

Review of non-avian sightings 2018

January

The year began unsettled, mild and windy at times before there was a quieter and colder spell from the 6th to the 12th with high pressure becoming more dominant. The remainder of the month however saw a return to unsettled conditions with westerly winds driving fronts across the country at regular intervals and it was generally mild.

It was a typically quiet start to the year for moths but the first Oak Beauty at Seabrook on the 23rd was notably early as this species is rarely recorded before March. Spring Usher, Pale Brindled Beauty, The Chestnut, Dark Chestnut and *Epiphyas postvittana* (Light Brown Apple Moth) were more usual records for January. No butterflies were recorded.

Up to two Harbour Porpoise and two Grey Seals were noted regularly off Samphire Hoe and three Grey Seals were seen from Folkestone Harbour arm on the 13th.



Oak Beauty at Seabrook (Paul Howe)



Spring Usher at Seabrook (Paul Howe)

February

The first week of the month was generally cold with predominately northerly or easterly winds, whilst the middle fortnight was often milder, with westerly and south-westerly winds, and it turned changeable in the second week. A settled spell followed but then from the 26th a very cold easterly airflow brought some severe overnight frosts, whilst daytime temperatures were barely above freezing and there was some significant snowfall.



Early Moth at Seabrook (Paul Howe)



Dotted Border at Hythe (Ian Roberts)

The first Hebrew Character and *Emmelina monodactyla* (Common Plume) were seen at Seabrook on the 1st and in the milder weather mid-month Early Moth, Clouded Drab and The Satellite at Seabrook and Dotted Border and Common Quaker at Hythe were added to the year list. The first butterfly of the year was a Peacock seen at Hythe on the 17th.

At least one Harbour Porpoise and one Grey Seal continued to be noted regularly off Samphire Hoe.