

## Asian Desert Warbler

*Sylvia nana*

Category A

Very rare vagrant.

1 record

*World/British distribution (Snow & Perrins 1998):*

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

*Kent status (KOS 2021):*

Rare vagrant.

British (BBRC) records to end 2020: 13

Kent (KOS) records to end 2020: 2



Asian Desert Warbler at Samphire Hoe (Roger Card)

It is a very rare vagrant to Britain, with a total of 13 records, only one of which (in 2020) has occurred since the local sighting. All records have occurred on the eastern or southern coasts of England between Northumberland and Devon (apart from one in Cheshire). There had been one previous sighting in Kent: at Seasalter in November 1991 (RBA no date; Holt *et al.* 2021; KOS no date).

There have been three spring sightings in Britain (two in May and one in June) and the others occurred in October (6), November (3) and December (1).

The single local occurrence was seen by Roger Card at Samphire Hoe on the 18<sup>th</sup> November 2012.

The record by year is shown in figure 1.

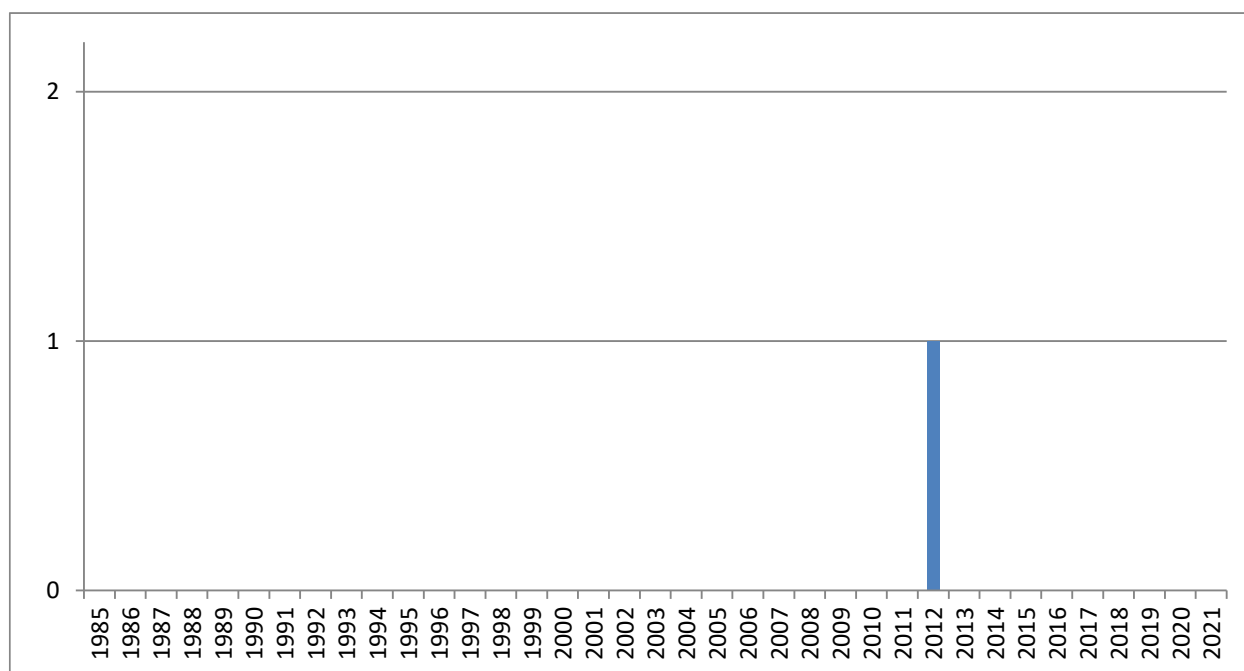


Figure 1: Asian Desert Warbler records at Folkestone and Hythe

The record by week is given in figure 2.

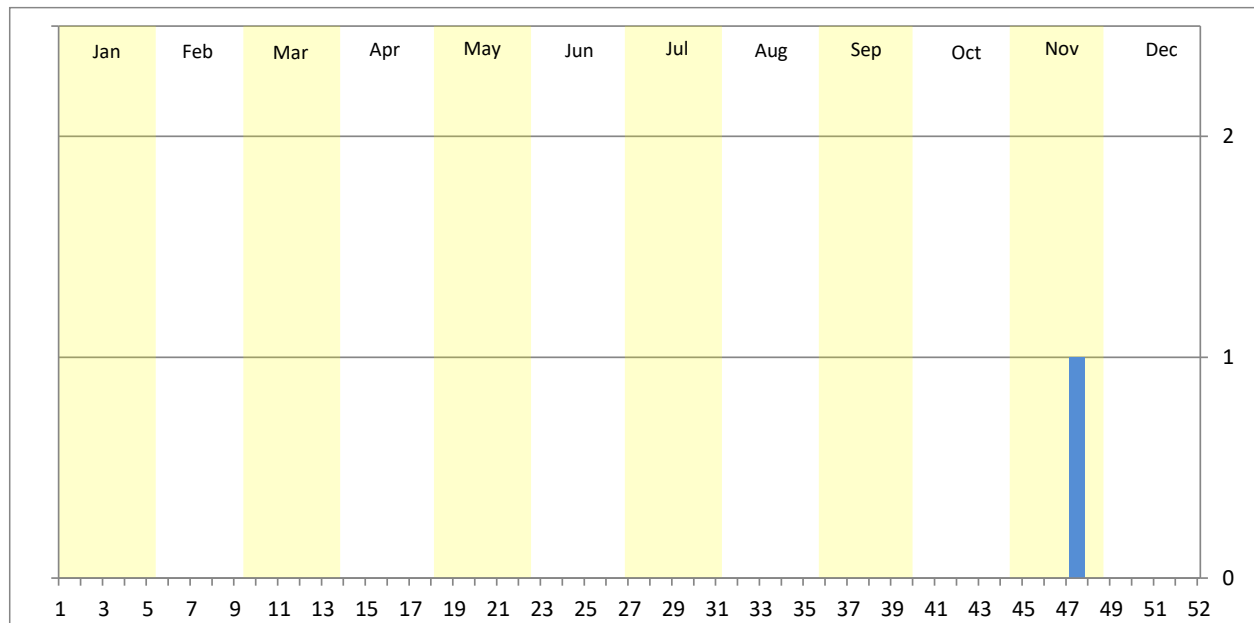


Figure 2: Asian Desert Warbler records at Folkestone and Hythe by week

Figure 3 shows the location of the record by tetrad.

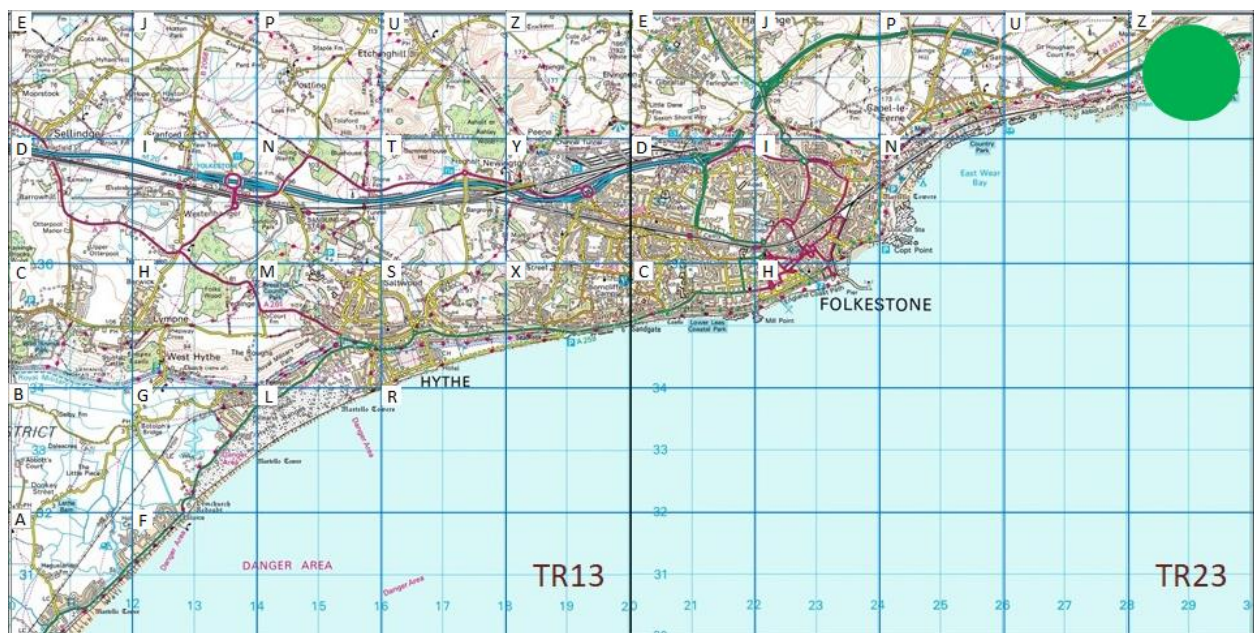


Figure 3: Distribution of all Asian Desert Warbler records at Folkestone and Hythe by tetrad

Confirmation of the only area record is as follows:

**2012** Samphire Hoe, 18<sup>th</sup> November, photographed (R. Card).

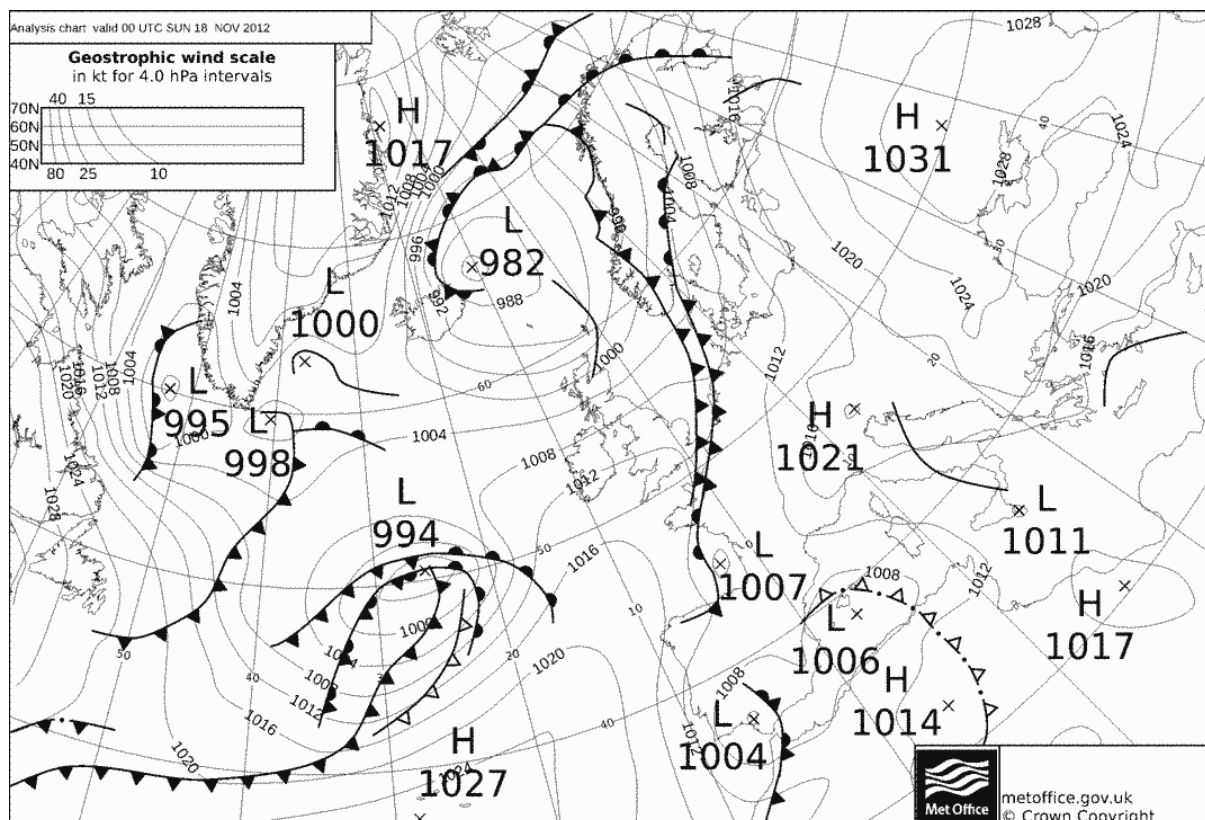
An account of the first area record is given below.

**Asian Desert Warbler at Samphire Hoe**  
**18<sup>th</sup> November 2012**

By Roger Card

**Weather conditions:**

The synoptic chart at midnight on 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> 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 18<sup>th</sup> 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.

The record was accepted by the British Birds Rarities Committee and appears in their annual report for 2012 (Hudson *et al.* 2013).

## References

- British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC). Statistics. [www.bbrc.org.uk/main-information/statistics](http://www.bbrc.org.uk/main-information/statistics) (accessed 2021).
- Holt, C., French, P. & the Rarities Committee 2021. Report on rare birds in Great Britain in 2020. *British Birds* 114: 570-628.
- Hudson, N. & the Rarities Committee 2013. Report on rare birds in Great Britain in 2012. *British Birds* 106: 570-641.
- Kent Ornithological Society (KOS). 1953-2021. *Kent Bird Reports*. Kent Ornithological Society.
- Kent Ornithological Society (KOS). The Kent List. <https://kentos.org.uk/index.php/recording/the-kent-list> (accessed 2022).
- Rare Bird Alert (RBA) Previous Records. [www.rarebirdalert.co.uk/RealData/recordshome.asp](http://www.rarebirdalert.co.uk/RealData/recordshome.asp) (accessed 2021).
- Snow, D. & Perrins, C.M. 1998. *The Birds of the Western Palearctic*. Oxford University Press.

## Acknowledgements

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

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Asian Desert Warbler at Samphire Hoe (Roger Card)