

Greater Scaup

Aythya marila

Category A

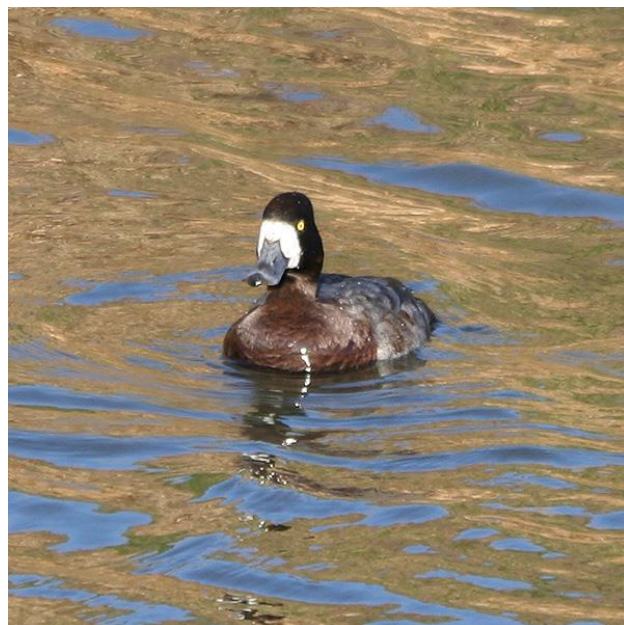
Rare migrant and winter visitor

28 records

Breeds in Iceland, northern Scandinavia and Russia, wintering on coasts around western Europe, including Britain.

A passage migrant and winter visitor in Kent, most prevalent in severe weather when large influxes may occasionally occur.

Ticehurst in his *A History of the Birds of Kent* (1909) notes that one Folkestone Museum had an example which was taken "on the Warren" but no date is given. The first dated record for the Folkestone and Hythe area was in 1963, when one was on the Hythe Canal on the 26th January.



Scaup at Seabrook (Brian Harper)

Remarkably this was followed by a flock of 35 on the sea just three days later. These birds were part of a significant influx into south-east Kent during hard weather, which included a count of 120 off Littlestone, and involved several birds being found dead on the tideline between Hythe and Dungeness.

Following a subsequent sighting in 1979, it has since occurred with some regularity, being seen in 15 of out of the 33 years since 1985 (as shown in figure 1). The peak year to date was 1996, with five records.

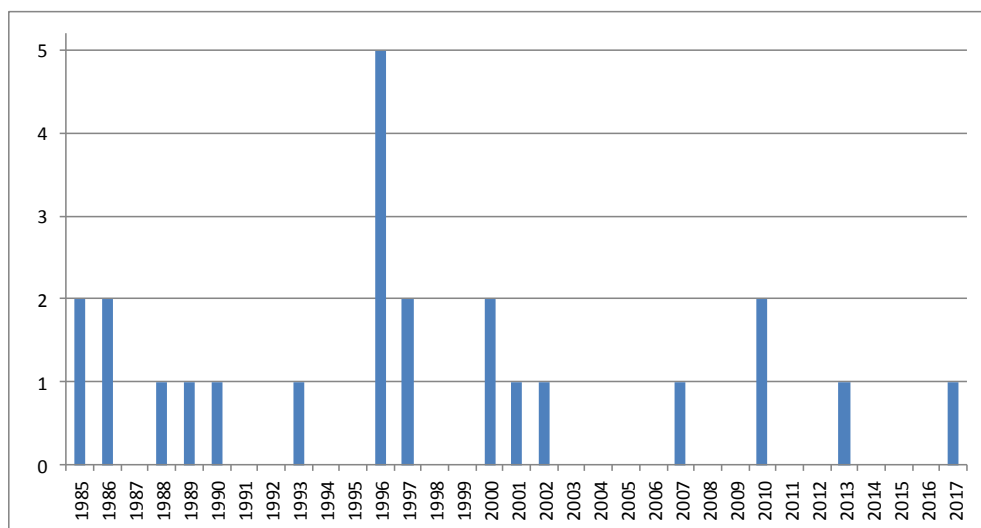


Figure 1: Scaup records since 1985 at Folkestone and Hythe

Apart from sightings on 29th September 2013, 4th October 1997 and 24th April 1989, all have been recorded between the 29th October (week 44) and 27th March (week 13), with a peak in late December / early January, as shown in figure 2.

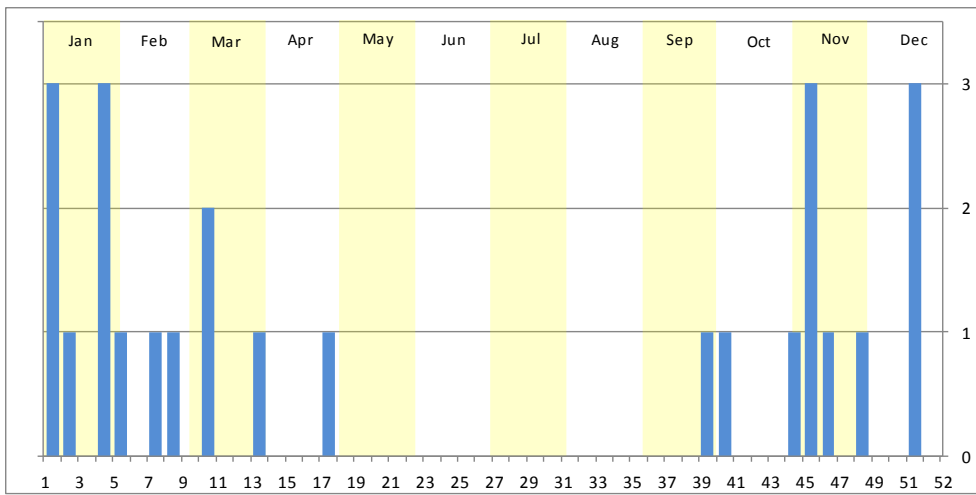


Figure 2: Scaup records at Folkestone and Hythe by week

The distribution of winter records recorded in the BTO/KOS Atlas (2007 – 2012) is shown in figure 3. The majority of other records are from Nickoll’s Quarry (9) and Copt Point / Folkestone Warren (8), with two each from Samphire Hoe and Seabrook, and the others at Botolph’s Bridge, Hythe and the Hythe Redoubt. Whilst most records have related to short-stayers or birds flying past, three individuals lingered for at least a fortnight, with one bird taking up residence at Nickoll’s Quarry for 56 days in the 2002/03 winter.

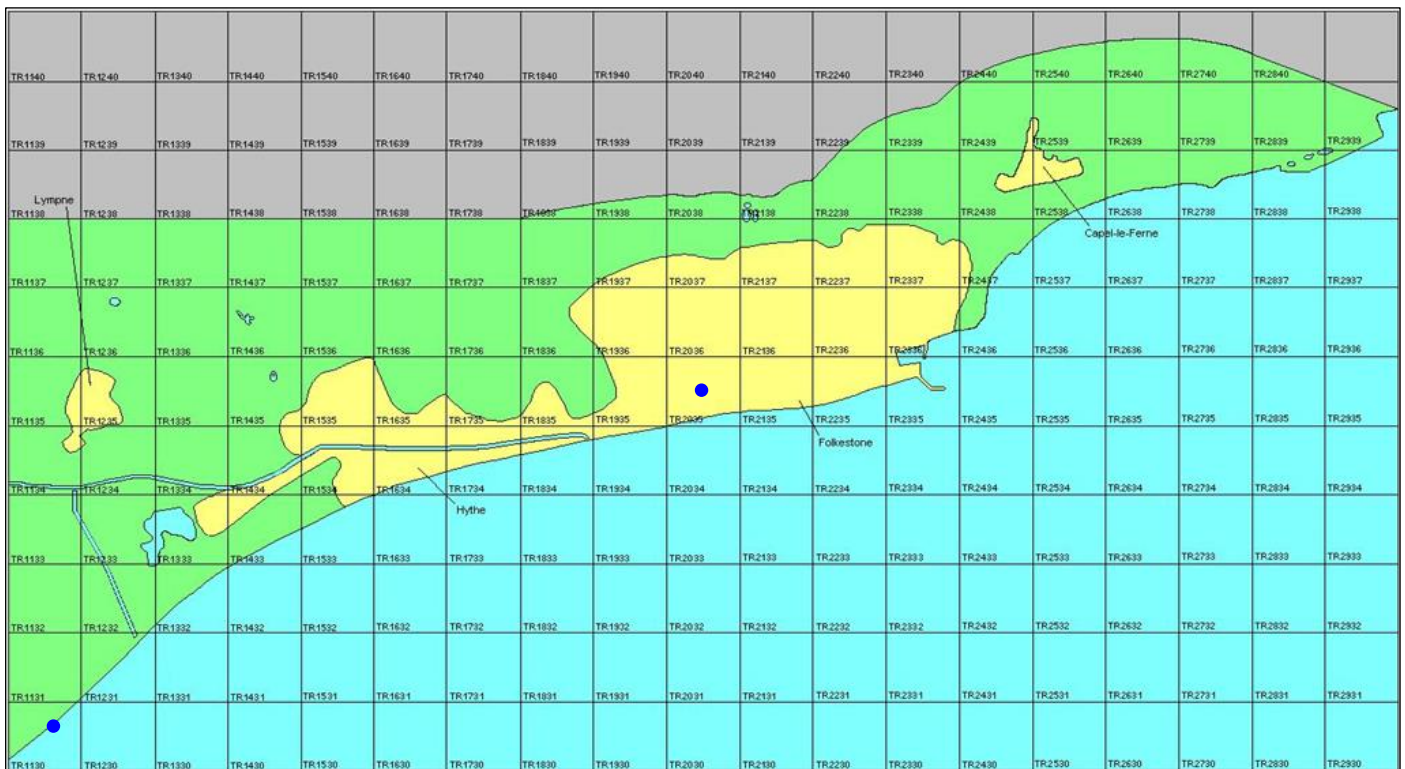


Figure 3: Wintering distribution of Scaup at Folkestone and Hythe (2007 – 2012 BTO/KOS Atlas)

The full list of records is as follows:

- Prior to 1909** Folkestone Warren, one obtained, undated (per N. Ticehurst)
- 1963** Hythe Canal, drake, 26th January (G. F. A. Munns)
- 1963** Hythe, 35, 29th January (G. F. A. Munns)
- 1979** Nickoll's Quarry, immature drake, 23rd January (D. Weaver)
- 1985** Nickoll's Quarry, drake, 16th to 17th February (R. & S. Philpott)
- 1985** Nickoll's Quarry, two females, 19th December to 1st January 1986 (P. Miller)
- 1986** Botolph's Bridge, two, 1st January (reported), possibly same as two females seen at Nickoll’s Quarry
- 1986** Nickoll's Quarry, 14 mid-morning, 1st January (P. Wells)
- 1988** Nickoll's Quarry, one, for three weeks in February (R. & S. Philpott)
- 1989** Nickoll's Quarry, drake, 24th to 30th April (I. A. Roberts)

- 1990** Nickoll's Quarry, female, 11th November (R. K. Norman)
- 1993** Copt Point, five flew east, 8th March (D. A. Gibson)
- 1996** Seabrook, three on the sea, 27th January (M. Whybrow)
- 1996** Copt Point, two flew east, 21st February (D. A. Gibson)
- 1996** Nickoll's Quarry, drake, 6th March (R. K. Norman)
- 1996** Copt Point, drake flew east, 14th November (I. A. Roberts)
- 1996** Copt Point, two flew east, 21st December (I. A. Roberts)
- 1997** Samphire Hoe, immature/female, 4th to 7th October (P. Chantler *et al*)
- 1997** Copt Point, one flew west, 5th November (D. A. Gibson, I. A. Roberts)
- 2000** Samphire Hoe, one, in March (reported)
- 2000** Copt Point, one flew west, 29th October (I. A. Roberts)
- 2001** Copt Point, three, 27th March (D. A. Gibson)
- 2002** Nickoll's Quarry, female, 9th November to 4th January 2003, photographed (I. A. Roberts, R. K. Norman)
- 2007** Hythe Canal (Seabrook), first-winter drake, 1st to 14th January, photographed (B. Harper, I. A. Roberts *et al*)
- 2010** Willop Outfall, immature/female on the sea, 27th November, photographed (B. & M. Harper)
- 2010** Sandgate, female on the sea, 19th December (M. Whybrow)
- 2013** Folkestone Warren, immature/female on the sea, 29th September, photographed (D. A. Gibson)
- 2016** Hythe Redoubt, ten on the sea, 10th January (reported)



Scaup at Seabrook (Brian Harper)