler in 2012, the fourth records of Great White Egret, Dotterel and Pallas's Warbler, and the fifth records of Caspian Gull and Sabine's Gull (with the latter being the first June record for the county).

Sightings of Pink-footed Goose, Red-rumped Swallow, Hoopoe, Crane, Hooded Crow, Little Stint, Bearded Tit, Tawny and Richard's Pipits, Smew, Yellow-browed and Wood Warbler, Wryneck and Twite added further excitement, whilst there were also record day counts or annual totals of Gadwall, Teal, Gannet, Red Kite, Great Skua, Short-eared Owl and Crossbill to report, as well as some exceptional movements of other finches.

Highlights amongst the breeding species were a Marsh Warbler holding territory in June and Firecrests confirmed breeding for the first time.

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19th January 2013

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Front cover: Red Kite at Capel-le-Ferne Café in May 2012 (Ian Roberts)

List of contributors 2012

I have endeavoured to include all observers known to have contributed records 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 be accepted for the oversight.

A J Appleton	J I Marshall
	S McMinn
S Beard	M McVail
G Blackburn	A J Morris
A Brown	
G J A Burton	R K Norman
R Card	R Oliver
J R Chantler	
P J Chantler	G Porter
S P Clancy	T Prentice
P Coleman	I Pritchard
L Collins	
M Collins	Rare Bird Alert
	I A Roberts
P Edmondson	C Roome
R Edwards	J Russell
	B A Ryan
D Featherbe	
N C Frampton	P J Sharp
	D E Smith
	P Smith
D A Gibson	
J A Gibson	
C Gillard	R Thorogood
R Gomes	P Trodd
B Green	
	M Vandoen
	M Varley
B Harper	
M Harper	
P I Holt	D Walker
P Howe	L Watkin
	D Weller
	P J Wells
N Jarman	M Whybrow
L Johannsen	B Woolhouse
C Johnson	
A Jupp	
M Keene	
M D Kennett	
S Knight	
D Lawrie	
A Lawson	
A Lean	
J E Leigh	
P Lightman	
A Luckhurst	

Review of the year 2012

January

Mild weather from 2011 continued into January 2012 due to the persisting influence of Atlantic weather systems. There were a couple of wet and windy periods, with the 3rd being particularly wild, when there were gusts of over 70 mph, but generally the weather was rather uneventful. The last few days saw temperatures drop and there were even a few snow flurries on the 31st.

With the absence of any cold weather wildfowl numbers were generally low. Mute Swans reached a peak of just 13 in the Botolph's Bridge/Nickoll's Quarry area and the only records of grey geese were two sightings of Greylag Geese in the same vicinity – 5 which flew in from the west before returning on the 7th and 2 which flew west on the 28th. Two Brent Geese flew east at Copt Point on the 3rd and one was in fields at the Willop Basin from the 4th-6th, before 7 flew east at the latter site on the 11th. Records of 6 Brent Geese east past Battery Point on the 24th and 40 east past Samphire Hoe the following day might have related to very early spring migrants (these were part of much larger up-channel movements off Dungeness), though 50 flew west at the former site on the 26th.



Goosander at Seabrook (Brian Harper)

There was a rather surprising influx of Shelduck, considering the mild conditions, with a total of up to 63 between the 1st and 11th, including 24 on the sea off the Willop Outfall on the 6th, 16 east past Folkestone Pier on the 8th and 9 that circled Nickoll's Quarry before flying back out to sea on the 10th. A pair of Wigeon was at the latter site on the 14th, where up to 7 Tufted Ducks were present throughout and up to 6 Teal were seen on several dates. Around 100 Teal were at Sandling Park on the 2nd, where a Mandarin and 5 Gadwall were also noted, and a pair of Gadwall flew west past Hythe on the 1st. Three adult drake **Goosander** were found on the canal at Seabrook on the 7th and were seen flying out on to the sea the next day. At least two remained in the area until the 11th, with one until the 14th, commuting between the canal and Hythe Bay.

A Black-throated Diver flew east past Mill Point on the 8th, when 64 Red-throated Divers flew west at Folkestone Pier, and another 50 of the latter species flew west past Folkestone Beach the following day. Fulmars had increased to 8 on the cliffs at Samphire by the 1st, with 3 noted at Folkestone Warren the next day, whilst Gannets were frequently noted offshore though the peak count was just 15 at Mill Point on the 8th. Cormorants were again using the bank of the canal cutting, north of Botolph's Bridge, as a roosting site, with a peak count of 8 there on the 22nd. There three sightings of Shag, probably relating to the same bird, in the Folkestone Harbour / Mill Point area between the 12th and 17th, but one off Samphire Hoe on the 25th was more likely to be a new individual.

A Little Egret was at Nickoll's Quarry on the 1st, with two at Botolph's Bridge on the 7th, then several sightings of singles in the Botolph's Bridge / Nickoll's Quarry area before 3 were counted on the 21st. The flock increased to 4 the subsequent day, and at least 3 were still present on the 28th. Others were seen at Fairmead Farm, Westenhangar on the 2nd and Samphire Hoe on the 25th, whilst a **Great White Egret** was reported at Nickoll's Quarry on the 27th.

Single Marsh Harriers flew west over Hill Road, Folkestone on the 8th and Nickoll's Quarry on the 10th, and Peregrines were seen away from their usual haunts at Botolph's Bridge on the 7th and Donkey Street on the 22nd. There were only two records of Water Rail – at Seabrook on the 7th and Samphire Hoe on the 30th – and Coot numbers were low, but the Moorhen found in Folkestone Harbour in mid-December remained there all month.

Seven Purple Sandpipers were at Hythe throughout, frequenting the rock groynes opposite the Imperial and Stade Court hotels, and 2 Dunlin were roosting there on the 8th. At least one Green Sandpiper was wintering in the Botolph's Bridge/ Nickoll's Quarry area. A Jack Snipe and 35 Common Snipe were in a flooded field inland of the Hythe Redoubt on the 4th, with smaller numbers of Common Snipe at several other sites. Single Woodcock were at Saltwood on the 5th and Thorn Wood, Postling Wents on the 21st.

A Bar-tailed Godwit flew west at the Willop Outfall on the 6th and a Sanderling was seen there on the 11th, whilst up to 21 Curlews were counted in the fields inland. A flock of Ringed Plovers frequented the Folkestone Harbour/ Mill Point area, with a peak count of 45 on the 13th. The Harbour also held up to 12 Redshank and 19 Turnstone, with up to 40 Turnstone at Hythe.



Bearded Tit at Nickoll's Quarry (Ian Roberts)

A Golden Plover flew west over Botolph's Bridge on the 14th and 80 Lapwings were near Perry Wood on the 2nd, whilst colder weather at the end of the month produced 10 Golden Plovers at Abbotscliffe and 96 Lapwings flying west south-west over Saltwood on the 31st.

An adult Little Gull lingered off Folkestone Pier on the 18th and there were counts of 10-15 Kittiwakes off Copt Point, Folkestone Pier, Mill Point and Samphire Hoe, whilst Mediterranean Gulls were widespread as always, with a peak count of 204 at Copt Point on the 23rd. There was a notable influx of Razorbills in the second half of the month, including counts of 65 off Copt Point on the 18th and 235 off Samphire Hoe on the 25th, and a **Little Auk** was reported off Abbotscliffe on the 23rd.

The resident Little Owl remained at Samphire Hoe all month and another was seen at Hythe Ranges on the 13th, whilst a Tawny Owl was calling near Perry Wood on the 7th. Single Kingfishers were along the canal by Princes Parade and at Nickoll's Quarry on the 1st, at West Hythe dam on the 7th and in Folkestone Harbour on the 17th, whilst up to two Ravens were seen along the cliffs between Folkestone Warren and Samphire Hoe on three dates.

A Firecrest was at West Hythe on the 7th, with another along the canal by Hythe Roughs on the 9th, and a Marsh Tit was in Chesterfield Wood, Sandling on the 2nd, whilst two **Bearded Tits** were at Nickoll's Quarry on the 10th. Two Cetti's Warblers were heard or seen near Botolph's Bridge, Seabrook and Nickoll's Quarry (2), single Chiffchaffs were seen along the canal at Hythe, adjacent to the Hotel Imperial Golf Course on two dates and a West Hythe on the 7th, whilst wintering Blackcaps were noted at the former site (female on the 8th) and Saltwood (male on the 7th and 24th).

Nuthatches were noted at two sites in the Saltwood area and there was a peak count of 60 Fieldfares in the Botolph's Bridge area on the 28th but very few Redwings were noted. A Black Redstart was in the Folkestone Harbour area on the 13th and two Stonechats were seen at Nickoll's Quarry and Samphire Hoe. A count of 29 Meadow Pipits at Nickoll's Quarry on the 14th was notable and Rock Pipits were at Folkestone Harbour and Samphire Hoe.

The only record of Siskin was of two in Chesterfield Wood, Sandling on the 2nd, whilst Linnet flocks were noted at Fisherman's Beach, Hythe (35) and Nickoll's Quarry (30), and a small flock of **Twite** flew south over Saltwood on the 24th. At least 50 Yellowhammers were noted in an area of set-aside near Summerhouse Hill on the 21st.

Despite the lack of any cold weather 111 species were recorded, which was exactly the same total as the previous two Januaries!

February

February was particularly notable for the appearance of two first class rarities and some significant cold weather movement. A second-winter **Kumlein's Gull**, which had been found in Dover Harbour in late January, was seen flying east past Samphire Hoe on the morning of the 6th; and an immature **White-tailed Eagle** was seen in a field near Botolph's Bridge on the afternoon of the 14th, before it flew off west. After being seen and photographed at Walland Marsh on the 16th it paid another visit to our area, flying south-west over Saltwood on the late morning of 19th.



Birds attracted to the ice-free canal cutting, including Goosander and several Wigeon (Ian Roberts)

The last few days of January had seen temperatures begin to drop and conditions turned bitterly cold in early February. After some light snow on the 4th, the following night saw some very heavy snowfall, leading to accumulations of up to 10 cm in lower areas and even deeper cover on the hills. Temperatures fell to -6 °C in Hythe and the canal remained frozen for several days, whilst parts of Nickoll's Quarry also began to ice over. However the canal cutting between West Hythe Dam and the sluice gate near the Hythe Redoubt remained largely ice-free during this period and attracted most of the highlight birds, including a **Bittern** near Stonereach Bridge on the 8th, a red-head **Smew** on the 11th, a **Great White Egret** between the 7th and 11th, and up to 3 **Goosanders** (2 drakes) between the same dates. **Goosanders** were also seen at Hythe beach, where a pair flew west on the 3rd, and Nickoll's Quarry, where a red-head was present on the 8th.

A pair of Black Swans, which drifted east from Hythe beach to Mill Point during the 3rd, made for an unusual sight, whilst the cold weather led to some accumulation of Mute Swans on the Marsh, though the peak count was just 26. About 80 Brent Geese were logged in the first half of the month, including 53 off the Hythe Redoubt on the 4th, 15 east past the Willop Outfall on the 4th, and up to 7 lingering in fields near Botolph's Bridge, and up to 3 Shelduck were seen in the Botolph's Bridge vicinity.

Two drake Pintail were on the sea off the Willop Outfall on the 1st, whilst 9 Shoveler were seen off Hythe Redoubt on the 4th, and there was a notable influx of Wigeon, with a flock in the Botolph's Bridge / Nickoll's Quarry area building up to a peak of 80 on the 10th, whilst on the sea counts included 15 off the Willop Outfall on the 1st, and 10 off Hythe and 27 off the Redoubt on the 4th. The other commoner dabbling ducks were also seen in good numbers, with peaks in the Botolph's Bridge / Nickoll's Quarry area of 15 Gadwall on the 11th, 22 Teal on the 10th and 64 Mallard on the 8th. This same area also produced maxima of 17 Pochard and 28 Tufted Ducks, both on the 10th, whilst elsewhere 5 Gadwall flew west past Samphire Hoe on the 3rd, with a female lingering with the local Mallards on the west pond for several days, and 4 Teal were noted there on the 6th.

The conditions also forced Little Grebes out into more open water and 15 were counted in the Botolph's Bridge / Nickoll's Quarry area on the 7th, whilst 14 Cormorants were logged at the former site on the 9th. Up to 3 Little Egrets remained in this area during the first half of the month, with another noted at Samphire Hoe on the 3rd, whilst Grey Herons increased to 15 at Botolph's Bridge on the 9th. A male Marsh Harrier was hunting at Botolph's Bridge on the 3rd-4th and a male Merlin was seen perched in a field at the Willop Basin on the 1st. The Moorhen remained in Folkestone Harbour throughout (being last seen on the 20th March), whilst Coot increased to 29 at Nickoll's Quarry on the 4th.

Waders were also affected by the weather, including a general increase in numbers of Lapwings and their appearance at unusual sites such as Horn Street (15 on the 9th), Samphire Hoe (peak of 7 on the 7th), the golf course at Copt Point (peak of 3 on the 8th) and Abbotscliffe (one on the 11th). There were also 4 Golden Plovers on the golf course at Copt Point on the 7th, and a couple of singles in the Botolph's Bridge / Willop Sewer area. An influx of Woodcock was particularly notable, with concentrations of 4 at Nickoll's Quarry on the 10th, 5 at Abbotscliffe on the 11th and 6 at Church Hougham on the 7th, and singles at 7 widely scattered sites well away from their normal woodland haunts.



White-tailed Eagle at Walland Marsh (Martin Casemore)

Singles of Grey Plover, Dunlin, Snipe and Curlew were noted at Samphire Hoe, whilst the Copt Point / Folkestone Harbour area attracted a Grey Plover (on the 8th), and peaks of 2 Sanderlings, 4 Redshanks, 7 Ringed Plovers, 20 Dunlins (also on the 8th) and 20 Turnstones. A Green Sandpiper and peaks of 2 Dunlin, 3 Snipe, 6 Curlew (on the 5th) and 7 Redshank were in the Botolph's Bridge / Nickoll's Quarry area, whilst at least 4 Purple Sandpipers remained at Hythe.

Ten Kittiwakes were at Mill Point on the 2nd and Common Gulls may have been congregating due to the weather, with counts of 35 at Nickoll's Quarry on the 8th and 40 at Samphire Hoe on the 6th. 15 Razorbills were on the sea off the latter site on the 3rd but otherwise auk numbers were low. The Little Owl was noted again at the Hoe on the 6th and Kingfishers were at Botolph's Bridge on two dates.

On the 5th nine Meadow Pipits and 27 Skylarks flew west over Hythe but little other cold weather movement was evident amongst passerines. Stonechats appeared to decrease from 4 at Samphire Hoe on the 1st to one on the 11th, and Fieldfares reduced to a few scattered singles, whilst Redwing numbers remained low.

There was a gradual thaw from around the 13th and the rest of the month felt much milder, though was in line with the seasonal norm and there were a few overnight frosts. It was mostly dry with mostly light to moderate winds.

Wildfowl numbers returned to normal levels, with small numbers of Gadwall, Teal, Pochard and Tufted Duck lingering at the usual sites such as Nickoll's Quarry and Folkestone Racecourse, Westenhanger. A drake Mandarin was along the canal at Seabrook on the 24th, four Shelduck flew west there on the 26th and a Pochard was present on the 29th. The only Common Scoter of the year so far was off Mill Point on the 21st, when a Shag and 39 Great Crested Grebes were also noted.

Common Buzzards were noted in the usual locations but a total of 11 which flew over Saltwood on the 25th, including a flock of 7, were presumably migrants. A Peregrine also flew over there on the 22nd. Three Water Rails were counted along the canal at Seabrook on the 29th.

Several Woodcock remained following the cold spell, with a total of 9 logged in the second half of the month, as did a Curlew at Samphire Hoe and 3 Dunlin in Folkestone Harbour, whilst a flock of 50 Golden Plovers that flew east at Abbotscliffe on the 22nd, were probably re-orientating. Two Ringed Plovers had returned to Hythe Ranges by the 25th and five Grey Plovers were at the Willop Outfall from the 23rd, whilst 40 Turnstones were counted at Hythe on the 21st.

A Great Skua was feeding on a dead fish off Samphire Hoe on the 22nd, when 5 Kittiwakes were also seen there. Common Gulls began to move through late in the month, and included a flock of 100 at Capel-le-Ferne on the 24th. 1,000 Wood Pigeons were in rape fields along Crete Road West on the 25th and six Tawny Owls were logged on the night of the 26th.

Single Cetti's Warblers at Nickoll's Quarry and along the canal at Seabrook on the 29th were an encouraging sign that some at least have survived the cold snap, whilst a Chiffchaff was at Seabrook on the 29th and Blackcaps were present in gardens in Saltwood (a male) and eastern Folkestone (a male and a female) in the second half of the month. Winter thrush numbers increased, and included 20 Redwings at Brockhill CP and 100 Fieldfares at Newingreen.



Kumlein's Gull at Dover Harbour (Martyn Wilson)

The last few days of the month saw some early signs of return passage, including a series of Crossbill records, with at least one in Chesterfield Wood, Sandling on the 26th-27th, four flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 27th and one heading east over Saltwood the next day. The first two Lesser Redpolls of the year were seen in a garden in Saltwood on the 26th, and a Reed Bunting and 7 Siskins flew north at Abbotscliffe on the 27th. A small nocturnal movement of Redwings occurred on the 29th.

A total of 113 species were recorded in February. These included 25 additions to the year list, which increased it to 126.

March

A rather mild 1st saw three Redwings grounded at Abbotscliffe, following the previous night's nocturnal movement, whilst two Common Buzzards flew west at Saltwood. An easterly breeze the next day encouraged some early passage at sea, with a Lesser Black-backed Gull, 2 Razorbills, 6 Red-throated Divers, 10 Cormorants, 11 Kittiwakes, 16 auk sp., 20 Common Gulls, 23 Fulmars and 170 Gannets moving up-channel past Samphire Hoe, and 5 Razorbills noted offshore. Passage continued on a foggy 3rd, when 5 Brent Geese, 14 Cormorants and 20 Gannets flew east at Seabrook, whilst 47 Great Crested Grebes were on the sea, and the Water Rail and female Pochard were still present on the canal there. In a moderate south-westerly the next day 5 Common Scoters, 66 Brent Geese and 124 Gannets went east past Hythe, whilst a female Blackcap was noted in a garden there. The small wintering flock of Purple Sandpipers remained at Hythe all month, with a peak count of four.

The wind veered round to the north-west on the 5th and focus changed to the land, where 20 Siskins and 1,200 Chaffinches flew east at Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site, with a Redwing, 2 Siskins and 490 Chaffinches heading east there the next day, whilst 80 Fieldfares and 120 Redwings were along Crete Road West. The 7th saw a strong south-westerly wind pick up but this did not generate any movement, though the second-winter **Kumlein's Gull** at Dover Harbour was visible from Samphire Hoe. The next day offered little more, apart from counts of 29 Red-throated Divers and 60 Great Crested Grebes on the sea off the Willop Outfall.

An area of high pressure brought calmer, milder conditions from the 9th, when a Chiffchaff (probably the first migrant individual of the year) was in a garden in Joyes Road, Folkestone, whilst a Merlin was seen along Crete Road West, and there was a nocturnal movement of Redwings.

Despite these signs of encouragement, the appearance of the area's first ever **Short-toed Treecreeper**, at Samphire Hoe on the 10th, was wholly unexpected. An account of this record is provided on page 92. The first migrant Firecrest of the year was also seen there, whilst an **Avocet** was at Hythe Ranges. A Little Egret in Folkestone Harbour, single Common Buzzards over Hythe and Saltwood, and 2 Siskins at Abbotscliffe completed a very good day. The 11th produced a Shag, a Woodcock, a Raven, the Firecrest and 5 Chiffchaffs at Samphire Hoe, whilst 8 Siskins and 80 Common Scoter flew east. A Raven, 2 Chiffchaffs and 4 Goldcrests were seen at Folkestone Warren, and a Marsh Harrier, three *alba* wagtails, four Common Buzzards and 1,275 Starlings flew over Saltwood.



Short-toed Treecreeper at Samphire Hoe (Simon Knight)

Arrivals continued as high pressure settled over southern England, with a Black Redstart at Samphire Hoe on the 13th, when a Chiffchaff and 4 Redwings were at Nickoll's Quarry and two Redshank flew east at Hythe Redoubt. Two Pochard, 2 Green Sandpipers, 2 Cetti's Warblers and 4 Tufted Ducks were also noted at the quarry and 185 Great Crested Grebes were off the Hythe Redoubt. A Little Egret, a Great Skua, 5 Shelduck, 5 Kittiwakes, 18 Red-throated Divers and 68 Gannets flew east past Samphire Hoe the following day, when a female Blackcap was in a garden in Folkestone and 2 Common Buzzards flew north over Saltwood. Two **Common Cranes** and another two Common Buzzards flew over a garden in Saltwood on the 15th, when 2 Redpolls were seen there and a male Blackcap was seen in a garden in Hythe.

The wind increased from the south-west as the high pressure system slipped away on the 16th, but migrants continued to arrive including a Black Redstart and 2 Wheatears along Hythe Ranges, and 4 Wheatears at Samphire Hoe, where a Great Skua was lingering offshore, a Shelduck, 8 Kittiwakes, 22 Red-throated Divers, 260 Gannets and 670 Brent Geese flew east and a Little Egret and a Red-breasted Merganser flew west. The first two Sandwich Terns of the year flew east at the latter site the next day, when 2 Chiffchaffs and 3 Black Redstarts were present.

A calm and pleasant day on the 18th produced a Black Redstart at Hythe, where two Common Buzzards flew north, a Firecrest, a Jack Snipe and 2 Chiffchaffs at Nickoll's Quarry, a Woodcock at Horn Street, 7 Redwings at Abbotscliffe, and 3 Siskins and 16 Redwings flying west over Saltwood. Cooler westerly winds from the 19th induced a little visual passage, when 3 *alba* wagtails, 3 Meadow Pipits, 3 Siskins, 6 Goldfinches, 8 Linnets, 9 Greenfinches and 79 Chaffinches flew east at Capel-le-Ferne Café, with two Marsh Harriers arriving in off the sea there the next day, after one had earlier been seen heading inland over Crete Road East. The 19th also saw a male Blackcap in a garden at Seabrook, Chiffchaffs at Capel-le-Ferne and Sene Golf Course (2), and a Raven at Capel-le-Ferne. Two Ravens were seen there the following day, when a Black Redstart at Round Down and a Wheatear, 4 Stonechats and 6 Chiffchaffs at Samphire Hoe were also logged. A Firecrest, a Goldcrest, a Brambling and 4 Chiffchaffs were at a foggy Samphire Hoe on the 21st, when a pair of Blackcaps were in a garden in Saltwood.

High pressure dominated the last ten days of the month and it was rather mild despite a cool north to north-easterly wind, with temperatures climbing to around 18°C on the 29th. A Snipe, a Curlew, 4 Shelduck, 40 Gannets and 294 Brent Geese flew east at Samphire Hoe on the 23rd, when a Grey Wagtail, a Yellowhammer and 2 Redpolls flew over, and 11 Sandwich Terns went east there the next day. The 24th also saw a notable easterly passage of Common Buzzards, with one over Folkestone, three over Hythe and five over Saltwood, whilst a **Red Kite** flew over Folkestone the following day. The 25th also produced some interesting passage at sea, with a Great Skua, a Grey Plover, a Shelduck, 2 Red-breasted Mergansers, 2 Sanderling, 4 Sandwich Terns, 6 Canada Geese, 8 Red-throated Divers, 9 Shoveler, 15 **Avocets** and 32 Brent Geese moving up-channel off Copt Point, whilst a pair of Gadwall were on the sea off Hythe. Another Common Buzzard flew over Folkestone on the 26th, and 11 Red-throated Divers, 15 Gannets and 15 Sandwich Terns passed Samphire Hoe.

On the 27th a Brambling, 2 Swallows, 4 Redpolls, 5 *alba* wagtails, 5 Siskins, 12 Crossbills, 16 Linnets and 3,145 Chaffinches flew east at Abbotscliffe, where a Corn Bunting and 2 Long-tailed Tits were noted, and another Swallow was along the canal near the Imperial Golf Course, Hythe, where two Greylag Geese flew west. Two Crossbills flew west at Abbotscliffe the next day, and 2 Siskins, 6 Linnets and 40 Chaffinches flew east there, whilst a Common Buzzard, 2 Green Sandpipers and 3 Swallows flew over Hillcrest Road, Hythe and 25 Sandwich Terns flew east past Copt Point. In total 5,001 Chaffinches were logged moving east at the cliffs in March.



Red Kite at Folkestone (Dale Gibson)

Another **Red Kite** flew inland over Abbotscliffe on the 29th, and a Swallow, a Black Redstart, a Firecrest, a Redwing and another 2 Long-tailed Tits were seen there, whilst 2 Common Buzzards, 4 Crossbills, 20 Redpolls and 40 Chaffinches flew over at the cliffs and a Blackcap and 8 Chiffchaffs were counted. Elsewhere a Kingfisher and 2 Canada Geese were at Nickoll's Quarry and 21 Sandwich Terns flew east at Hythe. The following day saw a Woodcock near Frogholt, 11 Siskins north over Saltwood and yet another migrant Common Buzzard (the 28th of the month) north over Mill Point. Finally a Red-breasted Merganser was seen off Abbotscliffe on the 31st.

A total of 116 species were recorded in March. These included 11 additions to the year list, which increased it to 137.

April

The dry weather continued into April and there was a small arrival on the 1st, involving 3 Black Redstarts and 3 Chiffchaffs at Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site and single Black Redstart and a Chiffchaff at Samphire Hoe. Two Red-breasted Mergansers, 2 Shelduck and 99 Sandwich Terns flew east at sea, with another 39 Sandwich Terns on the rocks opposite the Hotel Imperial, Hythe, where 7 Purple Sandpipers were counted. A Blackcap at Abbotscliffe was all that was of note on the 2nd and the following day produced just a single Red-breasted Merganser east past Copt Point.

Overnight showers into the 4th constituted the first rainfall for some time and two Wheatears and 5 Black Redstarts arrived at Samphire Hoe, with another 4 Wheatears at Abbotscliffe, whilst an Osprey was reported flying north-east over Folkestone in the afternoon. Two Greylag Geese flew north over Saltwood on the 5th and the 7th produced the first Willow Warbler, in a garden in Cheriton, and the first Sedge Warbler, at Nickoll's Quarry, with a flock of 15 Swallows briefly at the latter site. A Black Redstart and 3 Wheatears were at Samphire Hoe the next day, and 40 Common Scoter flew east.

A strong south-westerly wind picked up on the 9th, with rain arriving later in the day, and 2 Red-breasted Mergansers, 4 Brent Geese, 6 Sandwich Terns and 27 Common Scoter flew east past Copt Point, whilst a Swallow over Saltwood was the only bird of note on the land. The next day was also windy and felt colder as the wind headed round to a more northerly direction, but produced the first Whimbrel of the year, at Botolph's Bridge, where another Swallow was logged. A Raven and 3 Wheatears were at Samphire Hoe but just 3 Sandwich Terns passed by at sea.

The 11th was chilly with blustery showers but the first Whitethroat and Yellow Wagtail were at Abbotscliffe, along with a Black Redstart, 2 Willow Warblers and 3 Wheatears whilst a Redpoll flew north. A Blackcap, 3 Wheatears and 3 Chiffchaffs were at Samphire Hoe and another Blackcap was in a garden in Folkestone. Two Greylag and 2 Canada Geese were at Nickoll's Quarry. Although it remained cold in a moderate north-westerly breeze the next day arrivals continued, with a Black Redstart, a Wheatear, 3 Swallows, 5 Willow Warblers and 5 Ring Ouzels at Abbotscliffe, the first Reed Warbler and 3 Willow Warblers at Nickoll's Quarry, single Whitethroat, Wheatear and Willow Warbler at Princes Parade and a Wheatear by the Hotel Imperial, Hythe. A Swallow, a Peregrine and 4 Buzzards flew over Saltwood and 5 Buzzards flew over Port Lympne.

On the 13th the wind eased a little and a Hobby and 5 Swallows flew in off the sea at Samphire Hoe, where 2 Willow Warblers and 3 Wheatears were seen, whilst 4 Shags and 15 Sandwich Terns were offshore. Two of the previous day's Ring Ouzels remained at Abbotscliffe (until the 20th) and a Wheatear, a Willow Warbler and 6 Swallows were also noted, with another Swallow and 5 Wheatears at Church Hougham. Two Little Egrets flew west past Princes Parade, Hythe and 2 Reed Warblers were at West Hythe.



Ring Ouzel at Abbotscliffe (Ian Roberts)

The wind remained in the north over the next three days and it felt unseasonably cold with even an overnight frost on the 15th/16th. Migrants continued to trickle through, with a ringtail Hen Harrier at Abbotscliffe on the 15th being the highlight. The same day saw the first Sand Martins (3) and House Martins (4) with at

least 25 Swallows (increasing to 50 the next day) at Nickoll's Quarry, where a Reed Warbler, a Sedge Warbler, 2 Cetti's Warblers, a Green Sandpiper and 4 Greylag Geese were also logged, with a Corn Bunting at Botolph's Bridge. Two Wheatears were at Princes Parade, Hythe with a Reed Warbler along the canal at Seabrook, and a few Whitethroats and Swallows were at various locations. The sea remained quiet, with just one Whimbrel, 6 Sandwich Terns, 9 Brent Geese, 25 Gannets and 30 Common Scoter passing Copt Point on the 14th, and five Common Scoter off Hythe, with three lingering to the 16th.

The first of a series of Atlantic low pressure systems swept in on the 17th, bringing strong southerly winds and rain, and this encouraged some passage at sea, where an Arctic Skua, a Purple Sandpiper, a Red-breasted Merganser, 2 Pintail, 3 Great Skuas, 3 Mediterranean Gulls, 4 Manx Shearwaters, 60 Brent Geese and 110 Common Scoters passed Copt Point. Similar conditions the next day produced a Black-throated Diver, a Whimbrel, 3 Arctic Skuas, 5 Manx Shearwaters, 13 Great Skuas (a spring record) and 35 Common Scoters off the same site.

The wind eased on the 19th which allowed a **Hoopoe** to be found on the golf course by the Hotel Imperial, Hythe. The first Lesser Whitethroat was at Botolph's Bridge the following day, when a Willow Warbler, a Wheatear and 2 Whitethroats were at Abbotscliffe, with 15 Goldfinches, 20 Linnets and 23 Swallows flying over, and 2 Reed Warblers were by the Hythe Imperial Golf Course. The 21st was quiet after overnight rain, with just a Little Egret and 2 Ravens at Samphire Hoe and 6 Swallows in off the sea at Copt Point being of note.

Another low pressure system brought strong southerlies and heavy rain on the 23rd, and a Black-throated Diver, 2 Red-breasted Mergansers, 2 Bar-tailed Godwits, 3 Whimbrel, 3 Arctic Skuas, 4 Great Skuas, 30 Sandwich Terns and 77 Common Scoters flew east past Copt Point, whilst a flock of 25 Bar-tailed Godwits flew east over Saltwood.

The following day saw more rain and little of note bar a Shag offshore of Samphire Hoe. The sea remained the focus on the 25th as a south-easterly wind produced a **dark phase ('Blue') Fulmar**, a Pomarine Skua, 2 Manx Shearwaters, 2 Common Terns, 8 Arctic Skuas, 16 Great Skuas (another spring record), 20 Common Scoters and 90 Sandwich Terns past Copt Point before yet more heavy rain set in. The wind veered more southerly on the 26th and just singles of Manx Shearwater and Great Skua, and 30 Common Scoters flew east at Copt Point, whilst 3 House Martins arrived in off the sea there.

The 27th was another blustery day but the wind finally calmed in the late afternoon to give quite a calm, dry night, during which two Nightingales were heard singing in Asholt Wood. The wind had begun to pick up from the north-east though by dawn with rain moving in soon after, and the 28th was rather quiet, though the first Swift flew in off the sea at Capel-le-Ferne and 28 Whimbrel flew east past Copt Point.

The 29th began wet, with a strong easterly breeze, though did eventually brighten up. A Shag, 2 Great Skuas and 80 Sandwich Terns flew past Samphire Hoe, a Hobby was seen along Crete Road East, 15 House Martins flew in off the sea at Copt Point and 5 Swifts, 15 Sand Martins, 30 House Martins and 300+ Swallows were at Nickoll's Quarry.



Hoopoe at Hythe Imperial Golf Course (Brian Harper)

The last day of the month saw a small arrival, including a male Redstart, 2 Common Sandpipers, 2 Chiffchaffs, 2 Blackcap, 4 Whitethroats, 5 Wheatears and 6 House Martins at Samphire Hoe, where a Curlew, a Collared Dove, 2 Swifts, 3 Yellow Wagtails and 4 Swallows flew over, a Cuckoo, a Wheatear, 3 Swifts and 6 Whimbrel at Nickoll's Quarry, a Garden Warbler at Cowtye Wood, and 2 Wheatears at Abbotscliffe. At sea a Black-throated Diver, an Arctic Skua, a Great Skua, 2 Sanderlings, 4 Common Terns and 120 Sandwich Terns flew east past Copt Point.

Overall it was the wettest April in south-east England for 12 years, with over 250% of the average monthly rainfall recorded. Nationally it was the coldest April since 1989, with average temperatures down 5°C on last year, which meant it was colder than March. Unsurprisingly therefore most common migrants arrived later than last year. Only four of the 17 regularly occurring species with first arrival dates in April 2012 occurred earlier than in 2011 (Arctic Skua, Common Tern, Nightingale and Sedge Warbler) and on average arrivals were 3.9 days later than last year.

A total of 121 species were recorded in April, including 24 additions to the year list, which increased it to 161. On account of the weather this was considerably less than the 132 recorded in April 2011 when the year list stood at 168 by the end of the month.

May

Following overnight rain there was another small arrival on the first day of May, with a male Redstart, a Tree Pipit and a Willow Warbler at Abbotscliffe and a Nightingale, a Common Sandpiper and 4 Wheatears at Samphire Hoe. A Grey Wagtail, 3 Yellow Wagtails, 3 Swifts, 8 Swallows and 30 House Martins flew over the latter site, whilst a Swift and 3 Yellow Wagtails were seen over the former. At sea the only Little Tern of the spring flew east, as did yet another Great Skua, an Arctic Skua, a Grey Plover, 5 Shelduck, 6 Dunlin, 10 Kittiwakes, 29 Whimbrel, 64 Bar-tailed Godwits, 75 Sandwich Terns and 285 Common Terns, whilst a Shag was offshore.

Migrants continued to arrive into a moderate northerly wind on the 2nd, when a **Wood Warbler**, a Spotted Flycatcher, a female Common Redstart, a Firecrest, a Sedge Warbler, a Reed Warbler, a Common Sandpiper, 2 Dunlin and 4 Willow Warblers were at Samphire Hoe, and a Spotted Flycatcher, a female Common Redstart, a Reed Warbler, a Yellow Wagtail, a Willow Warbler and 2 Lesser Whitethroats were at Abbotscliffe. In total 2 Yellow Wagtails, 6 House Martins, 14 Swallows and 19 Swifts flew in off the sea at the cliffs, whilst a Black-throated Diver, a Canada Goose, 3 Ringed Plovers, 3 Whimbrel and 22 Dunlin flew east at sea. A Short-eared Owl was at Nickoll's Quarry, where a Cuckoo, 10 Swifts, 13 Whimbrel, 15 Sand Martins, 80 House Martins and 300 Swallows were also logged, whilst a Hobby flew over Saltwood, a Little Egret was at Copt Point and at least one Purple Sandpiper remained at Hythe.

Similar conditions the next day produced a Spotted Flycatcher, a Cuckoo, a Reed Warbler, a Sand Martin, 2 Common Sandpipers and 5 Wheatears at Samphire Hoe and a Fieldfare, a Tree Pipit and a Lesser Whitethroat in the gully at Abbotscliffe.

The wind eased a little on the 4th and a female Whinchat, 2 male Ring Ouzels, 2 Lesser Whitethroats, 3 Yellow Wagtails, 3 Whimbrel and 5 Wheatears were at Abbotscliffe, whilst 2 Hobbies, at least 15 Swallows and 178 Swifts flew over and a Great Skua was seen offshore. Two Redshank, 7 Whimbrel and 8 Wheatears were at Hythe Ranges.

Northerly winds persisted for the next two days and migration began to slow up, though a male Ring Ouzel, a new Black Redstart, 5 Common Sandpipers and 20 Wheatears were at Samphire Hoe on the 5th, when a Marsh Tit, a Willow Warbler, a Lesser Whitethroat and 3 Garden Warblers were recorded in the Sandling area. A Barn Owl (present until the month's end) and a Cuckoo were seen near the Hythe Redoubt the following evening, and a Grey Heron flew over at Hythe.



Wood Warbler at Samphire Hoe (Ian Roberts)

A couple of days of calm weather followed, and on the 7th a male Whinchat and a Reed Warbler were at Abbotscliffe, with a male Ring Ouzel and a Wheatear at Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site, 2 Black Redstarts and 3 Wheatears at Folkestone Pier, and 3 Blackcaps, 6 Wheatears and 6 Common Sandpipers at Samphire Hoe, whilst a Hobby, a Siskin, a Sand Martin, a Grey Heron and totals of 3 House Martins, 3 Swifts, 4 Redpolls, 4 Yellow Wagtails, 7 Crossbills and 46 Swallows flew over. Single Ravens were at Abbotscliffe and Samphire Hoe, and at sea a Pomarine Skua, an Arctic Skua and 68 Common Scoters flew east at Folkestone Pier, and a Pomarine Skua, a Sanderling, 2 Mediterranean Gulls and 50 Common Scoters flew east at Samphire Hoe. A Snipe was seen near the Hythe Redoubt.

A female Marsh Harrier flew over Saltwood on the 8th, when a Ringed Plover and 3 Wheatears were at Samphire Hoe, with a Siskin, a Redpoll, a Yellow Wagtail and 20 Swallows over, and 80 Common Scoters past. A Short-eared Owl was hunting in the Botolph's Bridge area in the evening. Single Arctic and Great Skuas were lingering off Samphire Hoe on the 9th, and a Little Egret, a Dunlin, a Whimbrel, 6 Oystercatchers, 20 Gannets and 25 Common Scoters flew east, whilst 3 Yellow Wagtails, 17 Swifts and 25 Swallows flew in off the sea. Two Ravens were also noted there. Another Marsh Harrier flew over Saltwood the next day. A Tree Pipit and a Wheatear were seen near the Hythe Redoubt on the 11th, whilst a Nightingale was singing in Asholt Wood (also heard on the 13th) and two Cuckoos flew over Hythe Town in the evening. An increase in Swift numbers was noticed at a number of sites, including 40 over Hythe.

The 12th was dry and clear, with a cool north-westerly breeze – ideal conditions here for visual migration, and expectant observers were not disappointed. A **Red-rumped Swallow**, an **Osprey**, a Cuckoo, a Redpoll, a Yellow Wagtail, 5 Sand Martins, 14 Siskins, 37 Crossbills, 100 House Martins, 105 Swifts and 135 Swallows flew over Capel-le-Ferne Café, whilst a **Hooded Crow** was at Abbotscliffe, a Short-eared Owl was at Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site and a **Honey Buzzard** flew west over Nickoll's Quarry. Two Wheatears were at Seabrook and 5 Garden Warblers were counted in the Sandling area.

The following day was quieter as the wind moved round to the south-west, but a Little Egret, a Hobby, a Yellow Wagtail, a Siskin, 3 Grey Herons, 26 House Martins and 77 Swallows flew over at the cliffs. A Firecrest and 3 Mandarin were seen at Sandling Park. With the wind remaining in the west or south-west over the next few days there was something of a lull in migration. On the 15th a Wheatear, 2 Common Sandpipers, 2 Chiffchaffs, 2 Whitethroats, 3 Blackcaps, 5 Swallows, 16 Swifts and 40 House Martins were at Samphire Hoe, with another Common Sandpiper at Nickoll's Quarry. A Short-eared Owl was at Abbotscliffe the next day, whilst a Hobby, a Cuckoo, 2 Common Sandpipers and 12 Tufted Ducks were at Nickoll's Quarry. A Hobby flew east over Saltwood on the 17th, when a Peregrine flew west over Saltwood Castle, a Knot flew east at Samphire Hoe and a Cuckoo was at Hythe Ranges.

A Sedge Warbler singing at Abbotscliffe on the 18th, where a Grey Heron flew over, and a Cuckoo was heard at Saltwood. A Great Skua, 4 Kittiwakes, 9 Brent Geese, 16 Common Terns, 20 Gannets and 125 Common Scoters flew east at Samphire Hoe on the 19th, but the most significant events of the day were an **Osprey** flying in off the sea Capel-le-Ferne and a **Red Kite** flying north over Lympne. The latter marked the beginning of an unprecedented influx of the species into Kent and Sussex, with another **Red Kite** being seen over Bargrove Wood the following day.



Hooded Crow at Abbotscliffe (Brendan Ryan)

The 20th also saw a change to a cool northerly wind, which 10 House Martins, 15 Swallows and 30 Swifts were seen flying in to at Capel-le-Ferne. Similar conditions the following day saw a Short-eared Owl flying in off the sea at Samphire Hoe, whilst 9 drake Mandarin ducks were at Chesterfield Wood, Sandling.

Despite the continuation of moderate north to north-easterly winds it began to get progressively warmer, with temperatures on the 22nd reaching 20°C for the first time in 2012. On the 23rd single **Red Kites** flew west at Capel-le-Ferne Café and north over Saltwood, with a Hobby and a Raven also flying over the latter site. A Nightingale was singing at Holywell, a Sand Martin and 23 Swallows flew in off the sea at Samphire Hoe, and 3 Mute Swans and 3 Whimbrel went east. The 24th produced just a Yellow Wagtail over Abbotscliffe and a Cuckoo at Hythe Ranges, whilst the next day saw a Sand Martin, 2 House Martins, 9 Swallows and 47 Crossbills flying east at Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site. A Hobby, a Cuckoo and a few House Martins, Swallows and Swifts flew over Capel-le-Ferne Café on the 26th.

The 27th saw the thermometer register 25°C as the north-easterly wind eased a little and, with superb visibility across the Channel, it was a perfect raptor day. In total eight species were recorded, including single **Honey Buzzards** over Capel-le-Ferne Café and Hythe, **Ospreys** over Capel-le-Ferne Café and Castle Hill, and a **Red Kite** flying east up the Hougham Valley. A Hobby at Asholt Wood and records of local Common Buzzard, Kestrel, Peregrine and Sparrowhawk made up the numbers. A Grey Heron, 6 House Martins, 20 Swifts, 30 Swallows and c. 45 Crossbills also flew over Capel-le-Ferne Café, where a Spotted Flycatcher was on the cliff-top. A **Bearded Tit** at Nickoll's Quarry completed a memorable day.

It remained very warm, with a light northerly breeze, on the 28th and a **Tawny Pipit**, a Grey Wagtail and a further 40 Crossbills flew east at Capel-le-Ferne Café, whilst **Red Kites** flew south-east over Hythe and north over Saltwood (2), with singles over Samphire Hoe and Saltwood again on the 29th, when 3 Shags were seen close inshore off the former site.

The influence of high pressure was waning by the 30th, but a Spotted Flycatcher at Church Hougham was a new arrival, and a Redshank flew over Samphire Hoe. The final day of May saw a change to a westerly wind, with 20 House Martins and 190 Swifts flying into it over Folkestone Warren.

Overall it was an eventful month, which saw a total of 138 species recorded. This was considerably more than the May of the previous year (124) and higher also than any individual month over the last two years (previous highest was 132 in April 2011). The species total included 12 additions to the year list, which increased it to 173.

June

The wind switched round to the east for the first few days of June, which brought in some cloud and drizzle, but also some late arriving warblers. A Reed Warbler and the first Grasshopper Warbler of the year were in song at Samphire Hoe on the 3rd and a singing **Marsh Warbler** was found off the Botolph's Bridge road on the 5th (until the 25th).

The Botolph's Bridge area also hosted a **Short-eared Owl** (on the 3rd), a **Barn Owl** (on the 9th, with it or another picked up dead on the 26th), a fly-over Nuthatch (on the 5th, a first record for this site from which the nearest woodland is somewhat distant), a singing Corn Bunting (on two dates) and several Cuckoos.

At the end of the first week an Atlantic depression swept in, bringing strong winds and rain (the first of several low pressure systems which dominated this rather cool, damp month). At sea a little movement had been stirred up, with two Manx Shearwaters flying west past Copt Point on the 8th and a flock of six flying east there the following day, and rather late singles of Great and Arctic Skua passed there on the 8th and 9th respectively. The appearance of a flock of 16 Canada Geese on the sea there on the latter date though were harder to explain.



Sabine's Gull off Copt Point (Ian Roberts)

When there were breaks of settled weather there were further movements of Crossbills, with 28 flying east at Capel-le-Ferne Café on the 13th, 32 north-east over Church Road, Cheriton and 26 east at Church Hougham on the 18th, and c.20 north-west over Seabrook on the 20th. The first Turtle Doves of the year finally arrived at West Hythe (on the 14th) and Abbotscliffe (on the 20th), whilst a wandering **Osprey** which flew over Samphire Hoe and then Abbotscliffe on the 19th was quite a surprise, being only the second June record for the area. A Willow Warbler at Samphire Hoe on the same day was another unusual record.

Highlights of the breeding season included 11 pairs of Grey Herons at Lympe (the highest count for at least three years), up to 3 pairs of Peregrines (plus three intriguing records of birds hunting in the Hythe / Saltwood area), Hobbies in three areas of potential breeding habitat, a pair of Oystercatchers, one or two pairs of Lapwings, a pair of Ringed Plovers, the first confirmed breeding record of Kingfisher in the BTO/KOS Atlas period, five Black Redstart territories (with at least two broods of young being successfully raised), 3 or 4 singing Nightingales, and the first confirmed breeding of Firecrest in the area.

A juvenile Wheatear at Seabrook on the 25th was either a very early migrant or a locally-bred bird, whilst the first returning wader was a Curlew which flew west past Copt Point on the 30th – the highlight of that day however was an adult **Sabine's Gull** which flew slowly west there (the first June record for the county).

There were 4 additions to the year list in June, which increased it to 177.

July

The unsettled weather continued into July, with the first three weeks of the month dominated by a south-westerly airflow and it was often blustery, frequently wet, and relatively cool, with temperatures rarely reaching 20 °C. The fourth week provided some respite when the skies cleared and the thermometer registered 28 °C on the 25th, but the month ended much as it had begun.

July was typically quiet though the hot spell late in the month produced the first July record of **Serin** (22nd area record) flying north over Cheriton on the 25th, whilst a **Honey Buzzard** flying west over Saltwood on the 20th was the other highlight.

As usual returning waders were one of the main features of the month. Two Curlews flew west past Folkestone Pier on the 2nd, with another over Cheriton the next day. Two Oystercatchers and five Lapwings were at the Willop Basin on the 6th, two Curlews and two Ringed Plovers were at Folkestone Beach the following day, and two Common Sandpipers were along Hythe Ranges on the 8th.

A Curlew was at the Willop Basin on the 15th and 15 Common Sandpipers were counted between there and the Hythe Redoubt. Two Curlews were near Botolph's Bridge the next day, a Whimbrel was on the beach at the Hythe Redoubt on the 21st and 3 Common Sandpipers were seen there on the 22nd. Seven Oystercatchers flew east at Sandgate on the 26th.



Whimbrel at Hythe Redoubt (Brian Harper)

Returning passerines also began to appear from mid-month, when 6 Sand Martins flew west at Abbotscliffe on the 15th, with a Yellow Wagtail and 625 Swifts flying west at Botolph's Bridge the following day, when a Kingfisher was seen at Samphire Hoe. A Turtle Dove was along Botolph's Bridge Road on the 22nd and the first returning Willow Warbler was at Abbotscliffe on the 29th, when three Crossbills flew west there. A Wheatear was at Samphire Hoe on the 31st.

Small numbers of Mediterranean Gulls were noted early in the month, increasing to 10 at the Willop Basin on the 15th and 30 at Samphire Hoe on the 23rd. Other sightings of note included two Little Egrets at Samphire Hoe on the 31st, a Hobby over Cheriton on the 3rd, a Peregrine at Hythe Ranges on the 8th, Black Redstarts at Folkestone Pier and Samphire Hoe (up to 3), and two Corn Buntings at Abbotscliffe throughout.

There was just one addition to the year list in July, which increased it to 178.

August

A south-westerly airflow continued to dominate the weather into August and the first week saw showers or light rain on all days, though with temperatures generally just above 20 °C it was at least a little warmer.

The month began with a small arrival on the 1st comprising singles of Hobby, Wheatear, Robin, Sedge Warbler, Blackcap and Chiffchaff at Samphire Hoe and 4 Willow Warblers at Abbotscliffe. Two Ravens were also seen at the former site whilst 6 Crossbills flew west over the latter. A Wheatear was on the golf course by the Hotel Imperial on the 2nd and a single Crossbill flew west at Saltwood on the 5th. The 6th produced 4 Wheatears at the Hythe Redoubt, where 20 Swifts flew out to sea. A Cuckoo, a Reed Bunting, 2 Willow Warblers, 2 Lesser Whitethroats and 10 Whitethroats were of note at Abbotscliffe on the 8th.

It was generally drier from the 9th and temperatures improved to around the 25 °C mark, though there was still a fair amount of cloud around. There was very little of interest recorded however, except for a Greenshank flying west up the Hougham Valley and a Whimbrel at the Hythe Redoubt, both on the 11th.

The 18th saw the thermometer reach 30 °C for the first time in the year and a Pied Flycatcher spent the afternoon in a garden near Hill Road in Folkestone. It stayed mostly dry over the following week though the temperature fell gradually and the wind remained in the south-westerly quadrant. A Swift, a Whinchat, a Willow Warbler and 5 Whitethroats were at Abbotscliffe on the 19th, whilst the next day produced a flyover **Dotterel** there, with a Great Spotted Woodpecker, 2 Tree Pipits and 4 Yellow Wagtails also passing through, and a Whinchat, 3 Whitethroats and 5 Willow Warblers in the bushes. The 21st saw a similar array, with a Whinchat, 4 Wheatears and 4 Willow Warblers there, and 2 Tree Pipits, and 6 Yellow Wagtails over.

Three Little Egrets flew over Church Road, Cheriton on the 22nd and ten Black Redstarts were logged at Samphire Hoe. The following day produced a **Great White Egret** at Westenhangar, whilst a Whimbrel and a Wheatear were along Hythe Ranges and a Yellow Wagtail flew over. Four Wheatears were at Abbotscliffe on the 24th.

The wind picked up on the 25th but as it remained from the south-west there was little of note on the sea, where just singles of Arctic Skua, Fulmar, Great Crested Grebe and Oystercatcher were noted. The following day saw a Garden Warbler at West Hythe, a Whimbrel at Hythe Ranges, a Whinchat, a Wheatear and a Sand Martin at Abbotscliffe, and a Wheatear on the Hythe Imperial Golf Course.

The 27th saw the wind increase again, and with a shift to a south-easterly direction, there was some offshore passage. The highlights were a Black Tern, 6 Balearic Shearwaters and 13 Arctic Skuas, with a Great Crested Grebe, 2 Teal, 5 Fulmars, 5 Oystercatchers, 9 Common Scoters, 40 Sandwich Terns, 70 Common Terns and 80 Gannets also passing west. On the land 2 Sand Martins and 2 Wheatears were at Church Hougham and 6 Swifts flew west over Hythe.



Wheatear at Hythe Redoubt (Brian Harper)

An **Osprey** flew north-west over Samphire Hoe then west over Abbotscliffe on the 28th, when singles of Hobby, Spotted Flycatcher and Nuthatch were at West Hythe. On the 29th a Whinchat, a Yellow Wagtail and 2 Wheatears were at Church Hougham, with a Common Sandpiper on Folkestone Pier the following day. The month ended with a Whinchat, 3 Wheatears and 3 Buzzards at Church Hougham and 250 Mediterranean Gulls flying over West Hougham.

There were five additions to the year list in August, which increased it to 183.

September

There was a quiet start to September, with a south-westerly airflow in place, and a Hobby and 2 Whinchats were all that were of note at Abbotscliffe on the 1st. However the wind began to move round to the north-east from the 3rd, when early fog cleared to reveal that there had been the first reasonable arrival of migrants the autumn: a Redstart, a Whinchat, a Spotted Flycatcher, a Sedge Warbler, a Lesser Whitethroat, 2 Garden Warblers, 2 Crossbills, 5 Wheatears, 8 Whitethroats and 30+ Chiffchaffs / Willow Warblers were at Abbotscliffe and a Short-eared Owl, a Whinchat, a Spotted Flycatcher, a Lesser Whitethroat, 2 Chiffchaffs, 3 Whitethroats, 4 Willow Warblers and 5 Wheatears were at Samphire Hoe. The following day saw a **Wryneck** along Crete Road East, and a Spotted Flycatcher, a Grey Wagtail, a Willow Warbler, a Blackcap, 2 Pied Flycatchers, 2 Great Spotted Woodpeckers, 3 Whinchats, 3 Wheatears, 4 Lesser Whitethroats and 6 Whitethroats at Abbotscliffe, with a Jay, 8 Chiffchaffs and 9 Wheatears at Samphire Hoe.

A ridge of high pressure built in from the 5th and brought dry, settled conditions, with light south-westerly winds and temperatures up to 27°C. It brought very little in the way of migrants however, with just a Great Spotted Woodpecker north over Hythe on the 5th; single Blackcap and Whitethroat at Abbotscliffe on the 7th; and a Hobby and a Spotted Flycatcher at Stutfall Castle, Lympe on the 9th.

The 11th saw a change to cooler, cloudier conditions with the wind switching to the north-westerly quadrant, and this produced a Hobby, a Wheatear and 5 Whinchats at Abbotscliffe. The following day saw a Spotted Flycatcher, 3 Great Spotted Woodpeckers, 3 Whitethroats, 4 Wheatears and 7 Chiffchaffs at Abbotscliffe, where a Swift, a Tree Pipit, 5 Sand Martins and 400 House Martins flew west, but there were just singles of Black Redstart, Wheatear, Sedge Warbler, Blackcap and Whitethroat there on the 13th. South-westerlies became established again from the 14th, and again migration slowed, with just 9 Sand Martins flying west at the Willop Outfall. A Hobby was at Abbotscliffe on the 16th.

A couple of days of north-westerlies followed from the 18th, when a Little Egret, a Grasshopper Warbler, a Spotted Flycatcher, a Goldcrest, 2 Wheatears, 2 Blackcaps and 10 Chiffchaffs were at Samphire Hoe, and a Raven and 2 Wheatears were at Abbotscliffe, where a Great Spotted Woodpecker, 4 Jays and 58 Meadow Pipits flew over. Another 3 Jays flew over Hythe. The next day saw a Buzzard, a Hobby, a Willow Warbler, a Redpoll, 2 Wheatears, 3 Whitethroats, 4 Sand Martins, 4 Blackcaps, 6 Chiffchaffs and at least 1,800 House Martins at Abbotscliffe, and a Wheatear, 2 Grey Wagtails, 2 Goldcrests, 4 Black Redstarts, 7 Blackcaps, 9 Chiffchaffs and 10 Robins at Samphire Hoe.



Rose-coloured Starling at Samphire Hoe (Ian Roberts)

The 20th produced the highlight of the month, with the finding of a juvenile **Rose-coloured Starling** at Samphire Hoe – the first record for the area (an account of which is provided on page 94). The Hoe also hosted a Dunlin, a Whinchat and a Sedge Warbler, whilst a Siskin and a Redpoll flew over, and the following day it produced a Sedge Warbler, 8 Blackcaps, 12 Chiffchaffs and 15 Robins. The 21st also saw a Nuthatch, a Blackcap, a Goldcrest and 3 Chiffchaffs in a garden in Saltwood, where 4 Siskins flew west.

The 23rd saw a moderate easterly wind pick up, with rain moving in during the day, and this led to the first notable passage at sea of the month, when a **Sooty Shearwater**, 2 **Balearic Shearwaters**, a Red-throated Diver, 2 Razorbills, 3 Arctic Skuas, 4 Guillemots, 4 Sandwich Terns, 7 Shoveler, 12 Common Scoter, 20 Brent Geese and 100 Gannets past Copt Point. On land a Firecrest, a Wheatear, 5 Blackcaps and 11 Chiffchaffs were at Samphire Hoe, and the following day produced another Firecrest, a Grey Wagtail, a Whitethroat, 8 Blackcaps and 10 Chiffchaffs there, 2 Firecrests, 4 Goldcrests and 15 Chiffchaffs at Capel-le-Ferne Café, a further Firecrest at Nickoll's Quarry and a Yellow Wagtail over Cheriton. Newly-arrived Firecrests were in a garden in Joyes Road, Folkestone and at Abbotscliffe on the 25th, whilst a Short-eared Owl flew east over Botolph's Bridge in the evening.

There was a large movement of Swallows across the area into a strong south-westerly wind on the 26th, with an estimate of about 1,200 per hour. A Jay also flew west at Copt Point. A north-westerly breeze on the 27th produced the first Ring Ouzel of the autumn at Abbotscliffe, where a Little Egret, a Whinchat, a Reed Warbler, a Lesser Whitethroat, 3 Goldcrests, 3 Blackcaps, 4 Whitethroats and 9 Chiffchaffs were also logged, whilst the first Brambling and Golden Plover of the autumn, a Buzzard, a Hobby, a Yellow Wagtail, 3 Siskins, 4 Crossbills, 12 Jays, c.1,000 House Martins and c.3,000 Swallows flew over. A Whitethroat, 5 Blackcaps, 7 Black Redstarts and 9 Chiffchaffs, 11 Robins were at Samphire Hoe, where a Redpoll flew over and 10 Brent Geese flew east. At least 3,000 Swallows were in the Botolph's Bridge area in the evening.

On the 28th a Wheatear, a Goldcrest, 2 Whinchats, 4 Yellow Wagtails and 13 Chiffchaffs were at Abbotscliffe, and 7 Siskins, 7 *alba* wagtails, 9 Sand Martins, 88 Meadow Pipits, 185 Linnets and c.600 Swallows flew over. A Wigeon, 4 Sanderling, 29 Lapwings and 148 Mallard were at the Willop Basin in the evening. The following day saw a Reed Warbler, a Blackcap and 6 Chiffchaffs at Abbotscliffe and a Buzzard, a Great Spotted Woodpecker, a Tree Pipit, 2 Jays, 3 Sand Martins, 4 Golden Plovers, 5 Reed Buntings, 6 Crossbills, 8 Siskins, 600 Swallows and 1,200 House Martins flew over. The month ended with a Common Redstart, 2 Goldcrests, 5 Blackcaps, 10 Chiffchaffs, 17 Yellowhammers and 140 Goldfinches at Abbotscliffe, and a Great Spotted Woodpecker, a Reed Bunting, 7 Jays, 7 Redpolls and 9 Siskins flying over.

October

A south-westerly airflow ensured it was a quiet start to the month, with just 3 Oystercatchers, 38 Turnstones and 39 Lapwings at the Willop Outfall of note on the 1st, but there were signs of improvement the following day when a Hen Harrier, a Hobby and 20 Jays flew over Abbotscliffe. A further 31 Jays flew west at Abbotscliffe on the 3rd, when a Grey Wagtail, a Blackcap, a Reed Bunting, 2 Sparrowhawks, 2 Goldcrests, 2 Redpolls, 2 Siskins, 5 Chiffchaffs, 10 Sky Larks, 12 Yellowhammer and 170 Goldfinches were also logged there and 3 Chiffchaffs were at Capel-le-Ferne Café.



Jay at Abbotscliffe (Ian Roberts)

The Jay influx reached unprecedented levels on the 4th when a total of **51** that flew west at Abbotscliffe set a new record day count for the area. Two Tree Pipits, 2 Yellow

Wagtails, 2 Grey Wagtails, 2 Redpolls, 3 Great Spotted Woodpeckers, 4 Mistle Thrushes, 6 Reed Buntings, 13 Pied Wagtails, 14 Siskins, 60 Chaffinches and 68 Goldfinches also flew over, with a Wheatear, 3 Blackcaps, 3 Goldcrests and 7 Chiffchaffs in the bushes. Elsewhere a Hobby flew west at Seabrook and 2 Kestrels arrived in off the sea there.

Yet another 36 Jays flew over Abbotscliffe on the 6th, as did a Yellow Wagtail, a Great Spotted Woodpecker, a Buzzard, 3 Redpolls, 247 Siskins and 600 Goldfinches, whilst a more easterly element in the wind led to some improvement on the ground, with a Ring Ouzel, the first Redwing of the autumn, a Wheatear, 2 Black Redstarts, 3 Chiffchaffs and 5 Goldcrests there, and a Whitethroat, a Brambling, 3 Blackcaps, 4 Black Redstarts, 7 Chiffchaffs, 9 Stonechats and 15 Robins at Samphire Hoe.

This improvement continued on the 7th, when a **Yellow-browed Warbler** (17th area record), a Firecrest, 2 Goldcrests, 2 Jays, 4 Black Redstarts, 5 Blackcaps, 11 Stonechats, 14 Chiffchaffs and 16 Robins were at Samphire Hoe. A Grey Wagtail, a Great Spotted Woodpecker, 2 Reed Buntings, 4 Bramblings, 9 Redpolls and 13 Jays flew over Abbotscliffe, where 12 Blackcaps and 23 Chiffchaffs were logged, and a Marsh Harrier, a Peregrine, a Snipe and a Cetti's Warbler were in the Botolph's Bridge / Nickoll's Quarry area.

Two Firecrests, 2 Ravens, 2 Blackcaps, 3 Black Redstarts and 9 Chiffchaffs were at Samphire Hoe the following day, with a further two Firecrests and 7 Goldcrests at Abbotscliffe, and 2 Snipe, 3 Redpolls, 4 Jays, 31 Pied Wagtails, 49 Siskins and 415 Goldfinches flew over at the cliffs.

Continuing easterlies on the 9th produced the area's second ever record of **Barred Warbler** at Abbotscliffe, where 2 Redstarts, 3 Blackcaps, 3 Chiffchaffs, 3 Firecrests, 4 Goldcrests, 6 Song Thrushes, 14 Blackbirds and 300 Swallows were also noted, whilst a Redpoll and 11 Siskins flew east. A Whinchat, a House Sparrow, 2 Blackcaps, 3 Wheatears and 7 Chiffchaffs were at Samphire Hoe, and a Buzzard flew west there. On the 10th a Lapwing, a Wheatear, 2 Firecrests and 5 Goldcrests were at Abbotscliffe, and a Yellow Wagtail, 2 Reed Buntings, 6 Brent Geese, 7 Redpolls, 22 Siskins, 42 Pied Wagtails and 555 Goldfinches over, whilst 80 Siskins flew east at Sandgate.

The 11th produced a Brambling, 2 Reed Buntings, 19 Redpolls, 50 Linnets, 52 Pied Wagtails, 63 Swallows, 100 Siskins and 1,100 Goldfinches flying east at Abbotscliffe, 7 Little Gulls and 13 Brent Geese off Copt Point, and a movement of around 2,000 House Martins east over Saltwood in the afternoon. The next morning saw just a Ring Ouzel and 2 Jays of note at Abbotscliffe, and 6 Redpolls and 7 Redwings over, whilst 3 Dunlin, 6 Ringed Plover and 72 Lapwings were at the Willop Basin in the evening.

A **Little Stint** (11th area record), a Dunlin, a Curlew, a Hobby and 78 Lapwings were at the Willop Basin on the 13th, where a Teal flew past offshore. A Jay, 3 Goldcrests and 9 Ring Ouzels were at Abbotscliffe, with a further two Ring Ouzels at Crete Road East, a Yellow Wagtail on football pitches at South Road, Hythe and a Kingfisher, a Buzzard and a Cetti's Warbler at Nickoll's Quarry. Visual migration was noted from various sites within the area, with approximate totals of 1 Redwing, 2 Jays, 6 Reed Buntings, 36 Redpolls, 125 Siskins, 135 Goldfinches, 150 House Martins and 350 Swallows passing through.



Ring Ouzel at Crete Road East (Brian Harper)

On the 14th two Chiffchaffs, 3 Blackcaps, 5 Goldcrests and 10 Ring Ouzels were at Abbotscliffe, and a Marsh Harrier, a Great Spotted Woodpecker, a Grey Wagtail, 4 Buzzards, 4 Sparrowhawks, 5 Collared Doves, 10 Reed Buntings, 12 Redwings, 13 Redpolls, 32 Siskins, 33 Pied Wagtails, 37 Jays, 69 Chaffinches, 80 Swallows, 130 House Martins, 155 Stock Doves and 310 Starlings flew over. A further four Common Buzzards flew west over Seabrook, with two more over Saltwood.

This rather productive run was halted by a depression sweeping in from the Atlantic on the 15th, and four Black Redstarts at Samphire was the only report of note. The 16th was little better with just a Sanderling and 87 Lapwings at the Willop Basin, whilst the following day saw nothing of note.

A Redstart, 2 Grey Wagtails, 2 Chiffchaffs, 3 Wheatears and 3 Ring Ouzels offered signs of encouragement at Samphire Hoe on the 18th as the barometer began to climb again, and the next day produced a Black Redstart, 2 Firecrests, 3 Sparrowhawks, 4 Ring Ouzels, 5 Chiffchaffs, 5 Goldcrests and 5 Stonechats there, whilst 5 Redpolls, 200 Goldfinches, 250 Siskins and 1,200 Starlings (including a single flock of 1,000+) flew east.

A Wood Lark (21st area record), a Grey Wagtail, 5 Bramblings, 14 Reed Buntings, 23 Redpolls, 38 Jays, 68 Siskins, c.220 Swallows and c.275 House Martins flew over Abbotscliffe on the 20th, and a Redstart, a Merlin, a Hobby, a Wheatear, 2 Ring Ouzels, 2 Firecrests, 3 Black Redstarts, 4 Chiffchaffs and 6 Goldcrests were at Samphire Hoe.

A moderate north-easterly wind picked up on the 21st and was accompanied by steady rain for much of the day. When it finally ceased Samphire Hoe's first, and the area's fourth ever, Pallas's Warbler was found in the Gate Scrub area (where it remained until the following evening). There were also 2 Black Redstarts, 2 Chiffchaffs, 4 Blackcaps, 8 Ring Ouzels, 8 Goldcrests and 25 Robins at the Hoe, and a further Ring Ouzel at Abbotscliffe. That night a large nocturnal movement of Blackbirds, Redwings and Song Thrushes was noted on a broad front between Dover and Hythe.

The north-easterly airflow became established for the next four days but observations were hampered by thick fog in the mornings which was slow to clear. A Redstart, a Black Redstart, a Redshank, 2 Wigeon, 2 Bramblings, 2 Chiffchaffs, 3 Goldcrests, 4 Ring Ouzels, 7 Stonechats, 10 Siskins, 10 Redwings, 20 Song Thrushes and 30 Blackbirds were at Samphire Hoe on the 22nd, whilst the first 33 Fieldfares of the autumn flew in off the sea at Abbotscliffe in the afternoon, with a Black Redstart, 3 Redpolls and 32 Robins also of note there. The following day produced a Firecrest, a Black Redstart, a Grey Wagtail, 2 Bramblings, 2 Ravens, 2 Reed Buntings, 3 Blackcaps, 3 Goldcrests, 12 Redwings and 28 Robins at Samphire Hoe, whilst a Coal Tit and Lapwing flew in off the sea there, and 4 Ring Ouzels were at Abbotscliffe.

On the 24th a Serin flew east at Abbotscliffe, where a Ring Ouzel was also noted, and a Firecrest, a Brambling and 2 continental Coal Tits were at Capel-le-Ferne Café, whilst totals for the cliffs included a Sand Martin, a Grey Wagtail, 2 Crossbills, 3 Redwings, 3 Mistle Thrushes, 3 Chiffchaffs, 5 Lapwings, 5 Jays, 6 Tree Sparrows, 9 Goldcrests, 12 Pied Wagtails, 13 Swallows, 15 Siskins, 16 Stock Doves, 18 Song Thrushes and 33 Redpolls. Two Goldcrests, 3 Siskins, 7 Crossbills, several Redwings and Song Thrushes, 20+ House Martins and Swallows, and a large number of Robins were at Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site the next day, and 15 Siskins and 17 Swallows flew east at Samphire Hoe.



Redstart at Samphire Hoe (Ian Roberts)

The wind increased on the 26th and a Red-breasted Merganser, a Gadwall, a Shelduck, 9 Dunlin, 9 Swallows and 67 Brent Geese were noted as they passed Folkestone Pier, whilst a late Common Sandpiper was also seen there, and 2 Dunlin were at the Willop Basin.

A cold northerly wind on the 27th induced a visual passage comprising a Snow Bunting, a Reed Bunting, a Brambling, 2 Fieldfares, 2 Redwings, 3 Crossbills, 3 Song Thrushes, 8 Pied Wagtails, 37 Swallows, 65 Siskins, 150 Stock Doves, 216 Redpolls and 1,405 Goldfinches, whilst 3 Ring Ouzels were grounded at Abbotscliffe. At sea an Arctic Skua, 5 Little Gulls, 8 Sanderling and 16 Knot passed Copt Point. The first Purple Sandpiper of the winter had returned to Hythe and 2 Dunlin, 5 Redshank and 8 Turnstone were in Folkestone Harbour.

Calmer conditions the following day enabled a Richard's Pipit (15th area record) to be found on the cliff-top at Abbotscliffe, and a Black Redstart, a Merlin, a Snipe, a Redwing, a Reed Bunting, 2 Chiffchaffs, 3 Woodcocks, 8 Goldcrests and large numbers of Blackbirds were also seen there, whilst 2 Ravens, 4 Jays, 6 Bramblings, 19 Sky Larks, 33 Siskins, 46 Redpolls, 65 Stock Doves, 400 Starlings and 405 Chaffinches flew over. A Raven and a Great Crested Grebe were at Samphire Hoe, where 10 Brent Geese flew west and a Firecrest was at Crete Road East.

There appeared to be a significant arrival of Blackbirds overnight as large numbers were grounded on the morning of the 29th, including 50 at dawn in a single hawthorn bush in Saltwood. On the 30th a Great Spotted Woodpecker, a Redwing, 2 Reed Buntings, 5 Jays, 6 Bramblings, 12 Redpolls, 22 Swallows, 85 Chaffinches and 130 Wood Pigeons flew over Abbotscliffe. The last day of the month was blustery, with heavy showers, and produced just a single Great Skua passing Copt Point and a Sparrowhawk and 110 Starlings arriving in off the sea, and 6 Redpolls over Saltwood.

There were eight additions to the year list in October, which increased it to 194.

November

The blustery conditions continued into November and made for a very quiet start to the month until a calmer interlude on the 3rd allowed a **Wood Lark**, 5 **Bewick's Swans** and 19 Stock Doves to move west over Abbotscliffe, whilst a Black Redstart was seen at Hythe Ranges.

The following day saw the wind increase again, but in a strong south-easterly with heavy showers there was some interest at sea, where a **Sooty Shearwater**, 3 Great Skuas, 40 Gannets and 67 Kittiwakes flew past Mill Point, with a Great Skua and 10 Kittiwakes offshore at Hythe and 3 Purple Sandpipers and 78 Turnstones counted on the beach there.

Another calmer day on the 5th saw a trickle of visual migration at Abbotscliffe, involving a Fieldfare, a Reed Bunting, 3 Redpolls, 4 Jays, 6 Swallows, 16 Siskins, 20 Goldfinches and 80 Wood Pigeons.

The 6th was cold and clear, leading to the first air frost of the autumn, with a fresh northerly breeze, and this induced a decent diurnal passage including 2 Reed Buntings, 3 Redpolls, 4 **Waxwings**, 4 Swallows, 5 Bramblings, 5 Siskins, 6 Pied Wagtails, 20 Sky Larks, 60 Fieldfares, 128 Stock Doves, 335 Wood Pigeons and 370 Chaffinches over Abbotscliffe, with 2 Redwings, 3 Fieldfares, 4 House Martins and 8 Swallows at Samphire Hoe.

The 7th was less cold, as the wind headed round to the west, and another **Wood Lark** flew west at Abbotscliffe, with a Fieldfare, 2 Jays, 3 Bramblings and 7 Long-tailed Tits also being seen there, whilst a Fieldfare, 5 Redwings, 12 Yellowhammers and 27 Pied Wagtails were at Church Hougham, and two Redpolls, 23 Siskins and 28 Stock Doves flew over.



Asian Desert Warbler at Samphire Hoe (Roger Card)

A moderate southerly wind picked up on the 9th and two Turnstones, 13 Red-throated Divers, 58 Common Scoters, 210 Kittiwakes, 405 auks and a record count of 985 Gannets flew past Mill Point, with 12 Sky Larks and 185 Starlings in off the sea there, and a Curlew, 3 Sanderling and 113 Lapwings at the Willop Basin. The following day saw two Red-breasted Mergansers, 6 Common Scoters, 25 auks and 40 Gannets pass the former site.

The 11th produced the first Lapland Bunting of the year at Abbotscliffe, and a Snow Bunting, 2 Brambling, 2 Redpolls, 2 Bullfinches, 3 Swallows, 7 Siskins, 40 Chaffinches and 2,000 Starlings flew over, whilst 2 Swallows were at Seabrook, 5 Long-tailed Tits were at Samphire Hoe and 234 Mediterranean Gulls were at Church Road, Cheriton. A quieter day followed with just a Little Egret and 15 Rock Pipits of note at Samphire Hoe on the 12th, and a Reed Bunting and two Redpolls over, and the 13th offered just a Water Rail and a Little Grebe on the canal at Seabrook, and a Curlew and 177 Lapwing at the Willop Basin, though there was a small movement of thrushes overnight.

It remained quiet on the 14th, with just a Snipe, 2 Black Redstarts, 2 Redwings, 3 Chiffchaffs and 14 Goldcrests at Samphire Hoe, but the following day produced the third **Wood Lark** of the month flying west at Abbotscliffe, with 5 Pied Wagtails, 6 Siskins and 6 Redpolls flying east there, a Firecrest and 2 Swallows at Folkestone Warren, and a flock of 28 **Pink-footed Geese** at Botolph's Bridge in the evening, with a total of 16 Goldcrests logged across the area.

A Snipe, a Brambling, 3 Fieldfares and 6 Song Thrushes were at Abbotscliffe on the 16th and 3 Redpolls flew over. In a moderate south-westerly the next day a Snipe, 2 Red-breasted Mergansers, 2 Fulmars, 4 Wigeon, 5 Red-throated Divers, 47 auks and 49 Gannets flew past Mill Point, a Firecrest was at West Hythe, a Peregrine was at Nickoll's Quarry and a Swallow was at Hythe, where Purple Sandpipers increased to four, and 20 Siskins flew west.

The 18th began with a north-westerly breeze which dropped to leave a mild, sunny day which proved to be the best of the autumn. The highlight was the area's first ever **Asian Desert Warbler** at Samphire Hoe though unfortunately it disappeared soon after being found (an account of this record is provided on page 96), and a **Red Kite**, a Woodcock and a Raven were also seen there. A flock of 22 **Waxwings** flew south-west over Capel-le-Ferne and a Golden Plover, a Swallow, a Fieldfare, 2 Snow Buntings, 5 Siskins, 5 Redpolls and 13 Stock Doves flew over Abbotscliffe, whilst a Firecrest was in a garden in Saltwood, a Firecrest and a Grey Wagtail were at West Hythe, and a Buzzard, a Snipe, a Teal, a Cetti's Warbler and 3 Little Egrets were at Botolph's Bridge. The following day however saw just a Water Rail, a Curlew, a Black Redstart, 2 Little Egrets, 4 Brent Geese and 5 Red-throated Divers at Samphire Hoe, as the wind began to increase from the south-west.

Attention reverted to the sea on the 20th, where a Great Skua, 2 Red-breasted Mergansers, 4 Fulmars, 8 Common Scoters, 11 Red-throated Divers, 53 Kittiwakes and 110 auks flew past Mill Point, with a Swallow seen over Folkestone Leas. Similar conditions over the next few days produced very little, with four Greylag Geese at the Willop Basin on the 25th-26th being the only new arrivals of note.



Adult Caspian Gull at Folkestone Harbour (Ian Roberts)

An adult **Caspian Gull** was seen on the East Pier at Folkestone Harbour on the 27th, whilst a Redpoll flew over there, a Firecrest was at Mill Point, 4 Black Redstarts were at Samphire Hoe, Purple Sandpipers increased to five at Hythe, and 240 Mediterranean Gulls were counted on the sea off Sandgate. The following day saw 5 Shelduck and 55 Brent Geese fly past Samphire Hoe whilst a single Siskin arrived in off the sea there.

There was a chilly end to the month, with daytime temperatures barely above 5°C, and a couple of hard frosts overnight, and this encouraged the departure of some lingering hirundines, with a very late House Martin flying south over Seabrook on the 29th and three Swallows going south at the Willop Outfall the next day, and the arrival of more **Waxwings** – with one flying over Victoria Grove, Folkestone and a flock of 15 on Dover Hill on the 30th. The 29th also produced a **Great Northern Diver**, 10 Red-throated Divers, 33 Shelduck, 41 Wigeon and 61 Brent Geese off Mill Point, whilst on the 30th a Short-eared Owl at Abbotscliffe, a Shag off Sandgate and a Dunlin, a Redshank, 4 Curlew, 4 Shelduck, 6 Sanderling, 10 Wigeon, 11 Teal, 29 Turnstone and 431 Lapwing at the Willop Outfall were also noteworthy.

There were seven additions to the year list in November, which increased it to 201.

December

The month began with a sighting of another, or possibly the same, **Great Northern Diver**, this time feeding off the apron at Folkestone Warren on the 1st, and some late visual passage comprised a Redpoll and 13 Siskins over Samphire Hoe and 2 Redpolls over Hythe. A Black Redstart was seen at Folkestone Pier, a Shag, a Goldcrest and 6 Stonechats were at Samphire Hoe, a Curlew, a Sanderling, 6 Redshank and 11 Teal were at the Willop Outfall and at least 3 Purple Sandpipers remained at Hythe, where 2 Brent Geese flew past.

The following day a Dunlin and 115 Lapwings were at the Willop Basin, with a Teal and 60 Red-throated Divers offshore and a Chiffchaff at West Hythe, whilst a flock of 5 Shags were on the sea off Sandgate on the 3rd. The 5th saw a small fall of snow over higher ground and 2 Swallows at Samphire Hoe (the second ever latest record locally) appeared quite out of place, whilst Lapwings at the Willop Basin increased to 860, nine Tufted Ducks were at Nickoll's Quarry and five Common Scoters were off Hythe. A Cetti's Warbler, 2 Gadwall, 2 Redpolls, 7 Tufted Ducks and 14 Teal were at Nickoll's Quarry on the 6th, whilst a Rock Pipit and 7 Teal were at the Hythe Redoubt, and a Sanderling and 4 Purple Sandpipers were at Hythe the next day.

A cool north-easterly wind on the 8th produced a spectacular movement of wildfowl with new record day counts for the area of Gadwall and Teal. Totals of birds either passing by or on the sea were a single drake **Goldeneye**, 4 Red-breasted Mergansers, 5 Shelduck, 6 Shoveler, 30 Mallard, 150 Gadwall, 255 Wigeon and 400 Teal. An Oystercatcher, 4 Ringed Plover, **14 Avocets**, 25 Dunlin and about 40 Brent Geese also flew past, whilst on the Basin there were a Peregrine, a Shelduck, 2 Brent Geese, 3 Curlew, 5 Gadwall, 6 Dunlin, 6 Redshank, 40 Teal and 55 Wigeon, and 6 Mute Swans flew north. Later at Mill Point a further 18 Mallard, 135 Teal and 360 Wigeon flew past, as did 165 Red-throated Divers, whilst a Shag and a Razorbill were on the sea and a Snow Bunting went east. Completing a very notable day were a flock of 37 **Waxwings** at Capel-le-Ferne and a Chiffchaff by the canal in Hythe.

It remained cold but there was less movement at sea on the 9th, with just 3 Gadwall and 12 Teal west past the Willop Outfall, and reduced numbers on the Basin, whilst a Shag and a Little Egret were at Samphire Hoe. The Willop Basin still held a Dunlin, a Brent Goose, 3 Curlew, 3 Redshank, 23 Teal and 285 Lapwings on the 10th, when a Siskin flew over and a mixed flock of 50 Fieldfares and Redwings was at Botolph's Bridge.

A moderate south-easterly wind picked up on the 14th accompanied by heavy rain, and a Great Skua, a Little Gull, 2 Velvet Scoters, 2 Common Scoters, 2 Shovelers, 4 Lapwings, 8 Brent Geese, 10 Teal, 11 Gadwall, 33 Red-throated Divers, 40 Gannets, 41 Wigeon, 44 Fulmars, 53 Kittiwakes and 255 auks (most if not all Guillemots) flew past Mill Point.

On the 15th a male **Hen Harrier** and a Peregrine were at Botolph's Bridge, where a Shoveler and 4 Gadwall flew over, and a Brent Goose, a Dunlin, 2 Curlew, 3 Redshank, 9 Wigeon and 165 Lapwings at the Willop Basin, with 7 Common Scoter off Princes Parade, Hythe.



Waxwing at Cheriton (Paul Edmondson)

The 11th saw another small snowfall and 3 **Waxwings** were seen in a garden in Folkestone, whilst 4 Gadwall, 11 Brent Geese, 16 Teal, 17 Wigeon and 80 Red-throated Divers were seen off the Willop Outfall. A Shag, a Little Egret, 6 Song Thrushes, 8 Fulmars and 10 Siskins were at Samphire Hoe on the 12th, with another Shag on the sea off Mill Point, 5 Sanderlings at Hythe and a Marsh Tit at Paraker Wood. A female Blackcap was seen in a garden in Folkestone on the 13th and a Little Egret was seen along the Pent Stream in Cheriton.

The 16th brought a further 9 **Waxwings** (at the Eurotunnel complex in Cheriton), whilst a Water Rail and 2 Black Redstarts were noted at Samphire Hoe, and at the Willop Basin 2 Brent Geese, 4 Curlew, 4 Teal, 8 Snipe, 9 Golden Plovers, 10 Wigeon, 12 Redshank and 1,650 Lapwings were counted. The next few days saw little of note before a Chiffchaff was recorded in a garden in Folkestone on the 20th.

A **Waxwing** flew over Cheriton on the 21st, whilst a Grey Wagtail, 2 Brent Geese, 2 Curlews, 10 Wigeon, 18 Golden Plover and 1,400 Lapwings were at the Willop Basin, with 3 Common Scoter, 12 Gannets, 20 Great Crested Grebes and 130 Red-throated Divers offshore, and a Little Egret, an Oystercatcher and 19 Great Crested Grebes were at Copt Point.

Wet and windy weather returned on the 22nd when a Shelduck flew past Folkestone and 10 Common Scoter were on the sea off Hythe (on Christmas Eve a Common Scoter was picked up on the beach there and taken into care but unfortunately had to be put down).

Boxing Day saw 10 **Waxwings** fly over the Willop Basin, where 55 Sanderlings and 825 Lapwings were counted, whilst a further **Waxwings** flew over Cheriton, and a Little Egret was at Botolph's Bridge. 25 Curlew and 160 Brent Geese flew east past Samphire Hoe on the 29th, where a Black Redstart remained. On the 30th a Peregrine and 14 Redshanks were at the Willop Basin, a Little Egret was at West Hythe and 3 Gadwall were at Botolph's Bridge.

There were 2 additions to the year list in December, which increased it to 203 – no previous year has produced more species. Overall 2012 proved to be the second wettest year nationally since records began in 1910.

Systematic list

Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>
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Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

With mild weather in January numbers at the beginning of the year were low, with a peak of just 13 at Nickoll's Quarry on the 13th, but cold weather in February led to some accumulation and a peak of 26 at West Hythe on the 11th, with presumably the same flock of 26 at the Willop Basin on the 23rd. There was little evidence of any spring passage, though three flew east past Samphire Hoe on the 23rd May.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 14 (16%) of the 1km squares across the area, with strongholds along the Royal Military Canal from Seabrook to West Hythe, and in the Romney Marsh area.

The late winter period only produced relatively small numbers too, with a peak count of just 10 at Botolph's Bridge on the 22nd November, however a flock of 6 which flew north over the Willop Basin during a cold weather movement on the 8th December were of note.

Bewick's Swan	<i>Cygnus columbianus</i>
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Rare migrant and winter visitor.

A family group of five were seen from Abbotscliffe on the 3rd November as they headed out to sea over Dover, then flew down-channel at were later seen at Dungeness (I. A. Roberts). The 28th area record.

Pink-footed Goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>
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Very rare vagrant.

A flock of 28 were present in fields at Botolph's Bridge in the late afternoon of the 15th November (I. A. Roberts). The sixth area record but the second in the last two years, and the largest flock to be recorded to date.



Pink-footed Geese at Botolph's Bridge (Ian Roberts)

Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>
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A regular winter visitor and passage migrant, with most presumably relating to the increasing feral populations within the county. At least one early record, and possibly some others, relate to genuine wild birds. Has been recorded in summer in suitable habitat but breeding has not been confirmed.

The only records from the early winter period were of five at West Hythe which flew in from the west before returning on the 7th January and two which flew west over Nickoll's Quarry on the 28th January. In spring two flew

west over Lynton Road, Hythe on the 27th March, one flew north over Saltwood on the 5th April, two were at Nickoll's Quarry on the 11th April, two flew west off Hythe on the 15th April and four were at Nickoll's Quarry later that day.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and probable breeding was recorded from one site (Nickoll's Quarry in 2009 though the pair did not make a breeding attempt).

In the late winter period there were 4 at the Willop Basin on the 25th to 26th November.

Canada Goose

<i>Branta canadensis</i>

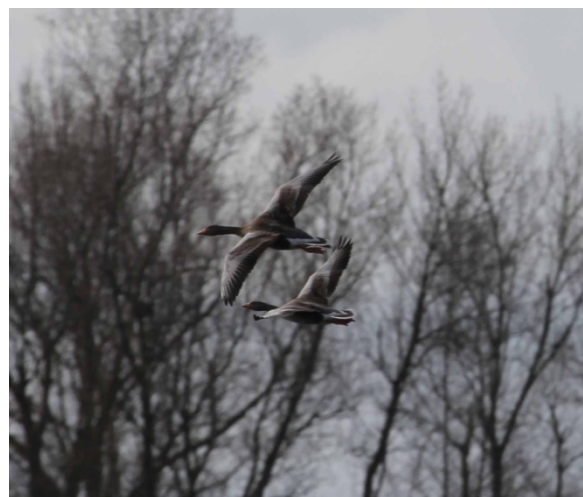
Currently breeds almost annually but formerly more numerous. Otherwise can be a visitor at any time of year.

There were no records from the early winter period, with the first being six off Copt Point on the 25th March. A pair was seen at Nickoll's Quarry on several dates between the 29th March and 29th April but there did not appear to be a breeding attempt this year. However the fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas found breeding of at least a possible status in four of the 1km squares across the area in the earlier years, including successful breeding at Nickoll's Quarry.

A single flew east at Samphire Hoe on the 2nd May, whilst a flock of 16 on the sea off Copt Point on the 9th June was an unusual record. There were no records either from the late winter period.



Canada Geese off Copt Point (Ian Roberts)



Greylag Geese at Nickoll's Quarry (Ian Roberts)

Brent Goose

<i>Branta bernicla</i>

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Small numbers were seen at various sites during January and February, with larger counts of 40 east past Samphire Hoe on the 25th January, 50 west past Battery Point (Seabrook) the next day and 53 off the Hythe Redoubt on the 4th February.

Spring passage was noted from early March, with the first significant count being 66 east past Hythe on the 4th, and peaked mid-month, when 670 flew east past Samphire Hoe on the 16th, with 294 east there on the 23rd. Passage tailed off thereafter, with the only later counts of any note being 50 east past Abbotscliffe on the 29th March and 60 east past Copt Point on the 17th April, but the last (nine east past Samphire Hoe on the 19th May) were the second latest in recent years. The spring total of 1,200 was 43% lower than last year's 2,112.

The first autumn birds, 20 west past Samphire Hoe and 17, possibly involving some of the same birds, west past Copt Point on the 23rd September were 7 days later than the earliest arrival last year. Four flew east past Samphire Hoe the next day, with another 10 east there on the 27th September. Small numbers were seen regularly in October and

November, with larger counts of 67 (17e, 50w) off Folkestone Pier on the 26th October, 55 east past Samphire Hoe on the 28th November and a total of 61 (23 off Folkestone and 38 off Hythe) the following day.

In December 39 (29w, 10e) flew past the Willop Outfall on the 8th when two were present on the Willop Basin, and 1-2 remained there until the 23rd, with a larger count of 11 (6 on the Basin and 5 offshore on the 11th). Elsewhere 160 flew east past Samphire Hoe on the 29th.

Shelduck

Tadorna tadorna

Winter visitor and passage migrant, probably having bred on at least one occasion.

Small numbers were seen at various sites during January and February, with larger counts of 24 on the sea off the Willop Outfall on the 6th January (with 14 still present the following day), 16 east past Folkestone Pier on the 8th January and 9 at Nickoll's Quarry on the 10th January. A light spring passage was noted between mid-March and early May with a total of 21 passing coastal watch-points.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and possible breeding was recorded from one site (a single bird in suitable habitat at Nickoll's Quarry in 2009 though it did not linger). The species has probably bred at this site in the past – in 2000 a pair was present until at least early July and a juvenile was seen in early August, and in 2002 a pair were present until at least late June and again a juvenile was seen in early August.



Shelduck at Nickoll's Quarry (Ian Roberts)

In the latter winter period one flew east past Folkestone Pier on the 26th October, 5 flew east past Samphire Hoe on the 28th November, 33 flew east past Folkestone Beach on the 29th November and 4 were on the sea off the Willop Outfall the next day. In December one was at the Willop Basin on the 8th December, when 5 (1e, 4w) were seen offshore there, and a single flew west past Folkestone Beach on the 22nd.

Mandarin Duck

Aix galericulata

Introduced breeding resident.

All records were from the Chesterfield Wood / Sandling Park lakes, where there was a peak of 12 birds present in May, apart from a single drake on the canal at Seabrook on the 24th February.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and confirmed breeding was recorded from five of the 1km squares across the area (around Saltwood) with possible breeding in another.

Wigeon

Anas penelope

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

A pair at Nickoll's Quarry on the 14th January was the only record in that month but cold weather in February led to a notable influx. Flocks were first noted offshore, with 15 on the sea off the Willop Outfall on the 1st, 10 on the sea off Hythe on the 4th and 27 on the sea off the Hythe Redoubt the same day, before 43 were counted at Nickoll's Quarry on the 5th. A count of 56 on the canal cutting south of Botolph's Bridge on the 9th may have involved the same expanding flock, and further increased to a peak of 80 on the 10th, before falling to 58 on the 11th, and dispersing very rapidly thereafter.

In autumn there was one at the Willop Basin on the 28th September, a pair on the sea off Samphire Hoe on the 22nd to 23rd October and four flew west past Folkestone Beach on the 17th November. The latter site produced 41 flying west on the 29th November and there were 9 on the sea off the Willop Outfall the next day, with a further drake on the Willop Basin. There was a significant movement on the 8th December, with a total of about 670 logged, mostly offshore (including 175 on the sea off the Willop Outfall) but including 55 on the flood at the Willop Basin. There were still 25 at the Willop Basin the next day, with up to 10 remaining there until the 21st December, and further, smaller movements of 17 west past the Willop Outfall on the 11th and 41 west past Folkestone Beach on the 14th December.

Gadwall

Anas strepera

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

The only records in January involved a pair flying west past Hythe on the 1st and five at Sandling Park Lake on the 2nd but cold weather in February led to a small influx. Six were at Nickoll's Quarry on the 1st and a flock remained in the Botolph's Bridge / Nickoll's Quarry area until the 11th, increasing to 13 on the 8th and 15 on the 11th. Elsewhere five flew west past Samphire Hoe on the 3rd, a female lingered on the west pond there between the 8th and the 11th, four were at Oak Banks, near Hythe on the 19th and three were on the Folkestone Racecourse Lake, at Westenhanger on the 26th. The final record from the early part of the year was of a pair on the sea off Hythe on the 25th March.

In autumn one flew east past Folkestone Pier on the 26th October, with a pair at Nickoll's Quarry on the 6th December before an unprecedented influx of 155 occurred on the 8th December, with 150 off the Willop Outfall (including 65 on the sea) and 5 on the flood at the Willop Basin (the previous highest count was 34 at Nickoll's Quarry on the 24th December 2010). Up to 4 remained in the Willop area until the 11th December, with 11 west past Folkestone Beach on the 14th, and 4 in the Botolph's Bridge area on the 15th, with 3 at the latter site again on the 30th December.

Teal

Anas crecca

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

There was a notable count of 100 at Sandling Park Lake on the 2nd January and up to six were seen on various dates in the Botolph's Bridge / Nickoll's Quarry area in January. Cold weather in February led to a small increase in the latter area, with seven on the 3rd, eight on the 4th, 12 on the 5th and 22 on the 10th, decreasing to 8 on the 11th as the flock rapidly dispersed.

Elsewhere one flew west past Samphire Hoe on the 3rd, three flew east past the Willop Outfall on the 4th, four were at Samphire Hoe on the 6th, six were at Oak Banks, near Hythe on the 19th, 15 were at Sandling Park Lake on the 26th and the last of the early winter period were four at Nickoll's Quarry on the 29th February.



Teal at Sandling Park Lake (Ian Roberts)

An early two flew west past Copt Point on the 27th August, with one east past the Willop Outfall on the 13th October and one at Botolph's Bridge on the 18th November. At the Willop Basin there were 11 on the 30th November to the 1st December, with further singles at Nickoll's Quarry on the 30th November and on the sea off the Willop area on the 2nd December, and on the 6th December there were 7 on the sea off the Hythe Redoubt and 14 at Nickoll's Quarry.

There was an unprecedented influx on the 8th December, when a total of 575 were logged, with 400 off the Willop Outfall, 135 east past Folkestone Beach and 40 on the Willop Basin (the previous highest count was 100 at Nickoll's Quarry on the 22nd December 2010, with the same total at Sandling Park Lake this January). 55 remained in the

Willop area the next day and numbers slowly dwindled there to 4 on the 16th, though 7 were seen there on the 26th December, and elsewhere 10 flew west past Folkestone Beach on the 14th December.

Mallard

<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>

Breeding resident and winter visitor.

Only small numbers were noted in January but cold weather in February led to accumulations of 42 at Nickoll's Quarry on the 3rd and 64 at Botolph's Bridge on the 8th.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 38 (44%) of the 1km squares across the area.

In late September a flock at the Willop Basin built up to 135 on the 24th and peaked at 148 on the 28th September. Several birds were involved in the cold weather movement of wildfowl on the 8th December, with a total of about 48 (28 east, 20 west) offshore.

Pintail

<i>Anas acuta</i>

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Two drakes were on the sea off the Willop Outfall on the 1st February and a pair flew east past Copt Point on the 17th April.

Shoveler

<i>Anas clypeata</i>

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

A flock of nine were on the sea off the Hythe Redoubt on the 4th February and another flock of nine flew east past Copt Point on the 25th March.

In the late winter period 7 flew west past Copt Point on the 23rd September, with 6 (3 west, 1 east, 2 on the sea) off the Willop Outfall on the 8th December, 2 west past Folkestone Beach on the 14th December and one flying over Botolph's Bridge the following day.

Pochard

<i>Aythya ferina</i>

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Cold weather in February led to a small influx in the Botolph's Bridge / Nickoll's Quarry area, with five from the 7th to the 9th, increasing to 17 on the 10th, but decreasing to 4 the next day and rapidly dispersing. Later in the month four were on the Folkestone Racecourse Lake, at Westenhanger on the 26th and singles were at Nickoll's Quarry and on the canal at Seabrook on the 29th, with the latter remaining until the 3rd March. At Nickoll's Quarry in March a pair were present on the 13th and a single drake on the 29th. There were no records from the late winter period.

Tufted Duck

<i>Aythya fuligula</i>

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

Up to seven were at Nickoll's Quarry in January before cold weather in February led to a small influx there, with 11 on the 1st, increasing to 16 on the 3rd, 24 on the 5th and 25 on the 10th, before rapidly dispersing. Elsewhere four were at Botolph's Bridge on the 8th to the 10th, and later in the month three were at Oak Banks, near Hythe on the 19th, four were on the Folkestone Racecourse Lake, at Westenhanger on the 26th and nine were at Nickoll's Quarry on the 29th.

Up to six were present at Nickoll's Quarry from March to mid-June, with 2-3 pairs possibly breeding though there was no confirmation of this, and there was an isolated count of 12 (8 drakes) on the 16th May. The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas found confirmed breeding in one of the 1km squares across the area (near Botolph's Bridge) with probable breeding in another five.

Only small numbers were noted in the late winter period with a peak of 9 at Nickoll's Quarry on the 9th December.

Common Scoter

<i>Melanitta nigra</i>

Non-breeding summer visitor, winter visitor and passage migrant.

One was on the sea off Mill Point on the 21st February and up-channel spring passage was noted from early March which included counts of 80 past Samphire Hoe on the 11th March, 110 past Copt Point on the 17th April, 77 past Copt Point on the 23rd April, 68 past Folkestone Pier on the 7th May and 125 past Samphire Hoe on the 19th May. The only summer records involved 42 east past Samphire Hoe on the 2nd June and one east past Copt Point on the 16th June.

Nine flew west past Copt Point on the 27th August, with 12 there on the 23rd September, and regular coastal records from mid-October, though the only count of note was 58 off Folkestone Beach on the 9th November. A flock of up to 10 were lingering in Hythe Bay off Princes Parade throughout December and one was picked up on the beach there on the 24th December and taken into care but unfortunately had to be put down.



Common Scoters at Hythe (Ian Roberts)

Velvet Scoter

<i>Melanitta fusca</i>

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Two flew west past Folkestone Beach on the 14th December.

Goldeneye

<i>Bucephala clangula</i>

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

A drake was on the sea off the Willop Outfall (and later off Princes Parade, Hythe) on the 8th December (B. Harper, M. Harper, I. A. Roberts). The 39th area record but the first for just over two years.

Smew

<i>Mergellus albellus</i>

Rare migrant and winter visitor.

A 'red-head' was seen on the canal cutting south of Botolph's Bridge on the 11th February (B. Harper, M. Harper, I. A. Roberts). The 16th area record but only the second since 2002.

Red-breasted Merganser

<i>Mergus serrator</i>

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

A drake flew west past Samphire Hoe on the 16th March before a total of 11 were logged moving eastwards past coastal watch-points between the 25th March and 23rd April.

In the late winter period one flew east past Folkestone Pier on the 26th October, with records of two drakes flying west past Folkestone Beach on the 10th, 17th and 20th November, and 4 (one drake) on the sea off the Willop Outfall before flying west on the 8th December.

Goosander

<i>Mergus merganser</i>

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Three drakes were found on the canal at Seabrook on the 7th January, and they were also seen there the next day, with two remaining until the 11th and one to the 14th January. Cold weather in February led to a small influx, with a pair flying west past Hythe on the 3rd, a 'red-head' at Nickoll's Quarry on the 8th and up to three (two drakes) in the Botolph's Bridge between the 7th and the 11th.

Red-legged Partridge

<i>Alectoris rufa</i>

Breeding resident.

Ones and twos were seen at several sites, mainly to the west of Hythe, with a peak count of 7 at Oak Banks, near Hythe on the 19th February.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 18 (21%) of the 1km squares across the area.

Grey Partridge

<i>Perdix perdix</i>

Breeding resident.

Only recorded from the Abbotscliffe area where there were three pairs present in spring and counts of 7-8 on several dates in the autumn.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 9 (10%) of the 1km squares across the area.



Grey Partridge at Abbotscliffe (Ian Roberts)

Pheasant

<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>

Breeding resident.

There were few counts received and peaks of just 7 at Botolph's Bridge on the 4th January and 14 along Donkey Street on the 22nd November.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and possible or probable breeding was recorded from 61 (71%) of the 1km squares across the area. Breeding was not confirmed in the survey period but the species tends to nest outside of the survey period (of April to July), for example in 2012 recently fledged young were seen near Stutfall Castle, Lympe on the 14th October.

Red-throated Diver

<i>Gavia stellata</i>

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Counts from the early winter period included 64 west past Folkestone Pier on the 8th January, 50 off Folkestone Beach on the 9th January, 25 off Copt Point on the 18th January and 29 on the sea off the Willop Outfall on the 8th March.

An up-channel spring passage was evident from mid-March to early May, with a total of 71 passing Copt Point or Samphire Hoe, and peak counts at the latter site of 18 on the 14th March and 22 on the 16th March.

One flew east past Copt Point on the 23rd September and small numbers were seen regularly again from early November, with counts including 60 off the Willop Outfall on the 2nd December, 165 west past Folkestone Beach on the 8th December, 80 east past the Willop Outfall on the 11th December, 33 off Folkestone Beach on the 14th December and 130 off the Willop Outfall on the 21st December.

Black-throated Diver

<i>Gavia arctica</i>

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

One which flew east past Mill Point on the 8th January was the only winter record. Spring passage comprised singles flying east at Copt Point on the 18th, 23rd and 30th April, and Samphire Hoe on the 2nd May.

The annual mean for the previous ten years was 7 birds so this was a slightly below average year.

Great Northern Diver

<i>Gavia immer</i>

Rare migrant and winter visitor.

One flew east past Folkestone Beach on the 29th November (I. A. Roberts) with one, possibly the same bird, watched feeding close inshore off the apron at Folkestone Warren on the 1st December (P. Chantler). The 27th and 28th area records.

Fulmar

<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>

Breeding visitor and passage migrant.

Birds had returned to cliffs by January, with 8 at Samphire Hoe and 3 at Capel-le-Ferne. There was a small up-channel passage in spring, with a peak of 23 east past Samphire Hoe on the 2nd March. On the 25th April a dark phase ('Blue Fulmar') flew west past Copt Point (D. A. Gibson), which was only the third area record (following singles which flew west past Copt Point on the 31st March 2001 and 18th April 2004).

Another unusual record was a single seen flying over Saltwood, some distance inland, on the 5th June. The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 7 of the 1km squares across the area, mainly along the cliffs but with a few wandering 'prospecting' birds.

In autumn one was seen off Copt Point on the 25th August, with 5 there on the 27th August, and regular records from mid-November, including a peak count of 44 east past Folkestone Beach on the 14th December. Birds had returned again to the cliffs by December, including 8 at Samphire Hoe on the 12th.

Sooty Shearwater

<i>Puffinus griseus</i>

Rare passage migrant.

Singles flew west past Copt Point on the 23rd September (D. A. Gibson) and east past Folkestone Beach on the 4th November (I. A. Roberts). The 40th and 41st area records.

Manx Shearwater

<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>

Passage migrant.

Four were seen off Copt Point on the 17th April (three flying east and one west), with five flying west there the next day. A further two were seen off the same site on the 25th April (one east and one west), and one flew west there the next day. June produced two further records, with two flying west past Copt Point on the 8th and a flock of six heading east there the next day. The total of 20 was the best since 2006.

Balearic Shearwater

<i>Puffinus mauretanicus</i>

Rare passage migrant.

Six flew west past Copt Point on the 27th August (I. A. Roberts) and two flew west there on the 23rd September (D. A. Gibson). The 30th and 31st area records.

Gannet

<i>Morus bassanus</i>

Passage migrant.

Only small numbers were present in the early winter period, with peak counts of just 15 off Mill Point on the 8th January and 10 off Copt Point on the 18th January, but there was a decent spring passage with a total of 812 logged moving up-channel between early March and late May. Counts included 170 past Samphire Hoe on the 2nd March, 124 past Hythe on the 4th March and 260 past Samphire Hoe on the 16th March.

Counts of 20-30 were regular throughout the summer, with larger totals of 40 off Samphire Hoe on the 2nd June and 45 west past Copt Point on the 16th June.

Larger numbers were noted from late August, including 80 west past Copt Point on the 27th August, 100 past Copt Point on the 23rd September and an exceptional 985 west past Folkestone Beach on the 9th November (the previous highest count was 510 past Copt Point on the 21st April 2001).



Gannet at Hythe (Brian Harper)

Cormorant

<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>

A non-breeding visitor at all times of year.

Small numbers were seen throughout the year with double-figure counts as follows: 14 at Botolph's Bridge (where the bank of the canal cutting, north of the pub was again being used as a roosting site) on the 9th February, 10 east past Samphire Hoe on the 2nd March, 14 off Seabrook on the 3rd March, 10 off Abbotscliffe on the 10th March and 10 off the Hythe Redoubt on the 6th July.

Passage migrant and winter visitor, with occasional summer records.

The peak monthly counts in 2012 are shown in the table below:

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
1	1	1	4	3	2	-	1	-	-	1	5

In January there were singles, possibly the same bird, in Folkestone Harbour on the 12th, off Mill Point on the 15th and flying west past Folkestone Beach on the 17th, with another at Samphire Hoe on the 25th. There were two further sightings at Mill Point in late February and another at Samphire Hoe on the 11th March.

In April there were 4 off Samphire Hoe on the 13th, with four singles there in late April / early May, and a count of 3 there on the 29th May. Elsewhere 2 were off Copt Point on the 3rd June.

One was seen off Abbotscliffe in late August but there were no further records until the end of November, when one was off Sandgate on the 30th. A flock of 5 were feeding offshore there on the 3rd December and singles were also seen at Folkestone Beach, Mill Point and Samphire Hoe in December.

Very rare vagrant.

One was seen at the Stonereach Bridge near Botolph's Bridge during a period of very severe weather on the 8th February (R. K. Norman). The 6th area record but the second in the last three years.

A scarce non-breeding visitor at any time of year, now regular in winter and on passage.

The peak monthly counts in 2012 are shown in the table below:

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
4	3	1	2	1	1	2	3	1	-	3	1

The Botolph's Bridge / Nickoll's Quarry area held a small wintering population, with up to three seen on many dates in January and February, and a peak of four at Nickoll's Quarry on the 22nd January. Elsewhere one was at Fairmead Farm, Westenhanger on the 2nd January, one was in Folkestone Harbour on the 10th March and singles were at Samphire Hoe on four dates in the first quarter of the year.

Spring produced five records, with two west past Hythe on the 13th April, one east past Samphire Hoe on the 21st April, one at Copt Point on the 2nd May, another east past Samphire Hoe on the 9th May and one in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 13th May.

The only mid-summer record related to one in the Fairmead Farm area, Westenhanger on the 8th June. This



Little Egret at Nickoll's Quarry (Brian Harper)

followed one in the same area in May 2011 and in the adjacent 1km square at Barrowhill in June 2009, and was recorded as possible breeding in the 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas.

Two were at Samphire Hoe on the 31st July and 3 flew over Church Road, Cheriton on the 22nd August, with singles at the former site on the 18th September and at Abbotscliffe on the 27th September.

In the late winter period there were regular sightings at Samphire Hoe from the 12th November (with a peak of 2 on the 19th November) and the Botolph's Bridge / West Hythe area from the 18th November (with a peak of 3 there on that date). Elsewhere singles were along the Pent Stream in Cheriton on three dates in mid-December and at Copt Point on the 21st December.

Great White Egret

<i>Ardea alba</i>

Very rare vagrant.

Following a report at Nickoll's Quarry on the 27th January, one was present in the Botolph's Bridge area between the 7th and the 11th February (I. A. Roberts *et al*). This is the third consecutive winter that this area has hosted the species and it is possible that the sightings might all relate to one returning individual.

In August one was seen at Westenhanger on the 23rd (D. Featherbe). The 4th and 5th area records.



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

Grey Heron

<i>Ardea cinerea</i>

Breeding resident and passage migrant.

Small numbers were seen at many sites across the area during the year, with cold weather in February leading to a concentration of 15 on the canal cutting near Botolph's Bridge on the 9th February. There were nine records of 12 birds between late March and late May which might have related to migrants, but just one in September that was suggestive of autumn passage.

Breeding was confirmed in the two 1km squares which cover Lympe Park Wood, with a total of 11 nests, which is a slight improvement on the ten counted in 2011 and eight in 2010.

Little Grebe

<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>

Breeding resident and winter visitor.

Small numbers were noted in the Botolph's Bridge area in January before cold weather in February led to an influx, peaking with 15 in the area (10 at Botolph's Bridge and 5 at Nickoll's Quarry) on the 7th, but these quickly dispersed as the thaw began, leaving just ones and twos at these sites, and elsewhere there were a pair at Oak Banks, near Hythe on the 19th February.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 7 of the 1km squares across the area.

Numbers in the late winter period were low but did include one on the canal at Seabrook on the 13th November.

Great Crested Grebe

<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>

Breeding resident and winter visitor.

Counts in January and February were generally low, with the cold weather seemingly having little effect, and the peak in this period was of 39 on the sea off Mill Point on the 21st February. Numbers increased in Hythe Bay during March, with 47 off Seabrook on the 3rd, 60 off the Willop Outfall on the 8th and a peak of 185 off Hythe Redoubt on the 13th, before decreasing.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding was confirmed in two 1km squares (Folkestone Racecourse Lake at Westenhanger and Nickoll's Quarry), with probable breeding in an additional 1km square at the latter site. Elsewhere in 2012 there was a summer record of one flying east past Copt Point on the 16th June.

Singles flew west past Copt Point on the 25th and 27th August and small numbers were seen regularly, mainly at coastal sites, from mid-October. Counts included 19 off Copt Point and 20 off the Willop Outfall on the 21st December, and 55 off Folkestone Pier on the 27th December (with this latter flock including a fully albino individual).

Honey Buzzard

<i>Pernis apivorus</i>

Scarce passage migrant.

One was seen over Nickoll's Quarry on the 12th May (B. Ryan, P. Chantler, J. Chantler), singles flew in off the sea at Capel-le-Ferne Café (P. Coleman) and north over Lynton Road, Hythe (I. A. Roberts) on the 27th May, and one flew west over Saltwood on the 20th July (P. Howe).

A total of 101 have been recorded in the area in the 23 years since 1990 (4.4 per year) so the total for 2012 is about average.

Red Kite

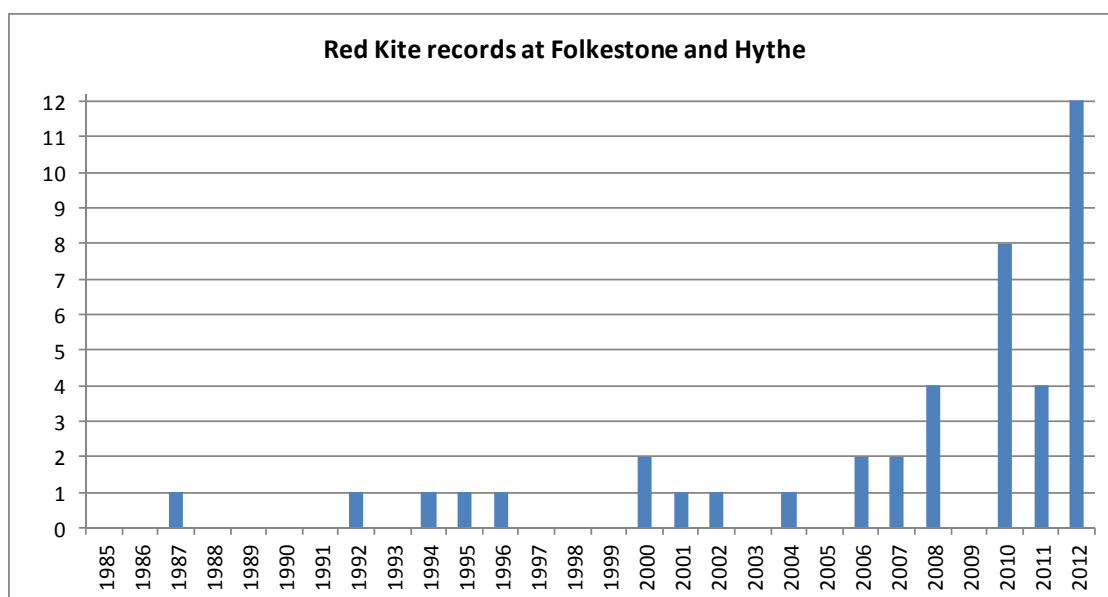
<i>Milvus milvus</i>

Rare migrant, but increasing.

There were two singles in late March, flying over Joyes Road, Folkestone on the 25th (D. A. Gibson) and north over Abbotscliffe on the 29th (I. A. Roberts), before a record influx (part of a wider record movement across Kent and Sussex) was witnessed in the second half of May. On the 19th May one flew north over Lympe (P. Sharp), with one over Bargrove Wood on the 20th (I. A. Roberts), singles west at Capel-le-Ferne Café (I. A. Roberts) and on north over Saltwood (P. Howe) on the 23rd, one east along the Hougham Valley on the 27th (M. Kennett), two north over

Saltwood (P. Howe) and one south-east over Military Road, Hythe (S. P. Clancy) on the 28th, and singles north over Saltwood (P. Howe) and west over Samphire Hoe on the 29th (P. Holt, P. Smith).

Finally, in November, one flew east at Samphire Hoe on the 18th (P. J. Chantler). The total of 12 constitutes a record year, as shown in the chart below, and signifies a marked change in status for a species which had only occurred on five occasions prior to the year 2000.



White-tailed Eagle

Haliaeetus albicilla

Very rare vagrant.

An immature was seen in field at Botolph's Bridge on the 14th February before it flew off to the west (P. Sharp). After being seen and photographed on Walland Marsh two days later, it made a brief reappearance on the 19th February, flying south-west over Saltwood during the late morning (P. Howe). The second area record, following one seen over Folkestone in November 1988.

Marsh Harrier

Circus aeruginosus

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Singles flew west over Hill Road, Folkestone on the 8th January and west over Nickoll's Quarry on the 10th January, and in February a male lingered in the Botolph's Bridge area from the 3rd to the 4th. In spring one flew south-west over Saltwood on the 11th March, with one north-west over Crete Road East on the 20th March, and a further two in off the sea at Capel-le-Ferne later that day, and two singles in May – flying east over Saltwood on the 8th and north there on the 10th.

There were just two reports in autumn, one at Nickoll's Quarry on the 7th October and one flying out to sea at Abbotscliffe on the 14th October.

The total of 11 was a little above the average of 8 per year recorded over the previous decade.

Rare migrant and winter visitor.

There were three records as follows:

A 'ring-tail' flew east and then west along the Hougham Valley on the 15th April (M. Kennett);

One flew out to sea at Abbotscliffe on the 2nd October (D. A. Gibson);

A male was at Botolph's Bridge on the 15th December (B. Harper, M. Harper, I. A. Roberts).

These were the 31st to 33rd area records. The previous decade saw an average of 1.4 records per year so this is an above average showing.



Hen Harrier at Botolph's Bridge (Brian Harper)

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

Ones and twos were seen at many sites throughout the year and the fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded, with breeding of at least a possible status recorded from 39 (45%) of the 1km squares across the area.

The only spring record indicative of migration was one in off the sea at Copt Point on the 26th April whilst in autumn four at Abbotscliffe on the 14th October might have included migrants, as might 3 (including 2 perched on the seawall) at Samphire Hoe on the 19th October, and a male flew in off the sea from a long distance out at Copt Point on the 31st October.

Formerly scarce, now an increasing breeding species, winter visitor and passage migrant.

Small numbers were seen at widespread sites throughout the year and there some evidence of migration, particularly in spring.

The first indications of passage were a single flying over Folkestone on the 20th February, followed by a total of 11 (including a flock of 7 heading WNW) over Saltwood on the 25th February. A total of 28 birds considered to have been migrants were logged in March, including 4 east over Saltwood on the 11th and a total of 9 heading east on the 24th (1 over Folkestone, 3 over Hythe and 5 over Saltwood). Fewer migrants were noted in April but these did include 4 over Saltwood and 5 over Port Lympne on the 12th.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 20 (23%) of the 1km squares across the area.

There were fewer signs of passage in autumn, though there were several coastal records at Abbotscliffe in September and October, one flew low over Samphire Hoe on the 9th October, and a total of 10 flew west on the 14th October (2 at Saltwood, 4 at Abbotscliffe and 4 at Seabrook).

Scarce passage migrant.

One was reported flying north-east over Folkestone on the 4th April, and there were then four in May – one in off the sea at Capel-le-Ferne on the 12th (D. A. Gibson, I. A. Roberts), one over Capel-le-Ferne Café on the 19th (P. Coleman, I. A. Roberts), one in off the sea at Capel-le-Ferne Café on the morning of the 27th (D. A. Gibson, I. A. Roberts) and one north over Castle Hill that evening (D. A. Gibson).

In June one which flew over Samphire Hoe and then Abbotscliffe on the 19th (P. Holt, M. Kennett) was only second to be recorded in that month. Finally another flew over Samphire Hoe and then Abbotscliffe on the 28th August (G. J. A. Burton, P. Edmondson).

A total of 55 have been recorded in the area in the 23 years since 1990 (2.4 per year) so the total for 2012 constitutes a good year.



Osprey at Capel-le-Ferne (Ian Roberts)

Breeding resident and passage migrant.

Ones and twos were seen at many sites throughout the year and the fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded, with breeding of at least a possible status recorded from 37 (43%) of the 1km squares across the area.

The record indicative of migration was of 2 in off the sea at Seabrook on the 6th October.

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

There were three records in the early winter period: a male at the Willop Basin on the 1st February, one along Crete Road West on the 9th March and a rather late bird at Kiln Wood on the 27th April.

October saw a further two sightings: singles at Samphire Hoe on the 20th and Abbotscliffe on the 28th.

The previous decade saw an average of 4.4 records per year so this was an about average showing.

A summer visitor with breeding suspected but not proven.

The first, which flew in off the sea at Samphire Hoe on the 13th April, was two days later than the earliest arrival last year. The rest of April however was unusually cold and wet and there were no further records until one at Crete Road East on the 29th. The main arrival occurred in May when 8 migrants were recorded, with 3 at Saltwood, 2 at Abbotscliffe, and singles at Capel-le-Ferne Café, Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site and Nickoll's Quarry.

There were summer records of birds present in three areas of potential breeding habitat but there are still no confirmed breeding records for the area. The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas found probable breeding in three 1km squares and possible breeding in another 14.

There were several records which appeared to relate to migrants in August and September, and three late ones in October: at Abbotscliffe on the 2nd, Seabrook on the 4th, the Willop Basin on the 13th and Samphire Hoe on the 20th. This final record was 12 days later than the latest date last year.

Peregrine

<i>Falco peregrinus</i>

Resident breeder, winter visitor and passage migrant.

There were regular records from the cliffs between Folkestone and Dover throughout the year. Away from here there were sightings in the early winter period from Botolph's Bridge on the 7th January, Donkey Street on the 22nd January, Saltwood on the 22nd February and Tumble Tye Farm, Capel-le-Ferne on the 24th February. One was also seen flying east over Saltwood on the 12th April.

Up to three pairs of Peregrines were present along the cliffs in spring, and the fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and confirmed breeding was recorded from two 1km squares across the area, with probable breeding in another two and possible breeding in one. All of these sites were at the cliffs but there an intriguing series of three records of birds seen catching or carrying prey in the Hythe / Saltwood area in the summer of 2012 (one over Saltwood Castle on the 17th May, one over Hythe town on the 28th June and one taking a pigeon from a Martello Tower at Hythe Ranges on the 8th July).

In the late winter period there were singles at Botolph's Bridge on the 7th October, Hythe on the 3rd November, Nickoll's Quarry on the 17th November, and in the Botolph's Bridge / Willop Basin area regularly in December.

Water Rail

<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

In the early winter period up to three were along the canal at Seabrook with another at Samphire Hoe, and the late winter period saw wintering singles at these same two sites.

Moorhen

<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>

Breeding resident.

One that had been found in Folkestone Harbour in mid-December 2011 and remained there until the 20th March was an unusual record for the site.

Peak counts from the more usual areas included 5 at Samphire Hoe on the 6th February, 18 at Botolph's Bridge on the 8th February and 8 at Brockhill Country Park on the 20th February.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 43 (50%) of the 1km squares across the area.



Moorhen at Seabrook (Brian Harper)

Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>
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Breeding resident and winter visitor.

Only small numbers were at Nickoll's Quarry in January but cold weather in February saw an increase to a peak of 29 there on the 4th. There were no other counts of note received.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 11 (13%) of the 1km squares across the area.

Crane	<i>Grus grus</i>
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Very rare vagrant.

Two were heard calling at Saltwood on the 15th March having earlier flown south-east from Sandwich Bay (P. Howe). The 9th area record.

Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>
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Breeding species, passage migrant and winter visitor.

There were early winter records from Hythe Ranges on the 2nd January, Hythe Redoubt on the 23rd February and Samphire Hoe on the 14th March, before a pair settled at Nickoll's Quarry from the 18th March with at least one remained into June and breeding may have occurred. There was a light spring passage with a total of 18 passing coastal sites between the 2nd and 24th May.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas found confirmed breeding in one 1km square, with probable breeding in 3 others and possible breeding in another.

One was on the beach below Abbotscliffe on the 19th June, with 2 at the Willop Basin on the 6th July, 7 east past Sandgate on the 26th July, one west at Copt Point on the 25th August and 5 east there on the 27th August. There were 3 at the Willop Outfall on the 1st October with a single there on the 16th October and another flying east on the 8th December, and one at Copt Point on the 21st December.

Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>
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Rare migrant.

One flew in from west and landed on beach at Hythe Ranges on the 10th March (B. Harper, M. Harper) and a total of 15 flew past Copt Point (13 east, including a flock of 12, and 2 west) on the 25th March (D. A. Gibson, I. A. Roberts). In the latter part of the year a total of 14 (flocks of 6 and 8) flew west past the Willop Outfall on the 8th December (B. Harper, M. Harper)

The 47th to 49th area records. The previous decade saw an average of 1.6 records per year so this is a slightly above average showing.

Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>
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Occasional breeding species, also a winter visitor and passage migrant.

The winter roost at Folkestone Beach held a peak of 45 birds on the 13th January and was presumably the source of the fairly regular records of up to 8 in Folkestone Harbour in January and February, and 2 at Folkestone Warren on the 8th February. Elsewhere there were 2 at the Hythe Ranges on the 25th February. The only signs of spring passage were 3 flying east past Samphire Hoe on the 2nd May and one on the seawall there on the 8th May.

A pair were present at Hythe Ranges in May, and might have bred, with an interesting record of one on the beach by the Hotel Imperial, Hythe on the 10th June. The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas found probable breeding in two 1km squares (both within Hythe Ranges).

The first returning birds to Folkestone Beach were noted on the 7th July and elsewhere 6 in the Willop area (2 on the beach and 4 on the Basin) on the 12th October and 4 east past the Willop Outfall on the 8th December were of note.

Dotterel

Charadrius morinellus

Very rare vagrant.

One flew over the gully field at Abbotscliffe on the 20th August (I. A. Roberts). The fourth area record, but the second in the last two years.

Golden Plover

Pluvialis apricaria

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

One flew west over Botolph's Bridge on the 14th January, with 10 in arable fields at Abbotscliffe on the 31st January, one at the Willop Basin on the 4th February, 4 on the golf course at Copt Point on the 7th February and one at Botolph's Bridge the next day. The largest count of the year was a flock of 50 flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 22nd February which were probably re-orientating following the thaw.

In autumn one flew west at Abbotscliffe on the 27th September, with 4 west there on the 29th September and one north on the 18th November, and in December there were up to 18 at the Willop Basin in the second half of the month.

Grey Plover

Pluvialis squatarola

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Cold weather in early February produced singles flying west over Samphire Hoe on the 6th and on the beach at Folkestone Warren on the 8th, and five were at the Willop Outfall on the 23rd to the 25th February. Spring passage however was very light with just one in off the sea at Copt Point on the 25th March and one east past Samphire Hoe on the 1st May.



Golden Plover at Princes Parade (Brian Harper)



Grey Plover the at Willop Outfall (Ian Roberts)

Occasional breeding species, also a winter visitor and passage migrant.

There were relatively low numbers present in January, with a peak of just 80 near Perry Wood on the 2nd, but some signs of cold weather movement late in the month into February. On the 31st January 96 flew west over Saltwood, with 15 at Horn Street, 7 at Samphire Hoe, 3 at Copt Point and one at Abbotscliffe occurring away from the usual areas in the first half of February.

There were one or two pairs present at the Willop Basin through May and June and may have bred (breeding was confirmed here last year) and one was seen in a flooded field inland from the Hythe Redoubt on the 19th May but did not linger.

In autumn most records came from the Willop Basin where up to 29 were present in late September, increasing to 43 in early October, 87 by the middle of October, 117 by the mid-November and 431 by the end of the month. Numbers further built up in December to 860 on the 5th and peaked at 1,650 on the 16th, before decreasing to 1,400 on the 21st and 825 on the 25th.



Lapwings at the Willop Basin (Brian Harper)

Elsewhere one was at Abbotscliffe on the 10th October, one flew in off the sea at Samphire Hoe on the 23rd October and 5 were at Abbotscliffe the next day, and cold weather movements in December comprised five north over Hillhurst Farm, Westenhanger on the 2nd, one north over Botolph's Bridge on the 10th and four west past Folkestone Beach on the 14th.

Passage migrant.

There was only one record in spring, a singleton east Samphire Hoe on the 17th May, and in autumn 16 flew past Copt Point on the 27th October.

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

In January ones and twos were seen at Folkestone Harbour and the Willop Outfall, and a light spring passage comprised 2 east past Copt Point on the 25th March, 2 east there on the 30th April and one east past Samphire Hoe on the 7th May.

In the late winter period up to 6 were at the Willop Outfall from late September into December, before there was a very good count of 55 on the 26th December which included both Polish- and Dutch-ringed individuals (see page 98 for further details). Elsewhere 8 were at Copt Point on the 27th October and up to 5 were on the beach at Hythe in December.

Very rare vagrant.

One was at the Willop Basin on the 13th October (I. A. Roberts, B. Harper). The 11th area record but the first for ten years.

Purple Sandpiper*Calidris maritima*

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

A flock of up to 7 were wintering at Hythe, frequenting the rock groynes opposite the Imperial and Stade Court Hotels, where they remained until early May. Elsewhere there was one at Folkestone Harbour on the 7th February and one flew east past Copt Point on the 17th April.

The first returning bird was noted at Hythe on the 27th October, increasing to 3 on the 4th November, 4 on the 17th and 5 on the 27th November, remaining through December.

Dunlin*Calidris alpina*

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Only 2 were seen in January, at Hythe on the 8th, but cold weather in early February led to a small influx with 2 at Botolph's Bridge on the 4th, up to 16 in Folkestone Harbour between the 4th and the 8th, one on the seawall at Samphire Hoe on the 6th to 7th, one at Copt Point on the 7th and 4 at Folkestone Warren on the 8th. There were also 3 in Folkestone Harbour on the 22nd February.

There was a light spring passage in May, with 6 east past Samphire Hoe on the 1st, 22 east there (with a further 2 seen briefly on the main pond) on the 2nd and one east there on the 9th.

In autumn one was seen on the west pond at Samphire Hoe on the 20th September, with 3 at the Willop Basin on the 12th October (one remaining until the following day), 2 there on the 26th October, 9 east past Folkestone Pier the same day and 2 in Folkestone Harbour on the 27th October. One was at the Willop Basin on the 30th November, increasing to 2 on the 2nd December and 6 on the 8th December, when 25 flew east offshore, and 3 flew west there the next day, with further singles on the Basin on the 10th and 15th December.

Jack Snipe*Lymnocyptes minimus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Singles were flushed from a flooded field inland of the Hythe Redoubt on the 4th January and from a marshy area at Nickoll's Quarry on the 18th March.

Common Snipe*Gallinago gallinago*

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Ones and twos were seen at various sites in the Botolph's Bridge / Nickoll's Quarry area in the early winter period with a larger count of 35 in flooded field inland of the Hythe Redoubt on the 4th January. Elsewhere 5 were at Fairmead Farm, Westenhanger on the 2nd January, one was at Samphire Hoe during a spell of cold weather on the 8th February and one flew east there on the 23rd March. An isolated record of one in a flooded field near the Hythe Redoubt on the 7th May was presumably a migrant.

In autumn one flew over Nickoll's Quarry on the 7th October, two flew south at Abbotscliffe on the 8th October and one was seen there on the 28th October. Further migrants were at Samphire Hoe on the 14th November, Abbotscliffe on the 16th November and flying west at Folkestone Beach on the 17th November, and small numbers were again wintering in the Botolph's Bridge / Nickoll's Quarry area. Elsewhere 8 were counted at the Willop Basin on the 16th December.

Woodcock*Scolopax rusticola*

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

In January singles were seen near Saltwood on the 5th and at Thorn Wood, Postling Wents on the 21st, before there was a marked cold weather influx in February. There were peak counts of 6 at Church Hougham on the 7th, 5 at Abbotscliffe on the 11th and 4 at Nickoll's Quarry on the 10th and Bargrove Wood on the 19th, with 2 at Oak Banks, near Hythe on the 19th, and widely scattered singles. These included one photographed by a garden pond in East Cliff Gardens, Folkestone on the 12th, one flying north over South Road in Hythe on the 5th, one flying over Folkestone bypass the same day and one flying over the M20 near junction 11 on the 7th, with others at Botolph's Bridge, Chesterfield Wood (Sandling), Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site and Samphire Hoe.



Woodcock at Folkestone (David Featherbe)

In March there were singles at Samphire Hoe on the 11th and flying over Horn Street on the 18th and near Frogholt on the 30th.

In autumn 3 were seen at Abbotscliffe on the 28th October with one at Samphire Hoe on the 18th November.

Bar-tailed Godwit

Limosa lapponica

Passage migrant.

One which flew west past the Willop Outfall on the 6th January was an unusual winter record. Spring passage however was poor, with just a total of 91 recorded, compared to an average for the previous ten years of 322 and a tally of 891 last year. Two flew east past Copt Point on the 23rd April, with a flock of about 25 flying low to the east over Saltwood later that day, and a total of 64 went east past Samphire Hoe on the 1st May.

Whimbrel

Numenius phaeopus

Passage migrant.

The first of the year was at Botolph's Bridge on the 10th April, with one east past Copt Point on the 14th, another east there on the 18th, 3 east on the 23rd April and 28 east on the 28th, whilst 6 were at Nickoll's Quarry on the 30th April. In May 29 flew east past Samphire Hoe on the 1st, a flock of 13 were at Nickoll's Quarry the next day, when one was at Copt Point and 3 passed Samphire Hoe, and a total of 10 were seen on the 4th (3 east past Hythe Ranges, 3 over Abbotscliffe and 4 at Botolph's Bridge). There were subsequent singles at Botolph's Bridge on the 6th and Samphire Hoe on the 9th, with 3 east past the latter site on the 23rd May and the last east past Hythe on the 27th May. The total for the spring was just 102, which is less than the average for the previous ten years of 122 and considerably less than last year's 230.

Autumn passage is always much lighter, and this year comprised just three birds – singles in the Hythe Redoubt area on the 21st July, 11th August and 23rd to 26th August.

Curlew

Numenius arquata

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Up to 21 were at the Willop Basin in January and smaller numbers were seen occasionally in the Botolph's Bridge / Nickoll's Quarry area in January and February, with a peak of 6 at the latter site on the 5th February. Elsewhere there were singles at Samphire Hoe on the 8th, 11th and 28th February, with another there on the 23rd March and one flying east on the 30th April being the only signs of any spring passage.

Returning birds were noted from late June, when one flew west at Copt Point on the 30th, with 2 west past Folkestone Pier on the 2nd July, one over West Road, Cheriton on the 4th July, 2 at Folkestone Beach on the 7th July, one at the Willop Outfall on the 15th July and 2 at Botolph's Bridge on the 16th July.

Small numbers were again at the Willop Basin in the late winter period, with peaks of 4 on the 30th November and 16th December. Elsewhere one was at Samphire Hoe on the 19th November and 25 flew east there on the 30th December.

Common Sandpiper

<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>

Passage migrant.

The first, two at Samphire Hoe on the 30th April, were eight days later than the earliest arrival last year. Most common migrants arrived later than last year due to the unusually cold and wet weather in April.

There were singles at Samphire Hoe on the 1st and 2nd May, increasing to two on the 3rd, five on the 5th-6th, and peaking at six there on the 7th. It appears that a spell of cold northerly winds held up migration and led to this accumulation of birds, as they rapidly moved on when the weather improved. There were an additional two at the same site on the 15th, when one was seen at Nickoll's Quarry, and there were two at the latter site the next day.

The first returning autumn birds were two along Hythe Ranges on the 8th July. Autumn passage was generally light, apart from a count of 13 between the Willop Outfall and Hythe Redoubt on the 15th July. There were few records in August, with the last on the 30th, and a late bird was seen at Folkestone Pier on the 26th October. This final record was almost two months later than the latest date last year, but is not the latest ever (there have even been December records in four years – most recently in 2008).

Green Sandpiper

<i>Tringa ochropus</i>

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Singles were seen in the Botolph's Bridge / Nickoll's Quarry area on 3 dates in January and 2 dates in February, with 2 at the latter site on the 13th March.

Two flew over Hillcrest Road, Hythe on the 28th March and one was at Nickoll's Quarry on the 16th April.

Unusually there were no records from the second half of the year (for the first time since 1995).



Green Sandpiper at Botolph's Bridge (Ian Roberts)

Greenshank

<i>Tringa nebularia</i>

Passage migrant.

The only record this year was of one flying west up the Hougham Valley on the 11th August (M. Kennett).

Redshank

<i>Tringa totanus</i>

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Up to 12 were wintering in Folkestone Harbour, with up to 6 at Nickoll's Quarry, 2 at the Willop Basin and singles at Botolph's Bridge, Hythe Ranges and inland of the Hythe Redoubt.

Two which flew east past Hythe Redoubt on the 13th March were probably migrants, as were two in a flooded field inland of Hythe Redoubt on the 4th May and one which flew over Samphire Hoe on the 30th May.

In autumn one flew over Samphire Hoe on the 22nd October and 5 had returned to Folkestone Harbour by the 27th October (with regular records there until the end of the year). At the Willop Basin there were a couple of singles in late November, increasing to 6 on the 1st December, 8 on the 9th, 12 on the 16th and 14 on the 30th December.

Turnstone

<i>Arenaria interpres</i>

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Up to 20 were wintering in Folkestone Harbour, with up to 40 at Hythe and up to 21 at the Willop Outfall, giving a total for the early winter period of about 81 wintering birds.

In the late winter period there were up to 78 at Hythe and up to 38 at the Willop Outfall, but just 8 in Folkestone Harbour (total of 124 for the area).

The only indications of any passage were two flying west past Folkestone Beach on the 9th November.

Pomarine Skua

<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>

Passage migrant.

One flew east past Copt Point on the 25th April and singles, possibly the same bird, flew east past Folkestone Pier and Samphire Hoe on the 7th May. The annual average for the previous ten years was just over 20 birds so this was a poor year.

Arctic Skua

<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>

Passage migrant.

The first, one flying east past Copt Point on the 29th April, was 12 days later than the first sighting last year but was quickly followed by three going east there the next day. A further three flew east there on the 23rd, with a good count of eight east on the 25th April (there have been only two higher day totals – 10 east at Copt on the 23rd April 1998 and 22 east at Samphire Hoe on the 30th April 2008).

There were further singles off Copt Point on the 30th April, Samphire Hoe on the 1st May, Folkestone Pier on the 7th May, Samphire Hoe on the 9th May and a very late bird at Copt Point on the 9th June (there had only been one previous June record – one at Copt Point on the 13th June 1998).

Autumn passage began with one off Samphire Hoe on the 25th August, with another good count of 13 west past Copt Point on the 27th August, 3 there on the 23rd September and a relatively late bird there on the 27th October. Whilst this was some 18 days later than the last



Arctic Skua at Folkestone Pier (Brian Harper)

sighting in 2011 there have been later sightings in eight of the last 15 years, with November records in seven of those.

Great Skua

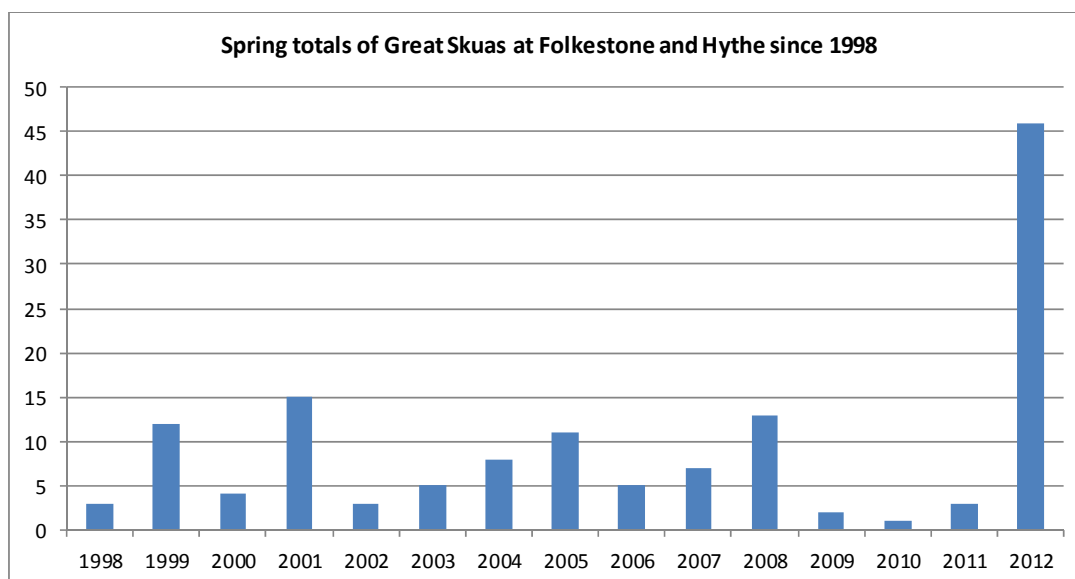
Stercorarius skua

Passage migrant.

One was seen close inshore, eating a fish, off Samphire Hoe on the 22nd February and there were further sightings, possibly relating to the same bird, there on the 14th and 16th March.

One flew east past Copt Point on the 25th March before an unprecedented passage was witnessed from mid-April. This began with 3 flying east at Copt Point on the 17th, with 13 east there the next day, 4 east on the 23rd, an exceptional 16 east there on the 25th, one there on the 26th, two past Samphire Hoe on the 29th and one at Copt Point on the 30th. There were four further singles in May, one off Abbotscliffe and the others off Samphire Hoe, and there was an unusually late bird which flew east past Copt Point on the 8th June (there has only been one previous record in June – also at Copt Point, on the 6th June 1992).

The day record for Great Skuas in spring was four prior to 2012, but this was twice exceeded this April. In total some 45 were logged in spring 2012 which is easily the best total for that season in recent years, as the chart below demonstrates:



Relatively few were seen in autumn however, with one east past Copt Point on the 31st October, 3 east past Folkestone Beach and one off Hythe on the 4th November, and further singles east past Folkestone Beach on the 20th November and 14th December.

Sabine's Gull

Xema sabini

Very rare vagrant.

An adult or first-summer bird drifted slowly west past Copt Point on the very unusual date of 30th June (I. A. Roberts). This was the fifth area record with all the others relating to juveniles seen in late August or September.

Kittiwake

Rissa tridactyla

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Regular along the coast in the early winter period with the following double-figure counts: 10 west past Copt Point on the 3rd January, 10 off Folkestone Pier and 15 off Mill Point on the 8th January, 12 off Copt Point on the 18th January and 10 off Mill Point on the 2nd February.

Spring passage was noted between early March and early June, including 11 east past Samphire Hoe on the 2nd March, 8 east there on the 16th March and 10 east there on the 1st May.

The latter half of the year did not produce any double-figure counts until November, when 67 (40e, 27w) were off Folkestone Beach and 10 were off Hythe on the 4th, with 210 west past Folkestone Beach on the 9th and 53 (51w, 2e) there on the 20th, with a further 53 west there on the 14th December.



Kittiwake at Folkestone Pier (Brian Harper)

Black-headed Gull

Chroicocephalus ridibundus

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Large numbers were seen in both the early and late winter periods but no counts were received.

Spring passage was noted between mid-March and late May, including counts of 20 east past Samphire Hoe on the 16th March, 25 east there on the 23rd March, 16 east past Samphire Hoe (and 24 at Nickoll's Quarry) on the 2nd May, 50 east past Samphire Hoe on the 7th May and 25 east past Folkestone Pier on the 23rd May.

Little Gull

Hydrocoloeus minutus

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

An adult was lingering off Folkestone Pier on the 18th January, 7 flew east past Copt Point on the 11th October, 5 flew east there on the 27th October and an adult flew east past Folkestone Beach on the 14th December. This represented an improvement on the total of four birds recorded last year but was well below the annual average for the previous ten years of 37.

Mediterranean Gull

Larus melanocephalus

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Large numbers were present at Copt Point in the early winter period but the flock was not systematically surveyed; however a peak count of 204 there on the 23rd January was received. Elsewhere counts of 50+ at Summerhouse Hill on the 21st January and 14 at Seabrook on the 3rd March were of note.

There was some evidence of a small spring passage with a total of 9 birds noted moving east (mostly past Samphire Hoe) between mid-March and early May.

The first returning birds were seen at Copt Point on the 3rd June but only small numbers were seen in the area until the second half of July. There were no counts received from Copt Point for the latter half of the year but elsewhere totals of 120 at Church Hougham on the 26th August, 250 at West Hougham on the 31st August, 100 along the cliffs at Samphire Hoe on the 3rd September, 234 at Church Road, Cheriton on the 11th November and 240 at Sandgate on the 27th November were of note.

The reading of colour rings revealed birds of Belgian, Dutch and German origin, one of which is now in its 14th year (see page 99 for further details).

Common Gull

<i>Larus canus</i>

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Large numbers were seen in both the early and late winter periods but the only counts received were during cold weather of 40 at Samphire Hoe on the 6th February and 35+ at Nickoll's Quarry on the 8th February.

Spring passage was noted between late-February and early May, including counts of 100+ at Tumble Tye Farm, Capel-le-Ferne on the 24th February, 20 east past Samphire Hoe on the 2nd March, 10 east there on the 26th March and 15 east there on the 7th May.

Lesser Black-backed Gull

<i>Larus fuscus</i>

Breeding species, winter visitor and passage migrant.

Only small numbers were noted in the first half of the year, and there was little evidence of any passage, but the fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 10 (12%) of the 1km squares across the area).

The second half of the year produced counts of 20 at the Willop Basin on the 25th November and 63 there (with a further 10 at Botolph's Bridge) on the 23rd December.



Common Gull at Seabrook (Brian Harper)



Lesser Black-backed Gull at Botolph's Bridge (Brian Harper)

Herring Gull

<i>Larus argentatus</i>

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

Large numbers were present across the area throughout the year, with particularly a high volume at Hythe in December, with an estimate of 1,000 there on the 16th.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 44 (51%) of the 1km squares across the area). In 2012 there was a count of 40 nests on industrial estate roofs in north-east Folkestone (TR2336 / 2337).

The reading of colour rings revealed movement of birds between here and Sussex, North Thames / London and northern France (see page 100 for further details).

Caspian Gull

<i>Larus cachinnans</i>

Very rare vagrant.

An adult, probably a female, was photographed on the east pier of Folkestone Harbour on the 27th November (I. A. Roberts). The fifth area record but the fourth in the Folkestone Harbour area and only the second adult to be identified.

Iceland Gull

<i>Larus glaucooides</i>

Very rare vagrant.

In January a second-winter bird of the Nearctic form *kumleini* was found in Dover Harbour where it remained into early March. It was seen flying east past Samphire Hoe towards Dover (P. Holt) on the 6th February, and was also visible from Samphire Hoe whilst over western side of Dover Harbour on 7th March (I. A. Roberts). The 11th area record but the first of this race.

Great Black-backed Gull

<i>Larus marinus</i>

Winter visitor and passage migrant, small numbers oversummer.

The only counts of note were of 27 at Sandgate on the 26th July, 47 there on the 25th August and 27 at Copt Point on the 11th October.

The reading of colour rings revealed single birds of Norwegian origin in January and July (see page 101 for further details).

Little Tern

<i>Sternula albifrons</i>

Passage migrant, formerly bred.

The only record was one east past Samphire Hoe on the 1st May. The annual mean for the previous ten years was just over four birds so this was a below average showing.

Black Tern

<i>Chlidonias niger</i>

Passage migrant.

The only record was one west past Copt Point on the 27th August. The annual average for the previous ten years was just over 23 birds so this was a very poor year.

Sandwich Tern

<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>

Non-breeding summer visitor and passage migrant, rare in winter.

The first, two east past Samphire Hoe on the 17th March, were just a day later than the arrival date last year. The next record was a week later, when 11 flew east at the same site on the 24th, with 15 east there on the 26th, 25 east past Copt Point on the 28th March and 21 east past Hythe the next day. The first April produced a total of 99 flying east past Copt Point and Samphire Hoe, with another 39 on the rocks opposite the Hotel Imperial, Hythe – a good count for so early in the spring.

The rest of April however was unusually cold and wet and there was only one further double-figure count in the first three weeks of the month, when 15 were seen off Samphire Hoe on the 13th. The last week of April however saw some improvement, with 30 east past Copt Point on the 23rd, 90 east there on the 25th, 80 east past Samphire Hoe on the 29th and 120 east past Copt Point on the 30th.

After a count of 75 east past Samphire Hoe on the 1st May numbers tailed off rapidly, and there were just two further double-figure counts in the remainder of the month: 18 east there on the 3rd and 25 east past Folkestone Pier on the 23rd.

Small numbers were seen throughout the summer as usual, but autumn passage was very poor, with just two double-figure counts: 20 off Copt Point on the 25th August and 40 there on the 27th August, and very few records in September. The last, off Hythe on the 5th October, was four days earlier than the final sighting last year.

Common Tern

Sterna hirundo

Passage migrant.

The first, two east past Copt Point on the 25th April, were four days earlier than last year, but spring passage was very poor, with the exception of a movement of 285 east past Samphire Hoe on the 1st May. Autumn passage was no better, and again there was only one notable count: 70 west past Copt Point on the 27th August.

Guillemot

Uria aalge

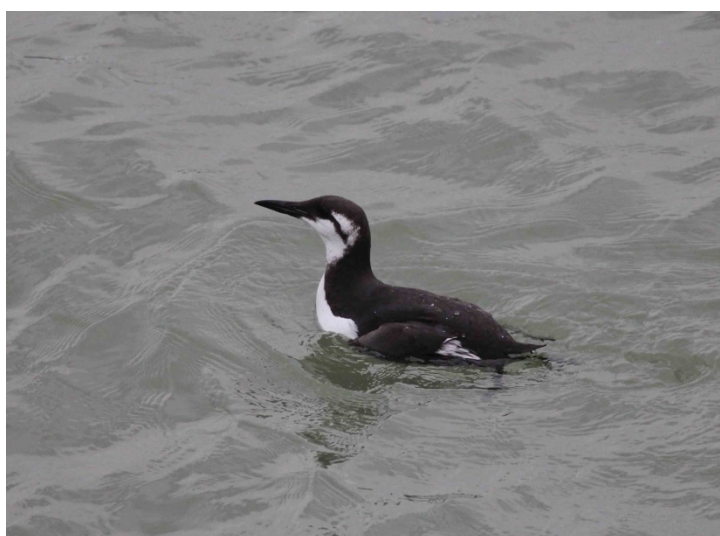
Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Counts in the early winter period included 25 off Mill Point and 20 off Folkestone Pier on the 8th January and 25 off Copt Point on the 18th January. The only signs of spring passage were 2 east at Samphire Hoe on the 1st May and one east there on the 7th May.

Recorded in autumn from the 4th September but only in small numbers until November, when there were several large counts but, due to the conditions and distance, most could only be identified as Guillemot/Razorbill ('auk sp.'). These movements included 405 (390w, 15e) off Folkestone Beach on the 9th November, 109 (72w, 37e) there on the 20th November and 255 (235e, 20w) on the 14th December.



Razorbill at Folkestone Pier (Ian Roberts)



Guillemot at Folkestone Pier (Ian Roberts)

Razorbill

Alca torda

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

A total of 18 were seen offshore on the 8th January (including 11 off Mill Point) and there was a notable influx of in the second half of the month, including counts of 65 off Copt Point on the 18th, 26 off Abbotscliffe on the 23rd and 235 off Samphire Hoe on the 25th. There were smaller numbers in February and March, with counts of 6 off Mill Point on the 2nd February, 15 off Samphire Hoe the next day and 7 there on the 2nd March.

There were 2 off Samphire Hoe on the 23rd and 24th September but only low numbers in the rest of the autumn / winter (though see the note about unidentified auks above).

Little Auk

<i>Alle alle</i>

Rare migrant and winter visitor.

One was seen off Abbotscliffe on the 23rd January (P. Edmondson). The 22nd area record but the first for five years and the first to be recorded January.

Feral Pigeon

<i>Columba livia</i>

Breeding resident.

A common and widespread species but the only count received was of 60 on the Martello Tower along the Hythe Ranges on the 16th December.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 49 (57%) of the 1km squares across the area). The results relate to the survey months of April to July but the species can breed at any time of the year. In 2012 a nest containing young was found at Folkestone West railway station as late as 21st December.

Stock Dove

<i>Columba oenas</i>

Breeding resident and passage migrant.

The only double-figure count of resident birds was of 17 at Nickoll's Quarry on the 2nd May. The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 52 (60%) of the 1km squares across the area).

Autumn passage involved at least 574 birds passing over at the cliffs in October and November, including counts of 155 (109w, 46e) at Abbotscliffe on the 14th October, 150 east there on the 27th October and 128 west there on the 6th November.

Wood Pigeon

<i>Columba palumbus</i>

Breeding resident and passage migrant.

An abundant species but the only counts in the early part of the year were of 146 at Samphire Hoe on the 25th January and 1,000 in rape fields along Crete Road West on the 25th February.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 86 (100%) of the 1km squares across the area), which makes it the equal most widespread breeding species in the local area.

There was a modest autumn passage including 130 west at Abbotscliffe on the 30th October, 335 west there on the 6th November and a couple of hundred in several flocks west over Saltwood on the 19th November.

In the late winter period large numbers were present in the Botolph's Bridge / Nickoll's Quarry but no counts were made.

Breeding resident and passage migrant.

A common resident but no large counts were received.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 71 (83%) of the 1km squares across the area), which makes it the equal 16th most widespread breeding species in the local area.

There was some evidence of arrival or passage, with one flying in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 27th March, one east at Samphire Hoe on the 30th April, another there on the 8th May, one at Abbotscliffe on the 23rd May and one at Samphire Hoe on the 19th June.

In autumn 5 flew east at Abbotscliffe on the 14th October and 2 flew west there on the 24th October.



Collared Dove at Samphire Hoe (Ian Roberts)

Declining breeding summer visitor and passage migrant, very rare in winter.

The sad plight of this species continues. There were just three records which is the lowest ever annual total: singles at West Hythe on the 14th June, Abbotscliffe on the 20th June and Botolph's Bridge on the 22nd July.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas found probable breeding in four 1km squares and possible breeding in another nine. The 1967 – 1973 Breeding Bird Survey data is not exactly comparable but there was confirmed breeding in ten of the 2km squares within TR13 and TR23 and possible breeding in another nine, so it was clearly a much more common and widespread bird four decades ago.

Declining breeding summer visitor and passage migrant,

As with many species the first arrival, at Nickoll's Quarry on 30th April, was significantly later than last year (in this instance by 11 days) due to unusually cold and wet weather in April. The main arrival occurred in May, with records from Samphire Hoe on the 3rd, Hythe Town centre (two flying east) on the 11th, Capel-le-Ferne Café (one east) on the 12th, Hythe Ranges on the 17th, Saltwood on the 18th, Hythe Ranges again on the 24th, Capel-le-Ferne Café (one east) on the 26th and one calling at just after midnight at West Hythe on the 30th May, with several in the Botolph's Bridge / Nickoll's Quarry area.

There were June records from the Botolph's Bridge / Nickoll's Quarry area, Saltwood and Hougham Court. The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and found probable breeding in five 1km squares and possible breeding in another 17.

Autumn passage as always was very light, with just a single bird at Abbotscliffe on 8th August.

Rare breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

A single was seen in the Botolph's Bridge / Nickoll's Quarry area on four dates between the 6th May and 9th June. It is likely that the sightings related to the same bird, or possibly a locally breeding pair. Sadly one was found dead in the same area, adjacent to the A259 and presumably the victim of a collision with a vehicle, on the 26th June, and there were no further sightings here.

These were the first summer records in this area since 2006, though there had been sightings there in three of the previous four winters. It seems likely that it still persists as a rare, and under-recorded, breeding resident.



Barn Owl at Botolph's Bridge (Paul Edmondson)

Introduced resident breeding species.

The regular Samphire Hoe bird was present throughout January and until the 6th February but was not seen again following the cold spell.

One was seen at Hythe Ranges on the 13th January and singles were seen in their usual haunts around Hythe Roughs and West Hythe during the year.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 8 (9%) of the 1km squares across the area).



Little Owl at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)

Breeding resident.

One was heard calling near Perry Wood on the 7th January and a total of 6 were logged as part of winter atlas survey work on the evening of the 26th February – a pair at Dibgate Quarry, a pair at Shorncliffe Military Cemetery, a male at Asholt Wood and a female at Peene.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS breeding atlas also concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 7 (8%) of the 1km squares across the area). In 2012 this included confirmed breeding at Paraker Wood, where a family group was heard and seen on the 16th May.

Passage migrant.

One was seen at Nickoll's Quarry on the 2nd May, with possibly the same bird seen hunting along the railway at dusk just west of the canal cutting on the 8th May. Another was flushed from Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site on the 12th May, with singles at Abbotscliffe on the 16th May and in off the sea at Samphire Hoe on the 22nd May, before one was photographed near the Hythe Redoubt on the unusually late date of 3rd June.



Short-eared Owl near Hythe Redoubt (Russell Edwards)

There has only been one previous record in this month (one at Nickoll's Quarry on the 17th June 1956 which was considered to "lend belief to the possibility of nearby breeding"), so it is an intriguing record, especially considering the possibility that one may have been lingering nearby in the Nickoll's Quarry / Canal Cutting area in early May, however the area was quite well-watched through June and there were no further sightings. Migrants have previously occurred as late as the 28th May (at Abbotscliffe in 2006).

In autumn one was hunting along the cliffs at Samphire Hoe on the 3rd September, one flew east over Botolph's Bridge on the 25th September and one was at Abbotscliffe on the 30th November.

The total for the year of 9 records is the highest ever and well above the annual average for the last ten years of just under four.

Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>
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Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

As with many species the first sighting, at Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site on 28th April, was later than last year (in this instance by 6 days) due to unusually cold and wet weather in April. Arrival thereafter however was rapid, with five at Nickoll's Quarry the next day, two at Samphire Hoe on the 30th April and widespread records from early May, including a total of 29 across five sites on the 2nd.

A movement of 178 east at Abbotscliffe on the 4th May was unusually large for so early in the month, and the next three-figure count was 105 in off the sea at Capel-le-Ferne Café on the 12th, with 190 west over Folkestone Warren on the 31st May.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 26% of the 1km squares within the area.

The only large count from autumn migration was 625 west over Botolph's Bridge on the 16th July and numbers dwindled quickly in August. There was only one sighting in September – at Abbotscliffe on the 12th.

Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
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Breeding resident, with dispersal to coasts and non-breeding areas in autumn and winter.

In the early winter period singles were seen at Botolph's Bridge, Nickoll's Quarry, Hythe and Folkestone Harbour.

A pair were confirmed breeding (seen carrying food) at Botolph's Bridge in May – the first confirmed breeding record in the BTO/KOS Atlas period – and birds were also seen in potential breeding habitat along the canal by Hythe Roughs and at West Hythe.

There was an interesting record, presumably involving post-breeding dispersal, at Samphire Hoe on the 16th July.

In the late winter period birds were present at Nickoll's Quarry and along the canal at Hythe (2).

Hoopoe

<i>Upupa epops</i>

Formerly regular, bred on one occasion. Now a very rare vagrant.

One spent a couple of hours on the golf course by the Hotel Imperial, Hythe in the late afternoon of 19th April (B. Harper, M. Harper, I. A. Roberts, M. Whybrow). The 8th recent record.

Wryneck

<i>Jynx torquilla</i>

Formerly bred, now a rare passage migrant.

One was seen anting on the hillside at Crete Road East on the 4th September (P. Edmondson). The 18th area record since 1980.

Green Woodpecker

<i>Picus viridis</i>

Breeding resident.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 71 (83%) of the 1km squares across the area), which makes it the equal 16th most widespread breeding species in the local area.

Great Spotted Woodpecker

<i>Dendrocopos major</i>

Breeding resident and passage migrant.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 41 (48%) of the 1km squares across the area).

Autumn passage was recorded between the 20th August and 30th October, with a total of 16 at Abbotscliffe, including 2 there on the 4th September, 3 on the 12th September and 3 west on the 4th October. Elsewhere one flew north over Lynton Road, Hythe on the 5th September.

Magpie

<i>Pica pica</i>

Breeding resident.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 86 (100%) of the 1km squares across the area), which makes it the equal most widespread breeding species in the local area.

The only count of note was 15 at Abbotscliffe on the 24th October.

Jay

<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>

Breeding resident and passage migrant.

The only count of note from the early part of the year was of 8 at Saltwood on the 18th March. The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 53 (62%) of the 1km squares across the area).

After an early single on the fence by the back track at Samphire Hoe on the 4th September there followed an exceptional influx between mid-September and early November. All of the double-figure counts were at Abbotscliffe, with 12 on the 27th September, 20 on the 2nd October, 31 on the 3rd, **51** on the 4th, 36 on the 6th, 13 on the 7th, 37 on the 14th and 38 on the 20th October. The majority of birds were moving north or west, with many passing through inland or following the Hougham valley, and few were seen arriving in off the sea. There were smaller counts at a number of other sites, including Samphire Hoe, Copt Point, Hythe, Hythe Ranges and Nickoll's Quarry.

The total for the autumn of 294 set a new record (surpassing the previous high of 116 recorded in an influx in 1998) as did the day count of 51 on the 4th October (exceeding counts of 39 south-west over Sandling Park on the 23rd September 1957 and 39 in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 15th October 1998). There was very little coverage of the Folkestone and Hythe area however in 1983 when the largest ever recorded influx into the county occurred.

Jackdaw

<i>Corvus monedula</i>

Breeding resident and passage migrant.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 66 (77%) of the 1km squares across the area), which makes it the 20th most widespread breeding species in the local area.

There were counts of 115 at Church Hougham on the 29th August, 40 at Abbotscliffe on the 24th October and 260+ at Saltwood on the 9th November.

Rook

<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>

Breeding resident and passage migrant.

A common resident but no large counts were received. There was little evidence of passage though one flew in off the sea at Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site on the 29th March, 3 were at Samphire Hoe on the 22nd September, 2 flew north at Abbotscliffe on the 27th September and 5 flew west at Abbotscliffe on the 14th October.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 14 (16%) of the 1km squares across the area).

Carrion Crow

<i>Corvus corone</i>

Breeding resident and passage migrant.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 85 (99%) of the 1km squares across the area), which makes it the equal 4th most widespread breeding species in the local area.

There was an increase in numbers at Abbotscliffe in autumn, with 38 present on the 19th September, 46 on the 4th October, 55 on the 24th October, 130 on the 11th November and 140 on the 16th November. Elsewhere 65 were counted on the beach at Mill Point on the 27th November.

Hooded Crow

<i>Corvus cornix</i>

Very rare vagrant.

One was seen and photographed in the sheep field at Abbotscliffe on the morning of the 12th May (B. Ryan, J. Chantler, P. Chantler). The 10th area record and the first since 2001.

Formerly a vagrant, now a regular non-breeding visitor at any time of year.

There were a total of 28 records, with the monthly bird/day totals shown in the table underneath.

All records related to single birds or a pair, though it is very difficult to determine how many individuals were involved.

All sightings were at the cliffs, between Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site and Samphire Hoe, apart from one which was seen flying high over Saltwood Castle on the morning of the 23rd May.



Raven at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
5	-	5	3	5	-	-	2	1	7	1	0

Breeding resident and passage migrant.

There was some suggestion of a light spring passage, with 4 in Folkestone Warren on the 11th March, one at Capel-le-Ferne Café on the 19th March, one at Samphire Hoe on the 21st March and 3 at Mill Point on the 30th March.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 38 (44%) of the 1km squares across the area).

Autumn passage was recorded between the 18th September and 1st December, with counts including 7 at Abbotscliffe on the 8th October, 8 at Samphire Hoe on the 21st October, 8 at Abbotscliffe on the 28th October, 14 at Samphire Hoe on the 14th November and 10 in the garden of Homepine House, Sandgate Road, Folkestone on the 15th November.

Recently confirmed as a breeding species. Also a passage migrant and winter visitor.

There were records from the early winter period at West Hythe on the 7th January and along the canal by Hythe Roughts on the 9th January. Spring passage was mainly noted in March, with singles at Samphire Hoe on the 10th and 11th, at Nickoll's Quarry on the 18th, Samphire Hoe again on the 21st and Abbotscliffe on the 29th March, but there was a late bird at Samphire Hoe on the 2nd May.

Breeding was confirmed for the first time when a male at Sandling Park on the 13th May was heard singing and also observed carrying food.

Autumn passage occurred from the 23rd September when one was at Samphire Hoe, with singles there and at Nickoll's Quarry, and two at Capel-le-Ferne Orchid Field on the 24th, and singles at Abbotscliffe and Joyes Road, Folkestone the next day. In October one was at Samphire Hoe on the 7th, with two there and two at Abbotscliffe the next day, three at the latter site on the 9th, and two there on the 10th. Two were again at Samphire Hoe on the 19th.

and 20th October, with one there on the 23rd, two at Capel-le-Ferne Orchid Field on the 24th and one along Crete Road East on the 28th.

Late migrants or wintering birds were at Folkestone Warren on the 15th November, West Hythe on the 17th, Saltwood and West Hythe dam on the 18th and Mill Point on the 27th November.

Blue Tit

<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>

Breeding resident and passage migrant.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 84 (98%) of the 1km squares across the area), which makes it the equal 8th most widespread breeding species in the local area.

There was little evidence of any passage though 4 did fly east at Abbotscliffe on the 7th October.

Great Tit

<i>Parus major</i>

Breeding resident and passage migrant.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 84 (98%) of the 1km squares across the area), which makes it the equal 8th most widespread breeding species in the local area.

Coal Tit

<i>Periparus ater</i>

Breeding resident and passage migrant.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 26 (30%) of the 1km squares across the area).

One at Capel-le-Ferne Café on the 19th March appeared to be of the continental form. In October one to seemed fly in off the sea at Samphire Hoe on the 23rd October and 2 birds of the continental form were at Capel-le-Ferne Café the following day.

Marsh Tit

<i>Poecile palustris</i>

Breeding resident.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 4 (5%) of the 1km squares across the area): Chesterfield Wood (TR1436), Bartholomew's Wood (TR1437), Bargrove Wood (TR1736) and Asholt Wood (TR1737).

Elsewhere in 2012 one was at Paraker Wood on the 12th December.

Bearded Tit

<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>

Rare migrant and winter visitor.

Two females or immatures were at Nickoll's Quarry on the 10th January (I. A. Roberts) and one was seen there on the 27th May (M. Harper). The 11th and 12th area records.

Rare passage migrant.

Singles flew west over the gully field at Abbotscliffe on the 20th October, 3rd November and 7th November (I. A. Roberts). The total of three equals the previous best year of 2006. There have now been 23 area records.

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

The only count of note from the first half of the year was a cold weather movement of 27 flying west along Hythe seafront on 5th February.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 56 (65%) of the 1km squares across the area).

Autumn passage included counts of 40 at Abbotscliffe on the 24th October, 19 in off the sea there on the 28th October, 21 there on the 3rd November, 20 in off the sea there on the 6th November, 12 in off the sea at Folkestone Beach on the 9th November and 26 at Abbotscliffe on the 30th November.



Sky Lark at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)

Passage migrant, has bred.

As with many species the first arrival, three at Nickoll's Quarry on the 15th (to the 16th April), was significantly later than last year (by 8 days) due to unusually cold and wet weather in April.

There were no further records however until 15 were at Nickoll's Quarry on the 29th April and the 2nd May, but there were widely scattered singles thereafter until the 25th May, and a count of 5 in off the sea at Capel-le-Ferne Café on the 12th.

The species last bred in 2003 (at Nickoll's Quarry) and no evidence of breeding was recorded during the fieldwork for the 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas.

The first returning migrants were six at Abbotscliffe on the 15th July and there was a relatively light passage through August and September, with no double-figure counts.



Photo: Sand Martin at Nickoll's Quarry (Brian Harper)

There was a notably late bird at Samphire Hoe on the 24th October – there have only been three later records: at Nickoll's Quarry on the 29th October 2003 and two singles on the 4th November (at Hythe in 1963 and West Hythe in 1981).

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first, one at Hythe and two at Abbotscliffe, on the 27th March were six days later than the arrival date last year and, apart from three over Hillcrest Road, Hythe the following day and one at Abbotscliffe on the 29th March, arrival was particularly slow due to unusually cold and wet weather in April. There were no reports in the first week of the month until a flock of 15 were at Nickoll's Quarry on the 7th, followed by a couple of singletons, then four on the 12th (including 3 in off the sea at Abbotscliffe) and 12 on the 13th (including 11 in off the sea at the cliffs). There were 25 at Nickoll's Quarry on the 15th, with 50 there the next day, and widespread single figure occurrences before 23 arrived in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 20th April. Arrival then slowed again before 300+ were present at Nickoll's Quarry between the 29th April and 2nd May. The bias of records towards this site, where birds appeared to be delaying their onward migration, no doubt reflects the weather conditions.

Finally the immigration gathered pace in May as conditions improved. Fourteen flew in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 4th, with 53 flying north at the cliffs on the 7th, 20 in off at Samphire Hoe on the 8th, with 25 the next day and a peak of 135 in off the sea at Capel-le-Ferne on the 12th. A total of 77 flew west at Abbotscliffe the next day but numbers dwindled thereafter as birds settled into breeding territories, although 30 flew in off the sea at Capel-le-Ferne on the 27th May. The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 57 (66%) of the 1km squares across the area).

Return passage was noted from about mid-September, with the largest counts in the last week of the month. On the 26th at least 300 were seen moving west in a broad front across the area in just 15 minutes and the following day 3,000 flew west at Abbotscliffe in the morning with a similar number present in the Botolph's Bridge / Nickoll's Quarry area in the evening. There were further counts of 600 going west at Abbotscliffe on both the 28th and 29th September but lower numbers thereafter. In October 310 were at Abbotscliffe on the 9th, with 370 in the area (including 270 east at Abbotscliffe) on the 13th and 220 west at Abbotscliffe on the 20th – the last three figure count of the year. There were still 22 at Abbotscliffe on the 30th October but lower numbers in November, with 12 (8 at Samphire Hoe and 4 at Abbotscliffe) on the 6th being the final double-figure total. The last records of the year were singles at Range Road, Hythe on the 17th November, Abbotscliffe on the 18th and Folkestone Leas on the 20th, three flying south at the Willop Outfall on the 30th November and a very late two at Samphire Hoe on the 5th December (there has only been one later record – at Hythe on the 8th December 1955).

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

As with many species the first arrival, four at Nickoll's Quarry on the 15th (with two remaining to the 16th April), were later than last year and there were no further sightings until the last week of the month, when three flew in off the sea at Copt Point on the 26th, one flew north at Abbotscliffe the next day, 15 flew in off the sea at Copt Point on the 29th and there were 30 at Nickoll's Quarry the same day. Counts in May included 30 at Samphire Hoe on the 1st, 80 at Nickoll's Quarry following next day, 100 in off the sea at Capel-le-Ferne on the 12th and 40 at Samphire Hoe on the 15th.

As usual birds were present at their ancestral haunts along the cliffs at Abbotscliffe and Samphire Hoe, whilst the fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 28 (33%) of the 1km squares across the area).

Return passage was noted from just before mid-September, with 400 at Abbotscliffe on the 12th, followed by an estimated 1,800 to 2,000 going west there on the 19th, 1,000 west there on the 27th and 1,200 west there on the 29th. In October 2,000 flew east at Saltwood on the afternoon of the 11th but numbers fell quickly thereafter, though a count of 275 west at Abbotscliffe on the 20th was noteworthy. November records were scarce and, after four at Samphire Hoe on the 6th had appeared that they were going to be the last, a lone bird flew south over Seabrook on the 29th (this was 13 days later than last year's departure date and the third latest ever – following one at Hythe on the 30th November 1963 and one at Lympe on the 2nd December 1974).

Very rare vagrant.

One, which flew in off the sea at Capel-le-Ferne Café at 07:40 on the 12th May (D. A. Gibson, I. A. Roberts), was only the 11th area record but the fifth in the last three years. It coincided with the peak Swallow arrival of the spring.

Cetti's Warbler

Cettia cetti

Breeding resident.

There were winter records from Seabrook, Botolph's Bridge and Nickoll's Quarry, and males were holding territory in these same areas in 2012, with singles at the two former sites and 2 at Nickoll's Quarry.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas recorded breeding of at least a possible status from 7 (8%) of the 1km squares across the area, mostly to the west of Hythe.



Cetti's Warbler at Botolph's Bridge (Brian Harper)

Long-tailed Tit

Aegithalos caudatus

Breeding resident and passage migrant.

Two at Abbotscliffe on the 27th and 29th March, 7 there on the 7th November and 5 at Samphire Hoe on the 11th November were at least local migrants.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 62 (72%) of the 1km squares across the area).

Pallas's Warbler

Phylloscopus proregulus

Very rare vagrant.

One was at Samphire Hoe on the 21st to 22nd October (P. Holt *et al*). The fourth area record but the first for the site (and the seventh *phylloscopus* species to be recorded there).

Yellow-browed Warbler

Phylloscopus inornatus

Rare migrant.

One was at Samphire Hoe on the 7th October (P. Holt, R. Card). The 17th area record but the sixth at this site in the last eight years.

Formerly regular, probably bred. Now a rare passage migrant.

One was at Samphire Hoe on the 2nd May (I. A. Roberts). The 17th area record since 1980 but the first for the site.

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant, with small numbers wintering.

One was along the canal at Hythe, adjacent to the Hotel Imperial Golf Course, on the 1st January, with further singles along the canal at Seabrook and West Hythe on the 7th January. One was also seen at Seabrook on the 29th February.

One in a garden in Joyes Road, Folkestone on the 9th March was probably the first arriving migrant, with 2 at Folkestone Warren and 5 at Samphire Hoe on the 11th, one at Nickoll's Quarry on the 13th, and regular records in the second half of the month, including peaks of 6 at Samphire Hoe on the 20th and 8 in the area (3 at Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site and 5 at Abbotscliffe) on the 29th March.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 74 (86%) of the 1km squares across the area (though breeding confirmed was only confirmed in just over a quarter of these), which makes it the 15th most widespread breeding species in the local area. The local population was estimated at around 140 pairs.



Chiffchaff at Nickoll's Quarry (Brian Harper)

Autumn passage was evident from early September when there were 5 at Abbotscliffe on the 3rd and 8 at Samphire Hoe the next day. Double-figure counts included 10 at Samphire Hoe on the 18th September, 12 there on the 21st, 10 there and 15 at Capel-le-Ferne Orchid Field on the 24th, and 13 at Abbotscliffe on the 28th September. In October there was a marked arrival on the 7th, when 14 were at Samphire Hoe and 23 were at Abbotscliffe, but numbers decreased thereafter with no site recording more than single figure counts. Very few were seen in November and a small arrival of 3 at Samphire Hoe on the 14th was of note.

In December wintering birds were present at West Hythe, Military Road (Hythe) and in a garden in East Cliff Gardens Folkestone.

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

As with many species the first arrival, one in a garden in Royal Military Avenue, Cheriton on the 7th April, was significantly later than last year (by 12 days) due to unusually cold and wet weather in April, and the bulk of the arrival occurred from the 11th April. Spring passage was light, with peak counts of five at Abbotscliffe and three at Nickoll's Quarry on the 12th April, and four at Samphire Hoe on the 2nd May.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 19 (22%) of the 1km squares across the area, but a significant proportion of these might have related to

migrants as breeding was only confirmed in one of these squares, with a probable status for another four. Migrants can continue to arrive late into the spring as an isolated record of one at Samphire Hoe on 19th June this year illustrates.

Returning birds were noted from late July and autumn passage was again disappointing, with double-figure counts having become quite a rarity in the last decade. The peak count was just seven (four at Samphire Hoe and three at Abbotscliffe) on the 3rd September, and the last was seen on the 19th September.

Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
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Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant, with small numbers wintering.

During the early winter period there were birds at Saltwood (a pair), Lynton Road, Hythe (a pair), along the canal at Hythe, adjacent to the Hotel Imperial Golf Course (a female), at Seabrook (a male), at East Cliff Gardens, Folkestone (a male) and at Browning Place, Folkestone (a female).

Two singing males at Brockhill Country Park on the 25th March appeared to be the first arriving migrants and several others were seen in late March and the first couple of days of April, but arrival thereafter seemed particularly slow, presumably due to the unusually cold and wet weather, and there were no counts of note.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 80 (93%) of the 1km squares across the area (though breeding confirmed was only confirmed in less than a quarter of these), which makes it the 12th most widespread breeding species in the local area. The local population was estimated at around 180 pairs.



Blackcap at Peene (Brian Harper)

Autumn passage was evident from early September when a few singles were noted at Abbotscliffe and increased from mid-month, with 11 in the area (4 at Abbotscliffe and 7 at Samphire Hoe) on the 19th, 8 at Samphire Hoe on the 21st September and 17 (5 at Samphire Hoe and 12 at Abbotscliffe) on the 7th October. Much smaller numbers were then recorded until the last migrant bird was at Folkestone Warren on the 27th October.

The only December record was of a female at Browning Place, Folkestone on the 13th.

Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>
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Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

As with many species the first arrival, one at Cowtye Wood on the 30th April, was later than last year (by 5 days) due to unusually cold and wet weather in April.

The woods in the Saltwood area remain the stronghold of this species and there was a peak count there of five on the 12th May. The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from just three of the 1km squares across the area.

Autumn passage was typically light, with just two singles recorded: at West Hythe on the 26th August and Abbotscliffe on the 3rd September.

Barred Warbler	<i>Sylvia nisoria</i>
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Very rare vagrant.

A mobile and elusive individual was at Abbotscliffe on the 9th October (I. A. Roberts). The second area record.

Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>
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Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

As with many species the first arrival, one at Nickoll's Quarry on 20th April, was significantly later than last year (by 7 days) due to unusually cold and wet weather in April, and the bulk did not appear until May.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 44 (51%) of the 1km squares across the area, and the local population was estimated at around 55 pairs.

Autumn passage was light, with a peak count of just four at Abbotscliffe on the 4th September, and the last was seen there on the 27th September. This was nine days later than departure in 2011, and is relatively late as there have only been later sightings in five of the last 12 years (with October records in three of those).

Asian Desert Warbler	<i>Sylvia nana</i>
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Very rare vagrant.

One was at Samphire Hoe briefly on the morning of the 18th November but could not be relocated despite extensive searching. The first area record, the second for the county and only the 11th national record. A full account of this record is given on page 96.

Common Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>
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Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

As with many species the first arrival, one at Abbotscliffe on the 11th April, was significantly later than last year (by 8 days) due to unusually cold and wet weather in April. Spring passage was relatively light, with peak counts of five at Abbotscliffe on the 4th May and Samphire Hoe the following day, and there were indications that breeding numbers were down on recent years.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 77 (90%) of the 1km squares across the area (with breeding confirmed in just over half of these), which makes it the 13th most widespread breeding species in the local area. The local population was estimated at around 170 pairs, though numbers appeared to be lower in 2012.

Autumn migrants were noted from early August, with peaks of 10 at Abbotscliffe on the 8th August and 11 (8 at Abbotscliffe and 3 at Samphire Hoe) on the 3rd September. The last, at Samphire Hoe on the 6th October, was relatively late (there have been later in records in just three years, with the latest on 10th October 1998).

Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>
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Passage migrant, formerly bred.

Singles were at Samphire Hoe on the 3rd June and the 18th September. A relatively poor year for the species but at least it was an improvement on its absence in 2011.

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first arrival, one at Nickoll's Quarry on 7th April, was considerably earlier than the earliest sighting in 2011 – one of the few species which bucked the trend this year. There were further sightings at this site of singles, possibly the same bird, in April, before two were heard singing there on the 30th, increasing to three on the 2nd. The only records away from Romney Marsh were of singing males at Samphire Hoe on the 2nd May and Abbotscliffe on the 18th May.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from seven 1km squares across the area, all in the Romney Marsh area, and the local population was estimated at up to 11 pairs.

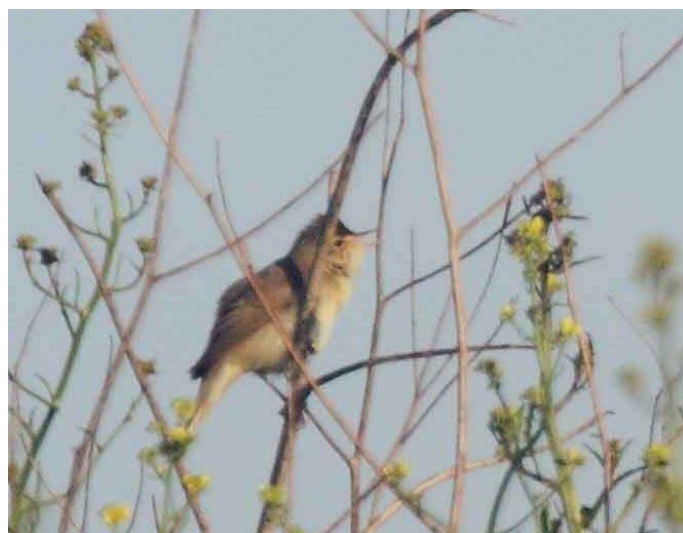
The first returning bird was noted at Samphire Hoe on the 1st August, followed by just four singles at the cliffs inn September, with the last at Samphire Hoe on the 21st September.

Rare summer visitor and passage migrant.

A singing male held territory in a weedy field near Botolph's Bridge from the 5th to the 25th June, though was not thought to have been paired (I. A. Roberts *et al*).

Marsh Warblers were established as a breeding species locally between 1987 (perhaps earlier) and 2006, but this was the first area record since. The population appeared to be transitory in nature, using sites for a few years before ceasing to occupy them, even though they appeared to remain suitable.

The Marsh Warbler is now considered to be a rare opportunistic breeder in coastal areas in Britain, and it is perhaps late migrants that find a mate and stay to breed, as there seems to be little consistency in distribution nationally over recent years.



Marsh Warbler at Botolph's Bridge (Paul Edmondson)

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first, one at Nickoll's Quarry on the 12th April, was three days later than the arrival date in 2011. As usual the bulk of the arrival did not occur until later in the month, not helped by the unusually cold and wet weather, but most appeared to be on territory by the end of April. Away from the *phragmites* the cliffs hosted a typical scattering of late migrants, with singles at Abbotscliffe and Samphire Hoe on the 2nd May, at Abbotscliffe on the 7th May and Samphire Hoe on the 3rd June.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 18 (21%) of the 1km squares across the area, with strongholds along the Royal Military Canal from Seabrook to West Hythe, and in the Romney Marsh area, and the local population was estimated at around 80 pairs.

Autumn passage was particularly light, with just two singles at the cliffs, both at Abbotscliffe, on the 27th and 29th September.

Waxwing	<i>Bombycilla garrulus</i>
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Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, with occasional large influxes.

There was an arrival of 104 birds in November and December as follows:

4 in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 6th November (I. A. Roberts)
22 south-west over Capel-le-Ferne Café on the 18th November (P. Chantler)
1 over Victoria Grove, Folkestone (D. Featherbe) and 15 at Dover Hill (D. A. Gibson) on the 30th November
37 at the Battle of Britain Memorial, Capel-le-Ferne Café on the 8th December (P. Chantler)
3 at Browning Place, Folkestone on the 11th December (M. Vandoen)
9 at the Eurotunnel complex, Cheriton on the 16th December (P. Edmondson)
1 over the Harvey Grammar School, Cheriton on the 21st December (J. Russell)
2 over Church Road, Cheriton and 10 over the Willop Outfall on the 26th December (B. Harper)

Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>
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Breeding resident.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 6 (7%) of the 1km squares across the area concentrated on the woods around Saltwood.

Elsewhere in 2012 one was seen near Hythe Redoubt (TR1232) on the 5th June (it was seen flying in from the east and circled over the field before heading back eastwards towards Nickoll's Quarry), one was at West Hythe (TR1234) on the 28th August and one in Saltwood village (TR1535) was a new species for the observer's garden.

Eurasian Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>
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Breeding resident.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 24 (28%) of the 1km squares across the area. There were no other records of note in 2012.

Short-toed Treecreeper	<i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>
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Very rare vagrant.

One was found at Samphire Hoe in the late morning of 10th March and remained until the evening, being seen and heard by many observers (P. Holt, T. Prentice *et al*). A full account of this first record for the area is given on page 92.

Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>
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Breeding resident and passage migrant.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 86 (100%) of the 1km squares across the area, which makes it the equal most widespread breeding species in the local area.

Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
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Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

The only count of note in the early part of the year was of 1,275 flying north-east over Saltwood on the 11th March.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 71 (83%) of the 1km squares across the area, which makes it the 18th most widespread breeding species in the local area.

A post-breeding flock of up to 200 were at Samphire Hoe in August and autumn passage was noted in October and November, with counts including 310 in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 14th October, 200 in off the sea there and a flock of 1,000 east over Samphire Hoe on the 19th October, 400 in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 28th October, 185 in off the sea at Folkestone Beach and 400 at the Willop Basin on the 9th November, and 2,000 in off the sea at Folkestone Beach on the 11th November.

Rose-coloured Starling

<i>Pastor roseus</i>

Very rare vagrant.

A juvenile was found at Samphire Hoe at around 09:00 on the 20th September and remained until the early afternoon (G. J. A. Burton, P. Holt, I. A. Roberts *et al*). A full account of this first record for the area is given on page 94.

Ring Ouzel

<i>Turdus torquatus</i>

Passage migrant.

As with many species the first arrival, a flock of five at Abbotscliffe on the 12th April, was later than last year (by five days) due to unusually cold and wet weather in April, and this weather caused the two males in the flock to linger until the 20th. There were only three other records in spring, all in May: two males at Abbotscliffe on the 4th, a male at Samphire Hoe on the 5th and a male at Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site on the 7th.

The first autumn record was one at Abbotscliffe on the 27th September and October saw a decent passage, with a total of 49 birds, mostly at Abbotscliffe and Samphire Hoe, but with two at Crete Road East on the 13th. Peak counts were nine at Abbotscliffe on the 13th and eight at Samphire Hoe on the 21st. The last, three at Abbotscliffe on the 27th October, were later than the departure date in 2011, but not particularly late as there have been November records in five of the last 12 years.

Blackbird

<i>Turdus merula</i>

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 85 (99%) of the 1km squares across the area, which makes it the equal 4th most widespread breeding species in the local area.

In autumn there was a count of 14 at Abbotscliffe on the 9th October and a large nocturnal movement was noted across the area on the night of the 21st/22nd October, with birds still moving just before dawn and 30 grounded at Samphire Hoe in the morning. Large numbers were also noted at Abbotscliffe on the 28th October and at Saltwood the following day (including 50 in a single hawthorn bush at dawn).

Fieldfare

<i>Turdus pilaris</i>

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Counts in the early winter period included 60 at Nickoll's Quarry on the 28th January, 100 at Newingreen on the 26th February and 80 along Crete Road West on the 5th March. There were no records after this latter count however until a particularly late bird was at Abbotscliffe on the 3rd May (this was only the third May record, following one at Capel-le-Ferne on the 2nd May 1997 and one at Church Hougham on the 13th May 1996).

The first record in autumn involved 33 flying off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 22nd October, which was 9 days later than the arrival date last year. The next were 2 in off the sea there on the 27th October, with one there on the 5th November and 60 in off the sea there, with 3 at Samphire Hoe, on the 6th November. Only small numbers were noted thereafter, aside from a mixed flock of 50 Fieldfares and Redwings at Botolph's Bridge on the 10th December.

Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>
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Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 75 (87%) of the 1km squares across the area, which makes it the 14th most widespread breeding species in the local area.

There were signs of autumn passage from late September through to November and a large nocturnal movement was noted across the area on the night of the 21st/22nd October, with birds still moving just before dawn and 20 grounded at Samphire Hoe in the morning. Further counts of 10 at Abbotscliffe on the 24th October and 7 there on the 6th November were also of note.

Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>
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Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Relatively few were recorded in the early winter period with the only counts of note being 20 at Brockhill Country Park on the 20th February and 120 along Crete Road West on the 5th March. Several small nocturnal movements were noted in March and a few grounded migrants were noted at coastal sites. The last, at Abbotscliffe on the 29th March, was 6 days later than the departure date last year.

The first in autumn, one at Abbotscliffe on the 6th October, was a day earlier than the arrival date last year and small numbers were noted regularly thereafter with a larger count of 12 flying north at Abbotscliffe on the 14th October. A large nocturnal movement was noted across the area on the night of the 21st/22nd October, with birds still moving just before dawn and 10 grounded at Samphire Hoe in the morning, with 12 there the following day. Several more small nocturnal movements were noted in October and November.

In the late winter period there were 16 at Botolph's Bridge on the 26th November and a mixed flock of 50 Fieldfares and Redwings there on the 10th December.



Fieldfare at Botolph's Bridge (Brian Harper)



Redwing at Nickoll's Quarry (Ian Roberts)

Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>
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Breeding resident.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 41 (48%) of the 1km squares across the area.

The only signs of possible passage were 4 flying west at Abbotscliffe on the 4th October and 3 (2 flying north and one west) there on the 24th October.

Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>
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Declining breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first arrivals, singles at Abbotscliffe and Samphire Hoe on the 2nd May, were significantly earlier than last year (by 18 days). As usual spring passage was light with just three further singles: on the seawall at Samphire Hoe on the 3rd May, at Capel-le-Ferne Café on the 27th May and at Church Hougham on the 30th May.

There were no records of potential breeding this year and the fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas only found probable breeding in one of the local 1km squares and possible breeding in another four. The 1967 – 1973 Breeding Bird Survey data is not exactly comparable but there was confirmed breeding in eight of the 2km squares within TR13 and TR23, so it was clearly a more common and widespread bird four decades ago.

Autumn passage was also light, with just six individuals recorded between the 28th August and 18th September, and the last departure date was the same as in 2011.

Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
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Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 83 (97%) of the 1km squares across the area, which makes it the 10th most widespread breeding species in the local area.

The species did not breed at Samphire Hoe however so one there on the 1st August was notable and it was early September before small numbers of migrants began to appear at Abbotscliffe. Larger numbers were noted from the middle of September including 10 at Samphire Hoe on the 19th and 15 there on the 21st, and in October there were 16 there on the 7th, 25 on the 21st and 28 on the 23rd, with 32 at Abbotscliffe on the 22nd and a large number at Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site on the 25th.

Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>
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Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first arrival, two singing at Asholt Wood on the 27th April, were ten days earlier than last year but the species did attract particular attention this year due to the national BTO Nightingale survey. There were further records from Asholt Wood in May, where the species probably bred though gaining proof of breeding is difficult, but the only other record in potential breeding habitat was one singing at Holy Well, Folkestone on the 23rd May. Elsewhere a migrant was singing by the back car park at Samphire Hoe on the 1st May.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and had found possible breeding in an additional two 1km squares.

As usual there were no autumn records (the last autumn records were in 2000).

Passage migrant.

One was seen and photographed in a garden at Browning Place, Folkestone on the 18th August and two in the gully at Abbotscliffe on the 4th September were also photographed.

The annual mean for the previous ten years was just over four birds so this was a slightly below average year but at least it was an improvement on its absence in 2011.



Pied Flycatcher at Abbotscliffe (Ian Roberts)

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

The only record from the early winter period was of one near Folkestone Pier on the 13th January.

Spring arrivals were noted from the 13th March, when one was at Samphire Hoe, followed by one at Hythe Ranges on the 16th March, 3 at Samphire Hoe on the 17th, one at the allotments at South Road, Hythe on the 18th, one at Round Down on the 20th and one at Abbotscliffe on the 29th March. In April three were at Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site on the 1st and there were 5 at Samphire Hoe on the 4th with regular records thereafter as birds settled into territories. There were 5 males holding territory locally with at least two broods of young being successfully raised (either by two pairs at the same site or by the same pair).



Black Redstart at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas found breeding of at least a possible status in 7 of the 1km squares across the area.

Most autumn records were from Samphire Hoe, where there were counts of 10 on the 22nd August and 7 on the 27th September, and at least 4 present until late November, with 2 still in mid-December and at least one lingering to the end of the year. Elsewhere there were several records from Abbotscliffe in September and October, one at Hythe Ranges on the 3rd November and at Folkestone Pier on the 1st December.

Passage migrant.

As with many species the first arrival, a male at Samphire Hoe on the 30th April, was significantly later than last year (in this instance by over three weeks) due to unusually cold and wet weather in April. However there was another male at Abbotscliffe the next day and single females there and at Samphire Hoe on the 2nd May.

The first returning bird was at Abbotscliffe on the 3rd September, with another there on the 30th September and two on the 9th October. A relatively late bird lingered at Samphire Hoe from the 18th to the 22nd October (there have only been two later records – at Nickoll's Quarry on the 23rd October 2001 and at Capel-le-Ferne on the 27th October 1999).

Whinchat

Saxicola rubetra

Passage migrant. Has bred in the past.

As usual spring passage was light, with just two singles at Abbotscliffe on the 4th and the 7th May.

The first returning bird was noted on the 19th August and autumn passage mainly involved ones and twos at the cliffs, with a count of 3 at Abbotscliffe on the 4th September and 5 at Church Hougham on the 11th September.

There was just one record in October – at Samphire Hoe on the 9th, which was eight days later than the last departure in 2011. This was not particularly late however as there have been later records in seven of the last 12 years, and there has even been two in November.



Whinchat at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)

Stonechat

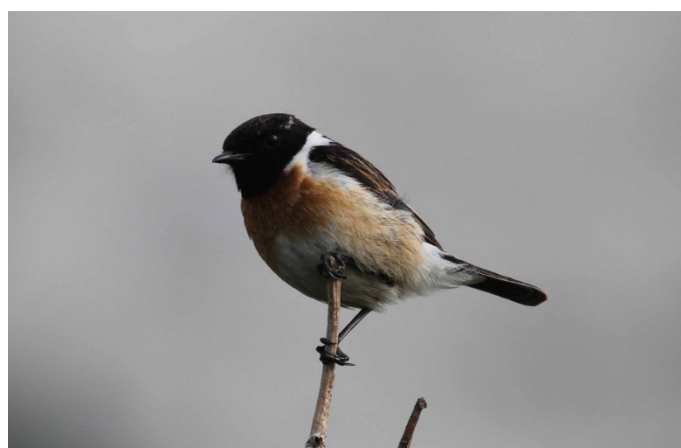
Saxicola torquatus

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

In the early winter period there were a pair at Nickoll's Quarry and 4 at Samphire Hoe in January / early February but the cold spell appeared to reduce numbers at the latter site and those at the former were not noted again.

In March an apparent migrant was at Abbotscliffe on the 12th and numbers increased to 4 again at Samphire Hoe by the 20th. At least one pair bred at the latter site and a male was seen at Hythe Roughs on the 28th May.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas found breeding of at least a possible status in 6 of the 1km squares across the area



Stonechat at Samphire Hoe (Ian Roberts)

At Samphire Hoe there were 8 in late September, increasing to a peak of 11 on the 7th October and up to 6 were still present in early December. Elsewhere there was a small passage through Abbotscliffe where 10 bird/days were logged between the 23rd September and the 14th October.

A rare breeding summer visitor but common passage migrant.

The first, two at Hythe Ranges and four at Samphire Hoe on the 16th March, were a little later (by four days) than the arrival date in 2011. Another was seen at the latter site on the 20th March but then there were no further records until seven (two at Samphire Hoe and five at Abbotscliffe) arrived on the 4th April. A small but steady arrival continued through the rest of the month, including counts of three (at Samphire Hoe) on the 8th, six (three at Samphire Hoe and three at Abbotscliffe) on the 11th, nine (including five at Church Hougham) on the 13th and eight (including five at Samphire Hoe) on the 30th April.

Arrival gathered pace in May, with five at Samphire Hoe on the 1st, 13 in the area on the 4th (including five at Abbotscliffe and six at Hythe Ranges), and peaking with 20 at Samphire Hoe on the 5th. 19 were still there the following day, but numbers dwindled thereafter with the last being seen there on 15th May.

There were no records in potential breeding habitat this year, though a juvenile by the Hythe Canal at Seabrook on the 25th June was an intriguing record but could have been a very early migrant. The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and had found confirmed breeding in a single 1km square (TR2838 at Samphire Hoe – a female seen carrying food on the 5th June last year, after a male had been heard singing in late May) and possible breeding at two 1km squares along Hythe Ranges where singing/displaying males were present.

The first definite autumn migrant was at Samphire Hoe on the 31st July and autumn passage was fairly light, with peak counts of ten (five each at Abbotscliffe and Samphire Hoe) on the 3rd September and 12 (three at Abbotscliffe and nine at Samphire Hoe) the following day. Smaller numbers were seen into October, with counts of three at Samphire Hoe on two dates, and the last there on the 20th (which was nine days earlier than last year's departure date).

Dunnock

Prunella modularis

Breeding resident and passage migrant.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 85 (99%) of the 1km squares across the area, which makes it the equal 4th most widespread breeding species in the local area.

There appeared to be an increase at coastal sites in the autumn, suggestive of passage, but the only count received was of 10 at Abbotscliffe on the 24th October.

House Sparrow

Passer domesticus

Breeding resident.

A common resident but the only count received was of 55 at Hougham Court on the 3rd October.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 64 (74%) of the 1km squares across the area.

A female/immature was seen at Samphire Hoe on the 9th October, where the species is unusual, and at Abbotscliffe 3 flying west on the 30th September and one there on the 24th October were probably local migrants.

Tree Sparrow

Passer montanus

Declining passage migrant. No longer breeds and now rare in winter.

The only record related to 6 which flew over Capel-le-Ferne Café on the 24th October. This species continues to be recorded every year though in decreasing numbers and it seems inevitable that we will sadly experience the first 'blank' year in the near future, perhaps followed by eventual extinction.

Yellow Wagtail

<i>Motacilla flava</i>

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

As with many species the first arrival, one north over Abbotscliffe on 11th April), was later than last year (by 7 days) due to unusually cold and wet weather in April, and there were no further records until three flew over Samphire Hoe on the 30th April. The main arrival took place in early May, including totals at the cliffs of 6 in off the sea on the 1st (3 at Abbotscliffe and 3 at Samphire Hoe), 3 on the 2nd, 3 at Abbotscliffe on the 4th, 4 in off the sea at Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site on the 7th, 1 on the 8th, 3 in off the sea at Samphire Hoe on the 9th, and singles in off the sea on the 12th, 13th, 19th and 24th May.

There were summer records from the Botolph's Bridge area. The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from ten 1km squares across the area, mostly from the Romney Marsh area.

Return passage was noted from mid-August but was very light, with a peak count of just 6 west over Abbotscliffe on the 21st August. There were several records into October, mostly at Abbotscliffe, but with a rather late bird on the football pitches at South Road, Hythe on the 13th (nine days later than the last record in 2011) – this equalled the second latest record (also at Hythe, on 13th October 1985, with latest ever being one at Copt Point on the 20th October 1984).

Grey Wagtail

<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>

Breeding resident and passage migrant.

Ones and twos were seen at well scattered sites in the early winter period and singles over Samphire Hoe on the 1st May and east at Capel-le-Ferne on the 28th May hinted at a light spring passage.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 11 (13%) of the 1km squares across the area.

Autumn migrants were recorded from the 4th September, when one flew out to sea at Abbotscliffe, with a further 4 logged at coastal sites later that month, followed by a total of 13 in October, mostly at the cliffs.

Small numbers were again wintering at the end of the year.

Pied / White ('alba') Wagtail

<i>Motacilla alba</i>

Breeding resident and passage migrant.

There was a small spring passage of 'alba' wagtails noted in March, including 3 north-east over Saltwood on the 11th, 3 in off the sea at Capel-le-Ferne Café on the 19th and 5 in/east at Abbotscliffe on the 27th.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded for Pied Wagtail from 45 (52%) of the 1km squares across the area.

Autumn passage of 'alba' wagtails between late September and mid-November was more pronounced, and included counts of 13 west at Abbotscliffe on the 4th October, 31 east there on the 8th, 42 east there on the 10th, 52 east there the next day, 30+ at the Willop Basin on the 13th October, 33 over Abbotscliffe on the 14th October, 27 at Church Hougham on the 7th November and 21 at Princes Parade, Hythe on the 9th November.

Very rare vagrant.

One flew out of Abbot's Gully and was later seen on the cliff-top by Abbot's House on the morning of the 28th October (P. Edmondson, D. A. Gibson). The 15th area record but the latest to date.

Very rare vagrant.

One flew north-east at Capel-le-Ferne Café at 07:00 on the 28th May (D. A. Gibson). The 12th area record and the first since 2007.

Passage migrant.

There were just three singles in spring: at Abbotscliffe on the 1st and 3rd May, and Botolph's Bridge on the 11th May.

Autumn passage was also fairly light with a total of eight recorded at Abbotscliffe between the 20th August and 4th October.

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

Counts in the early winter period included 8 at Fairmead Farm, Westenhanger on the 8th January and 29 at Nickoll's Quarry on the 14th January, and there was some response to the cold weather in early February with 9 flying over the coast at Hythe on the 5th, but spring passage was barely perceptible with a peak of 3 in off the sea at Capel-le-Ferne Café on the 19th March.

At least four pairs bred at Samphire Hoe and the fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded, with breeding of at least a possible status recorded from 29 (34%) of the 1km squares across the area.

Numbers increased in autumn, with 30 at Abbotscliffe on the 7th September and up to 50 there from mid-September through October, and movements of 58 west there on the 18th September, 88 west there on the 28th September and 35 west on the 6th October being of note.



Meadow Pipit at Princes Parade (Brian Harper)



Rock Pipit at Samphire Hoe (Ian Roberts)

Rock Pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus</i>
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Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

Birds were noted regularly in the Folkestone Harbour / Pier area and at Samphire Hoe with peak counts of 2 at the former on the 26th October and 15 at the latter on the 12th November. There was also one at Hythe Redoubt on the 6th December.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and probably breeding was recorded from 3 of the 1km squares across the area.

Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
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Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

Spring passage was noted in March with counts of 1,200 east at Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site on the 5th March, 490 east there the following day and an exceptional 3,145 east at Abbotscliffe on the 27th March (a spring record, exceeding the previous highest of 3,035 east at the same site on the 19th March last year, though there have been 3 larger counts in autumn with the highest ever being 4,333 in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 19th October 1998). The spring total of 5,001 has only been bettered once (with 6,006 in 2011).

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 85 (99%) of the 1km squares across the area, which makes it the equal 4th most widespread breeding species in the local area.

Autumn passage by comparison was very modest, with a total of 1,251 logged between late September and mid-November, including peak counts of just 405 in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 28th October and 370 in off the sea there on the 6th November.

Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>
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Winter visitor and passage migrant.

In spring singles flew in off the sea at Samphire Hoe on the 21st March and east at Abbotscliffe on the 27th March.

First recorded in autumn on the 27th September when one flew north at Abbotscliffe, with 29 logged in October, including counts of 5 west at Abbotscliffe on the 20th, 6 there on the 28th and 6 in off the sea there on the 30th. In November 5 flew in off the sea at Abbotscliffe, with 3 in off the sea there on the 7th, 2 in off on the 11th and the last on the 16th.

Serín	<i>Serinus serinus</i>
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Rare passage migrant.

Singles flew north over Chart Road in Cheriton on the evening of the 25th July (D. A. Gibson) and east at Abbotscliffe on the 24th October (I. A. Roberts). The 22nd and 23rd area records, but the first for six years and the first July record.

Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>
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Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

The only signs of spring passage were 9 east at Capel-le-Ferne Café on the 19th March and one at Samphire Hoe on the 21st March.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 18 (94%) of the 1km squares across the area, which makes it the 11th most widespread breeding species in the local area.

A light autumn passage was noted between late September and the end of October with a total of 38 logged moving overhead at the cliffs, and peak counts of 9 west at Abbotscliffe on the 14th October and 8 east at Capel-le-Ferne Café on the 24th October.

Goldfinch

<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant, widespread but less common in winter.

Spring passage was noted between mid-March and the end of April but numbers were low, with 13 west at Abbotscliffe on the 29th March and 25 west at Abbotscliffe on the 20th April being the only double-figure counts.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 68 (79%) of the 1km squares across the area, which makes it the 19th most widespread breeding species in the local area.

There was an increase in numbers at Abbotscliffe through September to 140 on the 30th, with 170 there on the 3rd October and an excellent visual passage was noted from through October and November. The total number of birds passing through was 4,779 (the second highest to date, following 4,980 in 2010), and included counts of 600 east at Abbotscliffe on the 6th October, 415 east there on the 8th, 555 east there on the 10th, 1,100 east there the following day and 1,345 east there on the 27th October (again the second highest day total to date, following 1,550 east at Capel-le-Ferne on the 21st October 2003).

Siskin

<i>Carduelis spinus</i>

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

The only wintering birds were two at Chesterfield Wood, Sandling on the 2nd January and spring passage between late February and mid-May was light, with the only double-figure counts being 20 east at Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site on the 5th March, 11 north over Saltwood on the 30th March and 14 in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 12th May.

Autumn passage was also protracted, extending from mid-September to mid-December, and produced a total of 1,291 (which was the third highest to date, following 4,713 in 2008 and 1,628 in 1996). The largest daily movements were 247 east at Abbotscliffe on the 6th October, 100 east there on the 11th October, 113 over Saltwood on the 13th October and 250 east at Samphire Hoe on the 19th October.

Linnet

<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant, less common in winter.

Early winter counts included 35 at Fisherman's Beach, Hythe on the 6th January and 30 at Nickoll's Quarry on the 10th January. Spring passage was light, with a peak of 45 (15 east and 30 west) at Abbotscliffe on the 4th May.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 58 (67%) of the 1km squares across the area.

Autumn passage was noted from late September to mid-November, with a peak of 185 west at Abbotscliffe on the 28th September.

Twite

<i>Carduelis flavirostris</i>

Rare passage migrant.

A small flock (one being seen but several heard) flew south over Saltwood on the 24th January (P. Howe). The 20th area record but the first since 2004.

Lesser Redpoll

<i>Carduelis cabaret</i>

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

The only record from the early winter period related to two in a garden in Saltwood on the 26th February and again on the 15th March. A light spring passage was noted between late March and early May with a total of 33 logged, including 4 east at Abbotscliffe on the 27th March, 20 in off the sea at the cliffs on the 29th March and 4 west at Capel-le-Ferne on the 7th May. One was seen in suitable breeding habitat at Chesterfield Wood, Sandling on the 13th April but might have just been a migrant bird (no others were recorded in the 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS breeding atlas).

There was a decent autumn passage between mid-September and early December with a total of 491 recorded and counts of 34 east at Nickoll's Quarry on the 13th October, 23 over Abbotscliffe on the 20th October, 33 east at the cliffs on the 24th October, 216 east at Abbotscliffe / Copt Point on the 27th October and 45 over Abbotscliffe the next day. Only one previous autumn has produced a higher total (610 in 1997) and higher day count (330 over Capel-le-Ferne on the 8th September 1997).

Crossbill

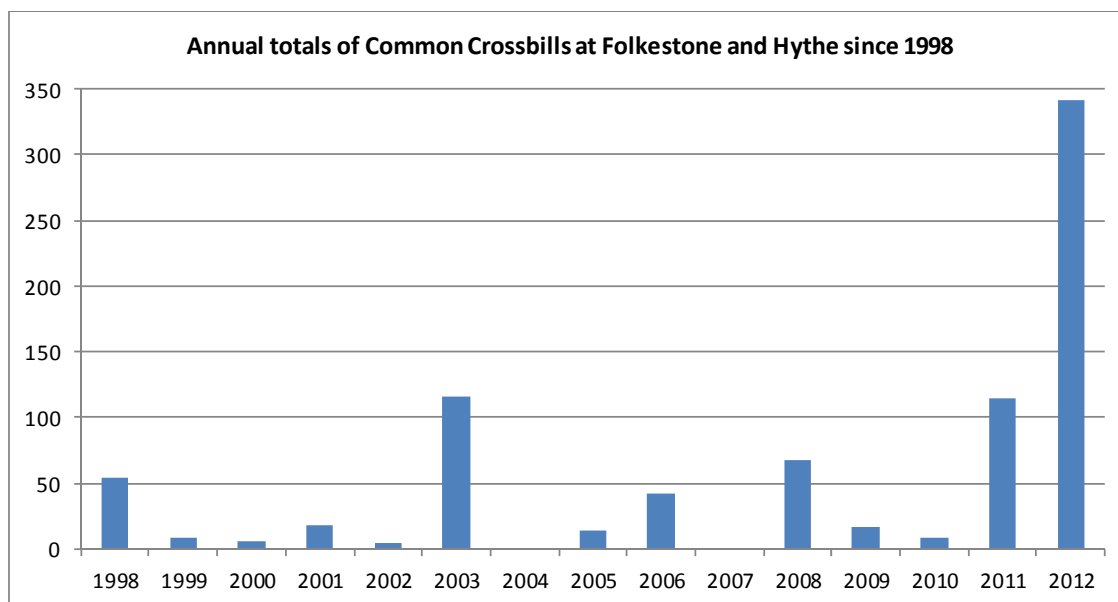
<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

The first records in an exceptional year for the species occurred in late February, when at least one was in Chesterfield Wood, Sandling on the 26th to 27th, 4 flew west at Abbotscliffe on the 27th and one flew ENE over Saltwood on the 28th. There were another series of sightings in late March, with 12 flying east at Abbotscliffe on the 27th, a pair going west there the next day and 4 east on the 29th, but it was May and June that produced the peak counts. On the 7th May seven flew east at Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site, with 37 east at the nearby Café on the 12th, 47 east at the Gun Site on the 25th, 45 east at the Café on the 27th and 40 east there the following day. In June 28 flew east at Capel-le-Ferne Café on the 18th, with 26 east over Church Hougham and 32 north-east over Church Road, Cheriton on the 18th and 20 north-west over the Seabrook Valley on the 20th.

Smaller numbers were noted in the autumn, with 3 west at Abbotscliffe on the 29th July, 6 west there on the 1st August, one west over Saltwood on the 5th August, 2 over Abbotscliffe on the 3rd September, with 4 east there on the 27th and 6 north on the 29th September, and the last few in late October, with 2 east at Capel-le-Ferne Café on the 24th, 7 over the Gun Site on the 25th and 3 east at the Café on the 27th.

The total for the year of 341 was a new record and comfortably exceeded that of recent years as the chart below demonstrates:



Bullfinch

Pyrrhula pyrrhula

Breeding resident.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 37 (43%) of the 1km squares across the area.

There are rarely any records that suggest passage in this sedentary species but 2 flew east at Abbotscliffe on the 11th November.

Snow Bunting

Plectrophenax nivalis

Passage migrant, occasionally overwinters.

At Abbotscliffe singles flew east on the 27th October and 11th November, with two east there on the 18th November, and one east over Folkestone Beach on the 8th December.

Lapland Bunting

Calcarius lapponicus

Passage migrant, occasionally overwinters.

The only record concerned one at Abbotscliffe on 11th November.

Yellowhammer

Emberiza citrinella

Breeding resident.

There were peak counts in the early part of the year of 50 in a set-a-side field near Summerhouse Hill on the 21st January, 23 at Church Hougham on the 19th February, 8 at Peene on the 10th March and 18 at Church Hougham on the 13th April.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 40 (47%) of the 1km squares across the area.

In the latter part of the year there peaks of 17 at Abbotscliffe on the 30th September, 12 at Church Hougham on the 7th November and 7 at Nickoll's Quarry on the 6th December.

Breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

There were no large counts in the early part of the year and little suggestion of spring passage, though one flew north at Abbotscliffe on the 27th February with another there on the 23rd March.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 22 (26%) of the 1km squares across the area.

After an early record at Abbotscliffe on the 8th August, autumn passage was noted from late September to the middle of November with counts of 5 west at Abbotscliffe on the 29th September, 6 west there on the 4th October, 10 over there on the 14th October and 14 over there on the 20th October.

Breeding resident.

The fieldwork for 2007 – 2012 BTO / KOS atlas concluded and breeding of at least a possible status was recorded from 9 (10%) of the 1km squares across the area.

Escaped species

Black Swan

Cygnus atratus

Escapee.

A pair first seen on the sea at Hythe opposite Stade Street in the early morning of 3rd February (L. Johannsen) slowly drifted east and were later seen off Princes Parade (P. Howe, I. A. Roberts) and finally off Mill Point at 15:30 (R. Thorogood).

There have been four previous sightings of this Australian species, three at Nickoll's Quarry (three birds from the 15th to 24th October 1994, one from 3rd September to 15th October 1997, and one on 19th November 1998) and one at Copt Point (two on the sea on 8th March 2002).



Black Swans at Hythe (Ian Roberts)

Black Swan breeds commonly in parts of the Netherlands, where it is established and self-sustaining. Small numbers also nest widely in France and around ten pairs have recently bred annually in Britain.

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 which appeared to relate to over-wintering individuals have been excluded these are indicated by an asterisk by the date. In total some 17 summer visitors arrived later this year compared to 9 which arrived earlier which was largely due to a particularly cold April (refer to the review of the month from page 10 for further details and analysis). These conditions might also have resulted in the later departure of a number of winter visitors.

Summer migrants

Species	Arrival date		Difference	
	2012	2011	Earlier	Later
Hobby	13 th Apr	11 th Apr		2
Common Sandpiper	30 th Apr	22 nd Apr		8
Arctic Skua	17 th Apr	29 th Apr	-12	
Sandwich Tern	17 th Mar	16 th Mar		1
Common Tern	25 th Apr	29 th Apr	-4	
Turtle Dove	14 th Jun	30 th Apr*		45
Cuckoo	30 th Apr	19 th Apr		11
Swift	28 th Apr	22 nd Apr		6
Sand Martin	15 th Apr	7 th Apr		8
Swallow	27 th Mar	21 st Mar		6
House Martin	15 th Apr	11 th Apr		4
Chiffchaff	9 th Mar*	12 th Mar*	-3	
Willow Warbler	7 th Apr	26 th Mar		12
Blackcap	25 th Mar*	3 rd Apr*	-9	
Garden Warbler	30 th Apr	25 th Apr		5
Lesser Whitethroat	20 th Apr	13 th Apr		7
Common Whitethroat	11 th Apr	3 rd Apr		8
Sedge Warbler	7 th Apr	24 th Apr	-17	
Reed Warbler	12 th Apr	9 th Apr		3
Spotted Flycatcher	2 nd May	20 th May	-18	
Ring Ouzel	12 th Apr	7 th Apr		5
Nightingale	27 th Apr	7 th May	-10	
Redstart	30 th Apr	7 th Apr		23
Whinchat	4 th May	11 th Apr		23
Wheatear	16 th Mar	12 th Mar		4
Yellow Wagtail	11 th Apr	4 th Apr		7
Tree Pipit	1 st May	6 th May	-5	

Departure date		Difference	
2012	2011	Earlier	Later
20 th Oct	8 th Oct		12
26 th Oct	31 st Aug		56
27 th Oct	9 th Oct		18
5 th Oct	9 th Oct	-4	
25 th Aug	9 th Oct	-45	
22 nd Jul	29 th Sep	-69	
8 th Aug	11 th Jul		28
12 th Sep	29 th Aug		14
24 th Oct	24 th Sep		30
5 th Dec	25 th Nov		10
29 th Nov	16 th Nov		13
14 th Nov*	19 th Nov*	-5	
19 th Sep	14 th Sep		5
27 th Oct*	1 st Nov*	-4	
3 rd Sep	29 th Aug		5
27 th Sep	18 th Sep		9
6 th Oct	3 rd Oct		3
21 st Sep	15 th Sep		6
29 th Sep	10 th Sep		19
18 th Sep	18 th Sep		
27 th Oct	16 th Oct		11
-	-	-	-
22 nd Oct	25 th Sep		27
9 th Oct	1 st Oct		8
20 th Oct	29 th Oct		9
13 th Oct	4 th Oct		9
4 th Oct	4 th Oct		

Winter migrants

Species	Departure date		Difference	
	2012	2011	Earlier	Later
Brent Goose	19 th May	3 rd May		16
Red-throated Diver	1 st May	3 rd May	-2	
Purple Sandpiper	2 nd May	24 th Apr		8
Fieldfare	3 rd May	29 th Mar		35
Redwing	29 th Mar	23 rd Mar		6
Brambling	27 th Mar	4 th Apr	-8	
Siskin	13 th May	8 th Apr		35
Lapland Bunting	-	-	-	-
Snow Bunting	-	-	-	-

Arrival date		Difference	
2012	2011	Earlier	Later
23 rd Sep	16 th Sep		7
23 rd Sep	9 th Oct	-16	
27 th Oct	5 th Nov	-9	
22 nd Oct	13 th Oct		9
6 th Oct	7 th Oct	-1	
27 th Sep	1 st Nov	-35	
20 th Sep	18 th Sep		2
11 th Nov	7 th Oct		35
27 th Oct	21 st Oct		6

The 2012 year list

January

1	Mute Swan	1st Jan
2	Shelduck	1st Jan
3	Gadwall	1st Jan
4	Mallard	1st Jan
5	Tufted Duck	1st Jan
6	Pheasant	1st Jan
7	Red-throated Diver	1st Jan
8	Great Crested Grebe	1st Jan
9	Fulmar	1st Jan
10	Gannet	1st Jan
11	Cormorant	1st Jan
12	Little Egret	1st Jan
13	Grey Heron	1st Jan
14	Sparrowhawk	1st Jan
15	Kestrel	1st Jan
16	Moorhen	1st Jan
17	Coot	1st Jan
18	Common Snipe	1st Jan
19	Purple Sandpiper	1st Jan
20	Curlew	1st Jan
21	Green Sandpiper	1st Jan
22	Mediterranean Gull	1st Jan
23	Black-headed Gull	1st Jan
24	Common Gull	1st Jan
25	Lesser Black-backed Gull	1st Jan
26	Herring Gull	1st Jan
27	Great Black-backed Gull	1st Jan
28	Kittiwake	1st Jan
29	Guillemot	1st Jan
30	Feral Pigeon	1st Jan
31	Stock Dove	1st Jan
32	Wood Pigeon	1st Jan
33	Collared Dove	1st Jan
34	Kingfisher	1st Jan
35	Green Woodpecker	1st Jan
36	Sky Lark	1st Jan
37	Meadow Pipit	1st Jan
38	Rock Pipit	1st Jan
39	Grey Wagtail	1st Jan
40	Pied Wagtail	1st Jan
41	Wren	1st Jan
42	Dunnock	1st Jan
43	Robin	1st Jan
44	Stonechat	1st Jan
45	Blackbird	1st Jan
46	Song Thrush	1st Jan
47	Cetti's Warbler	1st Jan
48	Chiffchaff	1st Jan
49	Goldcrest	1st Jan
50	Long-tailed Tit	1st Jan
51	Blue Tit	1st Jan

52	Great Tit	1st Jan
53	Magpie	1st Jan
54	Jackdaw	1st Jan
55	Rook	1st Jan
56	Carrion Crow	1st Jan
57	Starling	1st Jan
58	House Sparrow	1st Jan
59	Chaffinch	1st Jan
60	Greenfinch	1st Jan
61	Goldfinch	1st Jan
62	Reed Bunting	1st Jan
63	Bullfinch	2nd Jan
64	Linnet	2nd Jan
65	Siskin	2nd Jan
66	Raven	2nd Jan
67	Jay	2nd Jan
68	Nuthatch	2nd Jan
69	Coal Tit	2nd Jan
70	Marsh Tit	2nd Jan
71	Redwing	2nd Jan
72	Fieldfare	2nd Jan
73	Great Spotted Woodpecker	2nd Jan
74	Turnstone	2nd Jan
75	Redshank	2nd Jan
76	Lapwing	2nd Jan
77	Oystercatcher	2nd Jan
78	Peregrine	2nd Jan
79	Teal	2nd Jan
80	Mandarin	2nd Jan
81	Brent Goose	3rd Jan
82	Jack Snipe	4th Jan
83	Little Grebe	4th Jan
84	Woodcock	5th Jan
85	Ringed Plover	5th Jan
86	Bar-tailed Godwit	6th Jan
87	Yellowhammer	7th Jan
88	Treecreeper	7th Jan
89	Firecrest	7th Jan
90	Blackcap	7th Jan
91	Mistle Thrush	7th Jan
92	Tawny Owl	7th Jan
93	Water Rail	7th Jan
94	Common Buzzard	7th Jan
95	Goosander	7th Jan
96	Greylag Goose	7th Jan
97	Razorbill	8th Jan
98	Dunlin	8th Jan
99	Marsh Harrier	8th Jan
100	Black-throated Diver	8th Jan
101	Bearded Tit	10th Jan
102	Sanderling	11th Jan
103	Shag	12th Jan
104	Black Redstart	13th Jan
105	Little Owl	13th Jan
106	Golden Plover	14th Jan

107	Wigeon	14th Jan
108	Little Gull	18th Jan
109	Little Auk	23rd Jan
110	Twite	24th Jan
111	Great White Egret	27th Jan

February

112	Merlin	1st Feb
113	Pintail	1st Feb
114	Shoveler	4th Feb
115	Iceland (Kumlein's) Gull	6th Feb
116	Grey Plover	6th Feb
117	Pochard	7th Feb
118	Bittern	8th Feb
119	Smew	11th Feb
120	White-tailed Eagle	14th Feb
121	Red-legged Partridge	19th Feb
122	Common Scoter	21st Feb
123	Great Skua	22nd Feb
124	Grey Partridge	22nd Feb
125	Lesser Redpoll	26th Feb
126	Common Crossbill	26th Feb

March

127	Avocet	10th Mar
128	Short-toed Treecreeper	10th Mar
129	Common Crane	15th Mar
130	Red-breasted Merganser	16th Mar
131	Wheatear	16th Mar
132	Sandwich Tern	17th Mar
133	Brambling	21st Mar
134	Canada Goose	25th Mar
135	Red Kite	25th Mar
136	Corn Bunting	27th Mar
137	Swallow	27th Mar

April

138	Osprey	4th Apr
139	Willow Warbler	7th Apr
140	Sedge Warbler	7th Apr
141	Whimbrel	10th Apr
142	Whitethroat	11th Apr
143	Yellow Wagtail	11th Apr
144	Reed Warbler	12th Apr
145	Ring Ouzel	12th Apr
146	Hobby	12th Apr
147	Sand Martin	15th Apr
148	House Martin	15th Apr
149	Hen Harrier	15th Apr
150	Arctic Skua	17th Apr
151	Manx Shearwater	17th Apr
152	Hoopoe	19th Apr

153	Lesser Whitethroat	20th Apr
154	Common Tern	25th Apr
155	Pomarine Skua	25th Apr
156	Nightingale	27th Apr
157	Common Swift	28th Apr
158	Garden Warbler	30th Apr
159	Common Redstart	30th Apr
160	Cuckoo	30th Apr
161	Common Sandpiper	30th Apr

May

162	Tree Pipit	1st May
163	Little Tern	1st May
164	Short-eared Owl	2nd May
165	Wood Warbler	2nd May
166	Spotted Flycatcher	2nd May
167	Whinchat	4th May
168	Barn Owl	6th May
169	Hooded Crow	12th May
170	Red-rumped Swallow	12th May
171	Honey Buzzard	12th May
172	Knot	17th May
173	Tawny Pipit	28th May

June

174	Grasshopper Warbler	3rd Jun
175	Marsh Warbler	5th Jun
176	Turtle Dove	14th Jun
177	Sabine's Gull	30th Jun

July

178	Serin	25th Jul
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August

179	Greenshank	11th Aug
180	Pied Flycatcher	18th Aug
181	Dotterel	20th Aug
182	Black Tern	27th Aug
183	Balearic Shearwater	27th Aug

September

184	Wryneck	4th Sep
185	Rose-coloured Starling	20th Sep
186	Sooty Shearwater	23rd Sep

October

187	Yellow-browed Warbler	7th Oct
188	Barred Warbler	9th Oct
189	Little Stint	13th Oct

190	Wood Lark	20th Oct
191	Pallas' Warbler	21st Oct
192	Tree Sparrow	24th Oct
193	Snow Bunting	27th Oct
194	Richard's Pipit	28th Oct

November

195	Bewick's Swan	3rd Nov
196	Waxwing	6th Nov
197	Lapland Bunting	11th Nov
198	Pink-footed Goose	15th Nov
199	Asian Desert Warbler	18th Nov
200	Caspian Gull	27th Nov
201	Great Northern Diver	29th Nov

December

202	Goldeneye	8th Dec
203	Velvet Scoter	14th Dec

The Atlas

The fieldwork for BTO / KOS atlas concluded in 2012. The breeding and wintering distribution maps are available on the website, by following the link to the Folkestone and Hythe list, then the hyperlinks for the species. Detailed accounts have been completed for all of the rarer species and work on the more regular species will continue, drawing on the results of the national Atlas which is due to be published in August 2013.

The British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) Atlas survey period ran from the start of November 2007 to the end of February 2011 but was extended for a further year in Kent by the Kent Ornithological Society (KOS). The winter survey covered November to February for each year in this period and the breeding survey covered April to July.

Possible breeding is defined as at least one bird of that species being seen or heard in suitable nesting habitat during the survey period.

For more information on the national BTO atlas, refer to the BTO website:

<http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/birdatlas/about>

For more information on the Kent atlas, refer to the KOS website:

<http://www.kentos.org.uk/atlas>

The 20 most widespread breeding and wintering species in the Folkestone and Hythe area are shown below. The percentage for the breeding survey relates to the proportion of 1km squares where breeding of at least a possible status was recorded. The percentage for the winter survey simply relates to the proportion of 1km squares where the species was recorded.

Breeding species			Wintering species		
1=	Wood Pigeon	100%	1=	Herring Gull	100%
1=	Wren	100%	1=	Blackbird	100%
1=	Magpie	100%	1=	Song Thrush	100%
4=	Dunnock	99%	1=	Magpie	100%
4=	Blackbird	99%	1=	Carrion Crow	100%
4=	Carrion Crow	99%	6=	Black-headed Gull	99%
4=	Chaffinch	99%	6=	Wood Pigeon	99%
8=	Blue Tit	98%	6=	Dunnock	99%
8=	Great Tit	98%	6=	Robin	99%
10	Robin	97%	6=	Blue Tit	99%
11	Greenfinch	94%	11=	Common Gull	98%
12	Blackcap	93%	11=	Wren	98%
13	Whitethroat	90%	11=	Great Tit	98%
14	Song Thrush	87%	14=	Starling	97%
15	Chiffchaff	86%	14=	Chaffinch	97%
16=	Collared Dove	83%	16	Jackdaw	92%
16=	Green Woodpecker	83%	17	Greenfinch	91%
18	Starling	83%	18	Goldfinch	90%
19	Goldfinch	79%	19	Redwing	89%
20	Jackdaw	77%	20	Feral Pigeon	87%

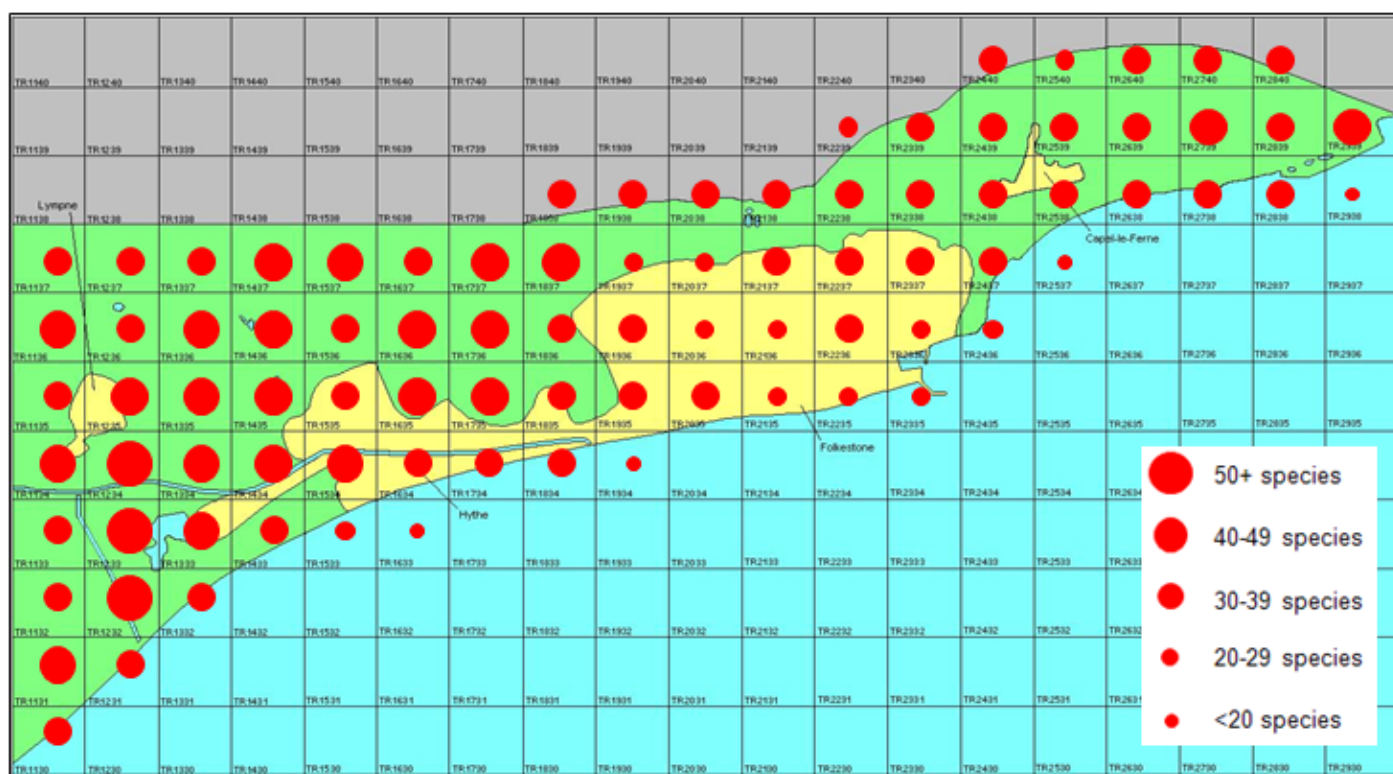
The 1km squares with the highest number of species where breeding of at least a possible status was recorded are shown below:

	<u>Grid reference</u>	<u>1km square location</u>	<u>Species</u>
1	TR1233	Botolph's Bridge / Nickoll's Quarry (North)	61
2=	TR1232	Nickoll's Quarry (West) / Hythe Redoubt	55
2=	TR1234	West Hythe / Lympe Park Wood	55
4	TR1434	Hythe Roughs (East)	49
5=	TR1736	Bargrove Wood / Dibgate	48
5=	TR1737	Beachborough Ponds / Frogholt	48
7=	TR1134	West Hythe Dam	47
7=	TR1333	Nickoll's Quarry (East)	47
7=	TR1334	Hythe Roughs (West)	47
10=	TR1537	Bluehouse and Cowtye Woods	46
10=	TR2939	Samphire Hoe (East) / Round Down	46
12	TR1436	Sandling Park	45
13=	TR1235	Lympe	43
13=	TR1435	Brockhill Country Park	43
15	TR1336	Kiln Wood / Hillhurst Farm	42
16=	TR1131	Willow Sewer (South) / Sewage Works	41
16=	TR1635	Saltwood Castle	41
16=	TR1735	Scene Wood	41
16=	TR2739	Hougham Court	41

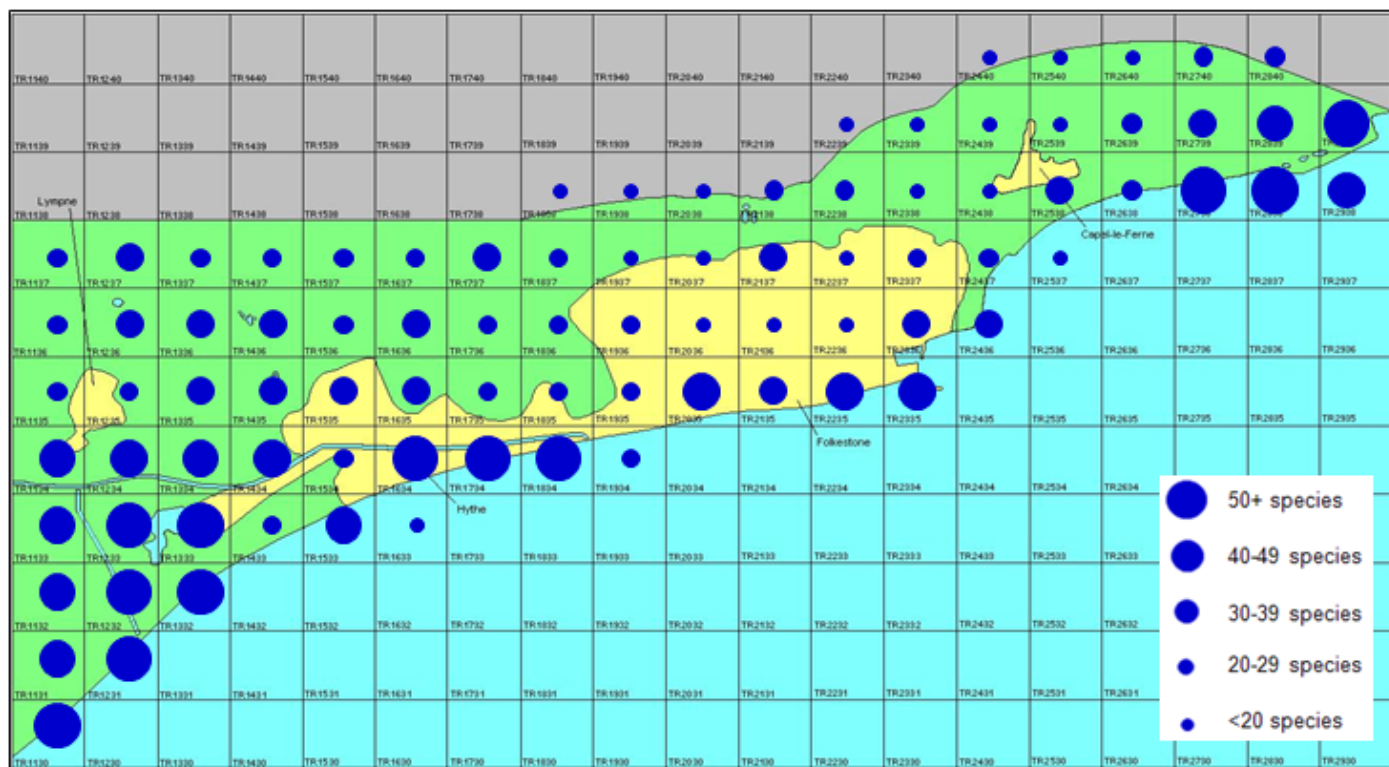
The 1km squares with the highest number of species recorded during the winter survey are shown below:

	<u>Grid reference</u>	<u>1km square location</u>	<u>Species</u>
1=	TR1233	Botolph's Bridge / Nickoll's Quarry (North)	100
1=	TR2939	Samphire Hoe (East)	100
3	TR1634	Hythe Town (Seafront / Canal)	93
4	TR1232	Nickoll's Quarry (West) / Hythe Redoubt	91
5	TR1834	Seabrook	81
6	TR1130	Willow Outfall	77
7	TR1333	Nickoll's Quarry (East)	76
8	TR1231	Hythe Redoubt (West)	75
9	TR2838	Abbotscliffe (East) / Samphire Hoe (West)	74
10	TR1734	Hythe Bay / Canal	72
11=	TR1332	Hythe Ranges (West)	70
11=	TR2738	Abbotscliffe (West)	70
13=	TR1131	Willow Basin / Sewage Works	69
13=	TR1133	Canal Cutting (Botolph's Bridge - Dam)	69
13=	TR1134	West Hythe Dam	69
16	TR2235	Mill Point (East)	67
17	TR2839	Abbotscliffe (Church Wood)	66
18=	TR1234	West Hythe / Lympe Park Wood	65
18=	TR2035	Sandgate	65
20	TR2938	Samphire Hoe (Mid)	63

The number of species where breeding of at least a possible status was recorded is shown by 1km square in the map below:



The number of species recorded during the winter survey is shown by 1km square in the map below:



New species for Folkestone and Hythe in 2012

Short-toed Treecreeper, Rose-coloured Starling and Asian Desert Warbler were added to the Folkestone and Hythe list in 2012, which increased it to 296 species. Accounts of these new species, all of which were at Samphire Hoe, are given below.

Short-toed Treecreeper at Samphire Hoe 10th March 2012

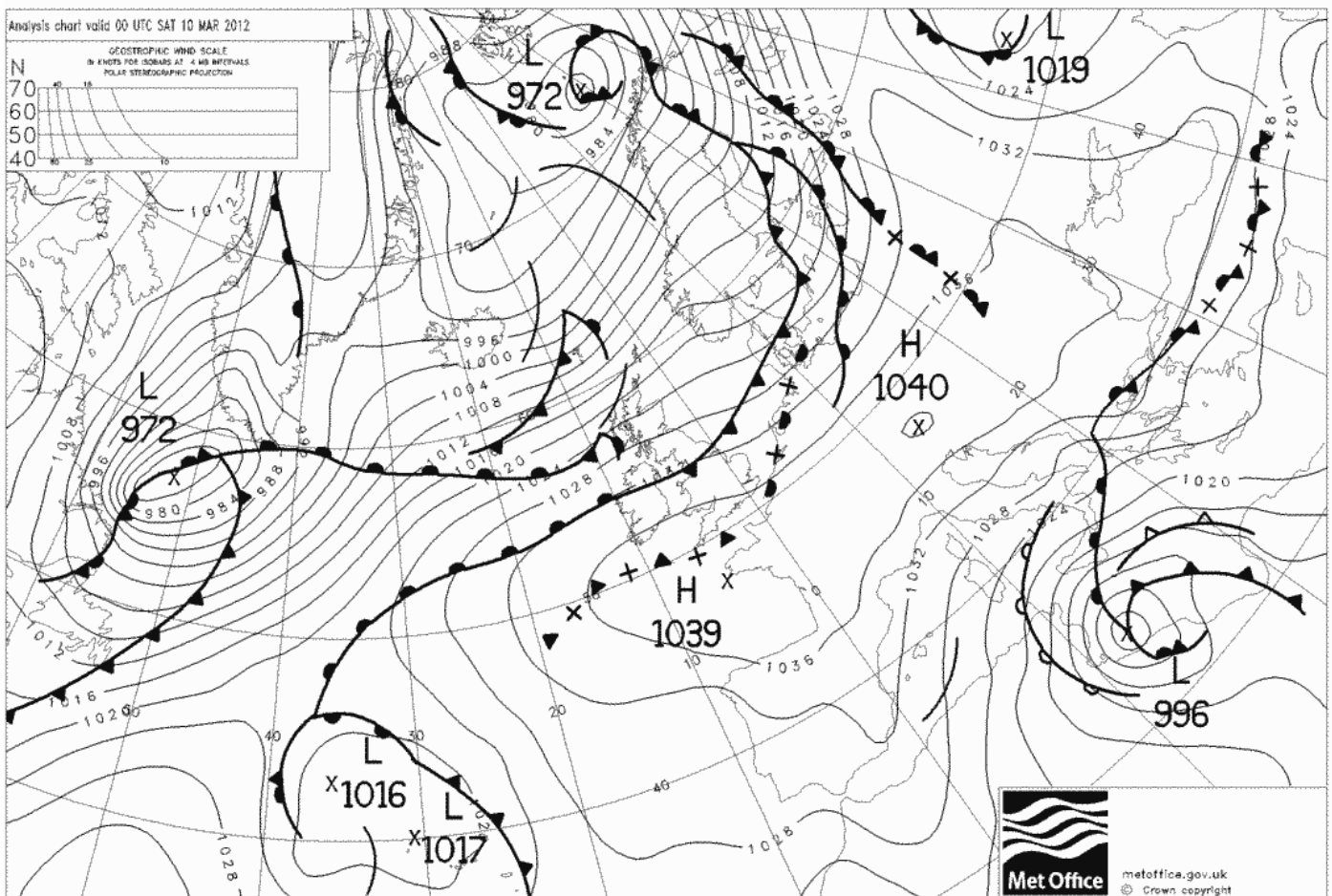
(Paul Holt, Tony Prentice *et al*)

Status:

A widespread resident throughout western Europe, from southern Spain north to Denmark and east to Poland, Ukraine and Greece. There had been 26 records in Britain to the end of 2011, 20 (77%) of which were in Kent, with others in Dorset (2), Essex (2), Suffolk and Yorkshire. Since the first in 1969 the species had appeared at a rate of almost one every two years in Kent up to 2011, with the majority (60%) at Dungeness, but with the most recent of these in nearby Dover in February 2010. Short-toed Treecreepers have been found in the county in all months of the year, with the exceptions of June and December, and with 35% of records occurring in spring (March to May).

Weather conditions:

Overcast with a light north-westerly wind. The synoptic chart for midnight on 10th March 2012, reproduced below, shows a ridge of high pressure stretching across the near continent.



Circumstances of the find:

In the late morning of 10th March 2012 Paul Holt and Tony Prentice found a Short-toed Treecreeper at the eastern end of Samphire Hoe. It was repeatedly giving the high, shrill, piping Dunnock-like 'zeet' call diagnostic of the species and was showing well on fence posts and in small buddleia bushes, where plumage features supporting the identification could be seen.

The bird remained at the site until the evening, being seen and heard by many observers, and some record photographs were obtained.

Description of the bird:

Voice: as described above, the high, shrill, piping Dunnock-like 'zeet' call, is diagnostic. A recording of Short-toed Treecreeper was played by one of the observers present, which allowed direct comparison with the bird, and which the bird appeared to respond to, making closer approach (though this effect 'wore off' as it often tends to do with playback). Vocalisations are conclusive in treecreeper identification, whereas plumage characteristics appear to be largely open to interpretation. However there were a few features which favour Short-toed Treecreeper:

Head pattern: The supercilium was indistinct and brownish-tinged in front of the eye, whereas Eurasian Treecreeper tends have a supercilium which is usually as distinct before eye as behind. The pale crown-streaks appeared to fade away towards fore-crown (in Eurasian evenly distinct over whole crown). The bill also appears rather long.

Upperparts: The primary tips appeared too well-marked for Eurasian Treecreeper.

Underparts: The white throat contrasted with the rest of the underparts, which were slightly darker, particularly on the flanks and vent.



Short-toed Treecreeper at Samphire Hoe (Simon Knight)

Rose-coloured Starling at Samphire Hoe 20th September 2012

(Geoff Burton, Paul Holt, Ian Roberts *et al*)

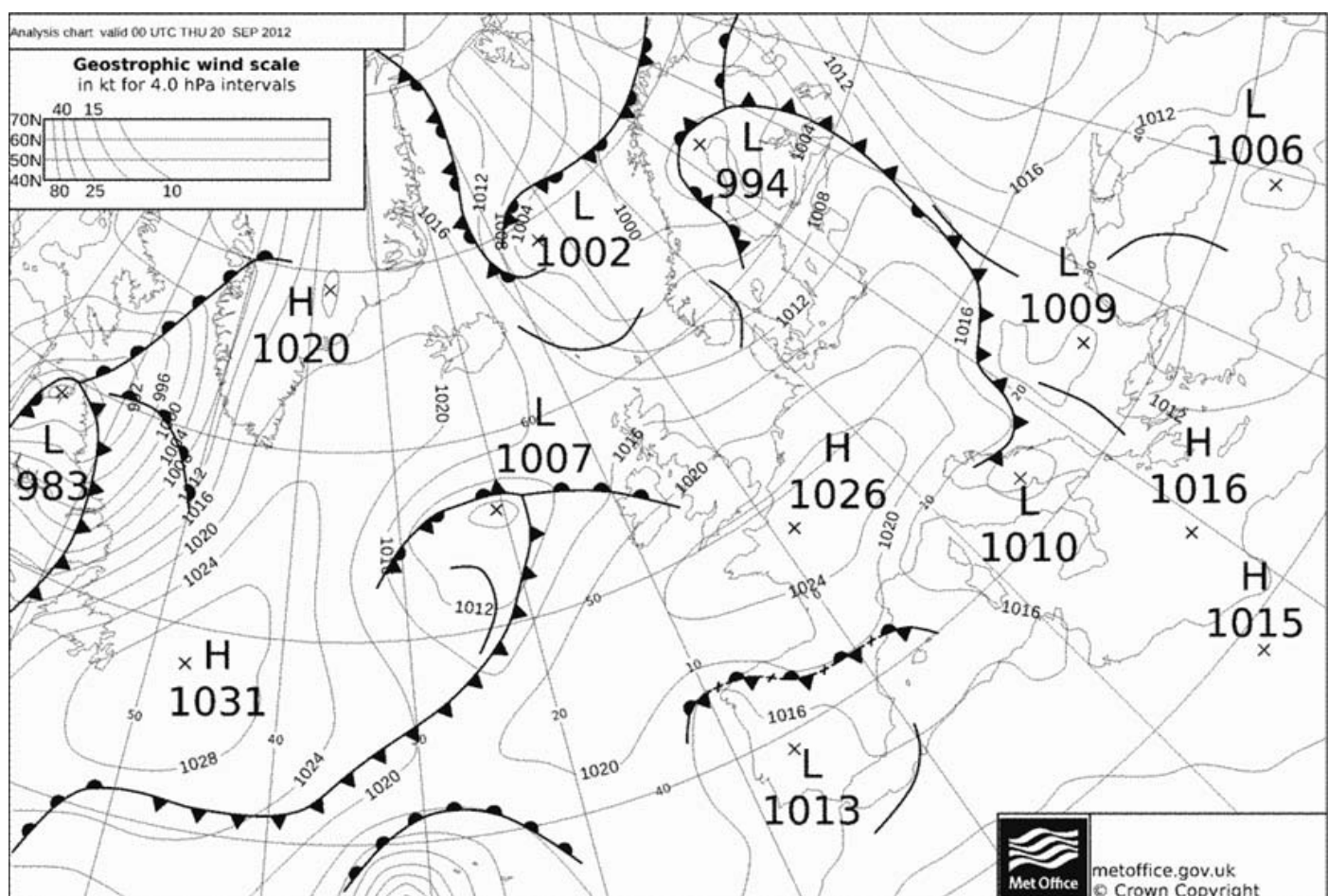
Status:

Within the Western Palearctic the core of its range is in Russia and Turkey, with smaller numbers into Greece and Albania. However it is an erratic, irruptive visitor to central and western Europe, with occasional breeding to the west of the usual limits, including an exceptional influx to the Hortobágy area of Hungary in 1995 when up to 1,700 pairs bred. It is an annual vagrant to Britain, mostly involving adults in late spring or early summer and juveniles in autumn. There had been 486 records nationally to the end of 2001 when the British Birds Rarities Committee removed it from the list of species which it assessed.

There had been 26 previous records in Kent. Only 14 of these occurred since 1970 but there have now been five in the last 5 years. Of the records since 1970 five were in spring/summer and eight in autumn, with the majority (5) in September. Where the age of the birds in autumn was given two were adults and four juveniles.

Weather conditions:

The night of the 19th/20th September was fairly cool and clear, with a light to moderate westerly wind. The synoptic chart at midnight shows an area of high pressure over the near continent.



Circumstances of the find:

At around 09:00 I received a call from Geoff Burton to say that he had found a Rose-coloured Starling at Samphire Hoe. Within 20 minutes I was on site and pleased to find the bird still present and showing well, and also being watched by Paul Holt.

Over the next hour a number of local birders arrived and all were able to get good views as it showed well in the brambles above the back car park and in the bushes above the back track, where it had been first seen. The bird was still present in the early afternoon, but it, nor the small Starling flock with which it was associating, could be not located in the late afternoon.

Description of the bird:

Head and upperparts: Pale dun-brown, with whitish throat and eye-ring. Darker wing feathers with prominent pale fringes. Paler rump.

Underparts: Paler than upperparts, though with faint darker speckling, tending to whitish on belly. Darker underwings.

Bare parts: Relatively short, thick bill with prominent yellow base. Pale pinkish legs.



Rose-coloured Starling at Samphire Hoe (Ian Roberts)

Asian Desert Warbler at Samphire Hoe
18th November 2012

(Roger Card)

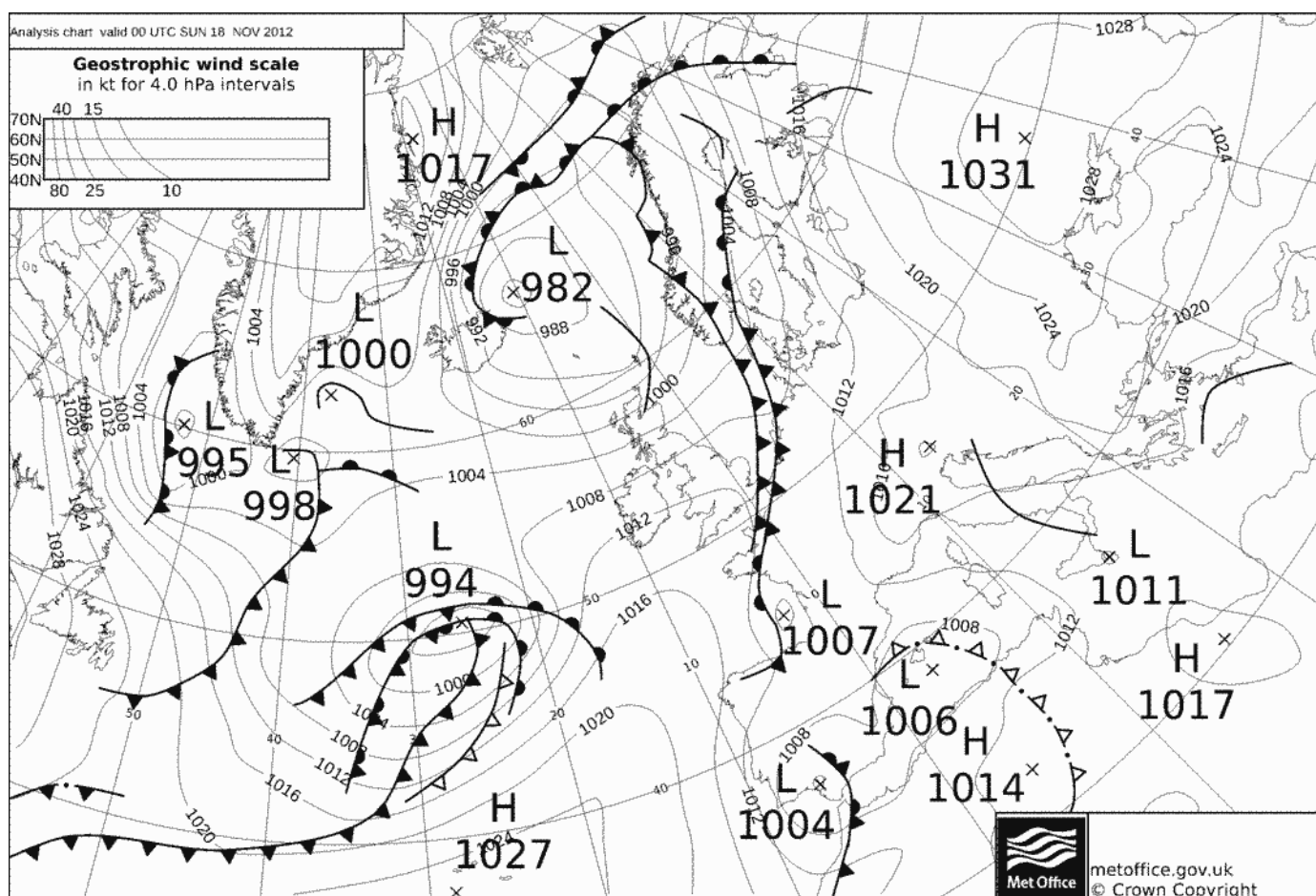
Status:

Breeds from Iran and Kazakhstan to Mongolia and winters from North-east Africa to northern India.

It is a very rare vagrant to Britain with 11 records prior to the one at Samphire Hoe (most recently in 2000). All of the previous records were on the eastern or southern coasts of England between Yorkshire and Devon (apart from one in Cheshire), with one in Kent – at Seasalter in November 1991.

Weather conditions:

The synoptic chart at midnight on 17th/18th November shows areas of high pressure extending eastwards into southern Asia, with two cold fronts running up the English Channel which brought heavy overnight rain to Kent. The morning dawned bright and clear, with a light to moderate north north-westerly wind which dropped during the day, leaving it feeling very mild and pleasant in late autumn sunshine.



Circumstances of the find:

On the morning of 18th November 2012 Roger Card found and photographed an Asian Desert Warbler at Samphire Hoe. It was last seen at 09:55 and unfortunately it could not be relocated despite extensive searching. The description that follows is taken from the photographs which demonstrate the key features.

Description of the bird:

Head and upperparts: Pale and sandy-coloured, with a contrastingly rufous tail. Outermost tail feathers white.

Underparts: Pale.

Bare parts: Pale yellow iris and pale straw-coloured legs and bill.



Asian Desert Warbler at Samphire Hoe (Roger Card)



Ringling recoveries in 2012

Details of birds ringed elsewhere and recovered in the Folkestone and Hythe area in 2012 are given here. All records in 2012 relate to ring numbers or combinations being read in the field. The code of the metal ring and colour rings are provided on the left. The distances and directions travelled are in relation to the ringing site in all cases.

The highlights in 2012 included sightings of Polish- and Dutch-ringed Sanderlings, two Norwegian-ringed Great Black-backed Gulls and a Mediterranean Gull which is now in its 14th year.

I am particularly grateful to Paul Roper of the North Thames Gull Group (www.ntgg.org.uk) and to Richard Thompson from the RSPCA's Mallydams centre (www.rspca.org.uk/allaboutanimals/wildlife/centres/mallydams) for providing life histories of the larger gulls and to Brian Harper (www.brizey.co.uk) for forwarding details of the Sanderlings and Mediterranean Gulls and for his excellent photographs.

Sanderling				<i>Calidris alba</i>
JT41906	Ringed	12-Aug-2012	Ujście wisły, Świbno, Poland	
B5RYR	Read in field	26-Dec-2012	Willop Outfall	1,262km WSW
H321299	Ringed	16-Aug-2012	Griend, Netherlands	
Y6RYYG	Read in field	18-Aug-2012	Griend, Netherlands	0km
	Read in field	19-Aug-2012	Richel, Netherlands	9km NW
	Read in field	04-Sep-2012	Griend, Netherlands	0km
	Read in field	06-Sep-2012	Griend, Netherlands	0km
	Read in field	05-Nov-2012	Zwanenwater, Netherlands	85km S
	Read in field	26-Dec-2012	Willop Outfall	382km SW



Polish-ringed Sanderling at the Willop Outfall (Brian Harper)

5346636	Ringed	17-Jun-2006	Juvenile	Niedersachsen, Germany	
Green AALT	Read in field	05-Jul-2006	1 st -year	Grünendeich, Germany	105km S
	Read in field	15-Jul-2006	1 st -year	Grünendeich, Germany	105km S
	Read in field	04-Nov-2006	1 st -year	Copt Point	621km SW
	Read in field	13 further sightings at Copt Point until 21-Mar-2007			
	Read in field	17-Apr-2007	1 st -year	Icklesham, East Sussex	677km SW
	Read in field	25-Apr-2007	1 st -year	Minsmere, Suffolk	555km WSW
	Read in field	02-May-2007	1 st -year	Dungeness	659km SW
	Read in field	19-Jan-2008	2 nd -year	Copt Point	621km SW
	Read in field	23-Feb-2008	2 nd -year	Copt Point	621km SW
	Read in field	11-Aug-2008	adult	Copt Point	621km SW
	Read in field	21-Dec-2008	adult	Copt Point	621km SW
	Read in field	3 further sightings at Copt Point until 14-Mar-2008			
	Read in field	30-Mar-2009	adult	Icklesham, East Sussex	677km SW
	Read in field	03-Oct-2009	adult	Copt Point	621km SW
	Read in field	15-May-2010	adult	Niedersachsen, Germany	0km
	Read in field	22-May-2010	adult	Niedersachsen, Germany	0km
	Read in field	20-Jun-2010	adult	Niedersachsen, Germany	0km
	Read in field	07-Dec-2010	adult	Copt Point	621km SW
	Read in field	13-Jul-2011	adult	Minsmere, Suffolk	555km WSW
	Read in field	20-Feb-2012	adult	Copt Point	621km SW
3585582	Ringed	17-Jun-2010	Juvenile	Hellevoetsluis, Slijkplaat, Netherlands	
White 33V9	Read in field	21-Aug-2010	1 st -year	Sandwich Bay	199km WSW
	Read in field	27-Jan-2011	1 st -year	Folkestone Harbour	217km WSW
	Read in field	25-Jun-2011	2 nd -year	Outreau, Pas-de-Calais, France	214km SW
	Read in field	21-Feb-2012	2 nd -year	Copt Point	217km WSW
E910140	Ringed	30-May-1998	Juvenile	Lillo, Solvay, Antwerpen, Belgium	
White E148	Read in field	01-Jun-1999	2 nd -year	Zandvlietsluis, Belgium	35km S
	Read in field	14-Jul-1999	2 nd -year	Copt Point	217km W
	Read in field	36 further sightings at Copt Point until 18-Mar-2000			
	Read in field	07-Apr-2000	2 nd -year	Zandvlietsluis, Belgium	35km S
	Read in field	18-Jul-2012	adult	Copt Point	217km W
	Read in field	33 further sightings at Copt Point until 09-Mar-2001			
	Read in field	12-Apr-2001	adult	Zandvlietsluis, Belgium	35km S
	Read in field	05-Jul-2001	adult	Copt Point	217km W
	Read in field	33 further sightings at Copt Point until 21-Feb-2002			
	Read in field	08-May-2002	adult	Zandvlietsluis, Belgium	35km S
	Read in field	8 further sightings at Zandvlietsluis until 12-Jul-2002			
	Read in field	17-Jul-2002	adult	Copt Point	217km W
	Read in field	29 further sightings at Copt Point until 27-Feb-2003			
	Read in field	10-Apr-2003	adult	Stabroek, Belgium	36km N
	Read in field	13-Jul-2003	adult	Copt Point	217km W
	Read in field	36 further sightings at Copt Point until 13-Mar-2004			
	Read in field	18-Jul-2004	adult	Copt Point	217km W
	Read in field	21 further sightings at Copt Point until 08-Mar-2005			
	Read in field	18-Apr-2005	adult	Noordelijk, Belgium	9km SW
	Read in field	17-Jul-2005	adult	Copt Point	217km W
	Read in field	32 further sightings at Copt Point until 23-Mar-2006			
	Trapped	21-May-2006	adult	Zandvlietsluis, Belgium	35km S

Read in field	26-Jun-2006	adult	Dungeness	235km W
Read in field	11-Jul-2006	adult	Copt Point	217km W
Read in field	29 further sightings at Copt Point until 17-Feb-2007			
Read in field	11-Mar-2007	adult	Zandvlietsluis, Belgium	35km S
Read in field	17-Mar-2007	adult	Zwijndrecht, Belgium	21km N
Read in field	21-Oct-2007	adult	Copt Point	217km W
Read in field	05-Jan-2008	adult	Copt Point	217km W
Read in field	10-Jan-2009	adult	Copt Point	217km W
Read in field	07-Feb-2009	adult	Copt Point	217km W
Read in field	27-Nov-2009	adult	Copt Point	217km W
Read in field	15-Feb-2010	adult	Copt Point	217km W
Read in field	06-Mar-2010	adult	Copt Point	217km W
Read in field	29-May-2010	adult	Doelpolder Noord, Belgium	22km NW
Read in field	2 further sightings at Doelpolder Noord until 12-Jun-2010			
Trapped	02-Jun-2011	adult	Sint-Amands, Belgium	34km SW
Read in field	21-Feb-2012	adult	Copt Point	217km W

FS57041 Green 153	Ringed	03-Aug-2004	2 nd -year	Le Portel, France	
	Read in field	12-Nov-2004	2 nd -year	Copt Point	50km NW
	Read in field	14 further sightings at Copt Point until 19-Mar-2005			
	Read in field	04-Jul-2005	adult	Copt Point	50km NW
	Read in field	06-Jul-2005	adult	Copt Point	50km NW
	Read in field	12-Jul-2005	adult	Le Portel, France	0km
	Read in field	16-Jul-2005	adult	Copt Point	50km NW
	Read in field	33 further sightings at Copt Point until 24-Mar-2006			
	Read in field	17-Jul-2006	adult	Copt Point	50km NW
	Read in field	35 further sightings at Copt Point until 17-Mar-2007			
	Trapped	22-Mar-2007	adult	Zandvlietsluis, Belgium	194km ENE
	Read in field	26-Mar-2007	adult	Zandvlietsluis, Belgium	194km ENE
	Read in field	14-Apr-2007	adult	Oostburg, Netherlands	150km NE
	Read in field	03-Aug-2007	adult	Copt Point	50km NW
	Read in field	05-Jan-2008	adult	Copt Point	50km NW
	Read in field	23-Feb-2008	adult	Copt Point	50km NW
	Read in field	05-Mar-2008	adult	Copt Point	50km NW
	Read in field	22-Mar-2008	adult	Zandvlietsluis, Belgium	194km ENE
	Read in field	25-Jul-2008	adult	Le Portel, France	0km
	Read in field	21-Dec-2008	adult	Copt Point	50km NW
	Read in field	3 further sightings at Copt Point until 14-Mar-2009			
	Read in field	28-Jul-2009	adult	Copt Point	50km NW
	Read in field	4 further sightings at Copt Point until 15-Feb-2010			
	Read in field	02-Jun-2010	adult	Haringvliet, Netherlands	217km NE
	Read in field	08-Feb-2011	adult	Copt Point	50km NW
	Read in field	05-Jul-2011	adult	Le Portel, France	0km
	Read in field	16-Jan-2012	adult	Copt Point	50km NW
	Read in field	21-Feb-2012	adult	Copt Point	50km NW

Herring Gull

Larus argentatus

GN88143 Red US6T	Ringed	22-Jan-2011	3 rd -year	Pitsea, Essex	
	Read in field	13-Sep-2011	3 rd -year	Folkestone Harbour	71km SE
	Read in field	24-Jan-2012	4 th -year	Folkestone Harbour	71km SE

GN87715	Ringed	30-Oct-2011	3 rd -year	Pitsea, Essex	
Red YK0T	Read in field	11-Feb-2011	3 rd -year	Ramsgate Harbour	68km ESE
	Read in field	28-Apr-2012	3 rd -year	Blaringhem, Nord, France	165km SE
	Read in field	31-Jan-2012	4 th -year	Folkestone Harbour	71km SE
GR30993	Ringed	03-Dec-2011	1 st -year	Pitsea, Essex	
Red AU1T	Read in field	14-Jan-2012	1 st -year	Pitsea, Essex	0km
	Read in field	18-Jan-2012	1 st -year	Folkestone Harbour	71km SE
	Read in field	28-Jan-2012	1 st -year	Pitsea, Essex	0km
	Read in field	17-Mar-2012	1 st -year	Folkestone Harbour	71km SE
GN88104	Ringed	22-Jan-2011	2 nd -year	Pitsea, Essex	
Red TS4T	Read in field	21-Jun-2011	2 nd -year	Folkestone Harbour	71km SE
	Read in field	17-Mar-2012	3 rd -year	Folkestone Harbour	71km SE
GC42023	Ringed	06-Aug-2007	Juvenile	Fairlight, East Sussex (in care for 39 days)	
White A5DX	Read in field	01-Sep-2009	3 rd -year	Dannes, Pas-de-Calais, France	72km SE
	Read in field	24-Jan-2011	Adult	Folkestone Harbour	40km NE
	Read in field	01-Feb-2011	Adult	Folkestone Harbour	40km NE
	Read in field	30-Jan-2012	Adult	Folkestone Harbour	40km NE
	Read in field	20-Mar-2012	Adult	Folkestone Harbour	40km NE
GN88138	Ringed	22-Jan-2011	2 nd -year	Pitsea, Essex	
Red RS6T	Read in field	06-Jul-2011	3 rd -year	Le Portel, France	121 km SE
	Read in field	20-Mar-2012	3 rd -year	Folkestone Harbour	71km SE
GR14004	Ringed	30-Jul-2010	Juvenile	Brighton, East Sussex	
White A7GT	Read in field	24-Jun-2012	2 nd -year	Hythe Town	90km ENE
GR14048	Ringed	21-Oct-2010	Juvenile	Fairlight, East Sussex (in care for 90 days)	
White A7JR	Read in field	29-Jan-2011	1 st -year	Pitsea, Essex	71km N
	Trapped	12-Nov-2011	2 nd -year	Rainham, Greater London	75km NNW
	Read in field	13-Nov-2011	2 nd -year	Walthamstow, London	92km NW
	Read in field	12-Feb-2012	2 nd -year	Walthamstow, London	92km NW
	Read in field	02-Dec-2012	3 rd -year	Folkestone Harbour	40km NE
GR15461	Ringed	22-Oct-2011	1 st -year	Pitsea, Essex	
Red UV1T	Read in field	23-Dec-2012	2 nd -year	Burmarsh Road, Palmarsh	67 km SE

Great Black-backed Gull

Larus marinus

3031712	Ringed	06-Jul-2011	Juvenile	Lindesnes, Vest-Ager, Norway	
Black JP262	Read in field	01-Jan-2012	1 st -year	Folkestone Harbour	865km SW
3024845	Ringed	30-Jun-2010	Juvenile	Landekilen, Vest-Ager, Norway	
Black JE680	Read in field	16-Aug-2010	1 st -year	Brennevinsmyra, Norway	6km E
	Read in field	11-Jan-2011	1 st -year	Boulogne, France	894km SW

Read in field	07-Jul-2011	2 nd -year	Dungeness	892km SW
Read in field	08-Jul-2011	2 nd -year	Dungeness	892km SW
Read in field	13-Jul-2012	3 rd -year	Seabrook	872km SW



Herring Gull "TS4T" at Folkestone (Ian Roberts)



13-year-old Mediterranean Gull "E148" at Folkestone (Brian Harper)

The Folkestone and Hythe area

The Folkestone and Hythe area includes most of the 10km squares TR13 and TR23, though excludes the western half of the first 'column' of 2km tetrads in TR13 and the most northern 'row' of 2km tetrads, and it also includes a small component of the most southerly part of TR24, as shown in the map below.

It therefore extends from the Willop Outfall and Basin in the south-west to Folkestone Racecourse at Westenhangar in the north-west to Samphire Hoe in the east, and excludes Dymchurch, Sellindge, Hawkinge and Dover.

