

## Grey Phalarope

*Phalaropus fulicarius*

Category A

Very rare vagrant

5 records

Breeds in the extreme north of Asia, North America and Greenland, also in Iceland and Spitsbergen. Winters off western Africa and western South America. Migrates almost exclusively by sea routes, occurring inshore or inland only under stress of weather. Occasionally large numbers can occur off Britain and Ireland following passages of vigorous Atlantic depressions.

A rare autumn and winter migrant to Kent.



Grey Phalarope at West Hythe (Mike Terry)

The first area record was documented in the *Zoologist* (1871, p.2443): “last month Baillon’s Crake, three Grey Phalaropes and the Common Cormorant were taken in the Hythe Canal by Mr. F. Young – *Charles Gordon; Museum, Dover, November 24, 1870*”. Ticehurst also referred to this record in his *A History of the Birds of Kent* (1909) and it is no doubt the basis for inclusion in Knight and Tolputt’s “List of birds observed in Folkestone and its immediate neighbourhood” published in the Folkestone Natural History Society’s annual report for 1871.

The second area record concerned one seen at Folkestone (East Cliff) Sands on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1966, followed by another which spend two days in the nearby Harbour from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup> January 1981. There have been two further records in 2003 and 2009 as shown in shown in figure 1, the first at Copt Point and the second on the canal at West Hythe.

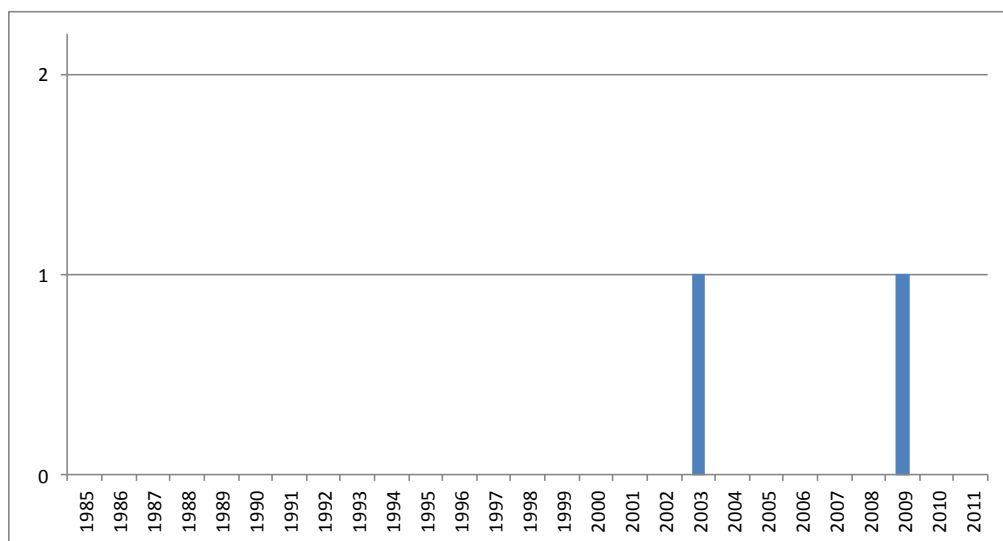


Figure 1: Grey Phalarope records since 1985 at Folkestone and Hythe

All dated records have occurred between 23<sup>rd</sup> October (week 43) and 6<sup>th</sup> January (week 1). The first area record was only given as October. The records by week are given in figure 2.

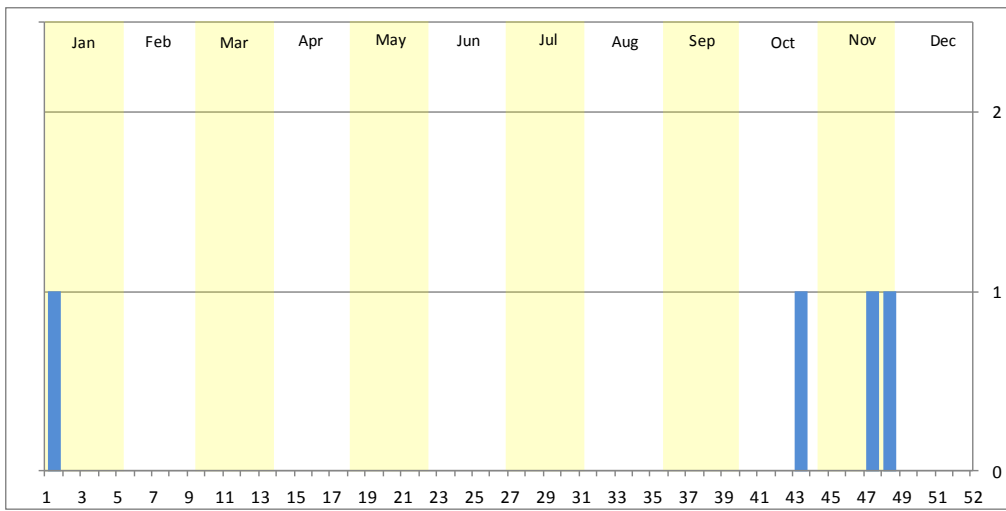


Figure 2: Grey Phalarope records at Folkestone and Hythe by week

One at West Hythe on the 25<sup>th</sup> November 2009 fell within the fieldwork period for the BTO/KOS Atlas (2007 – 2012) is shown in figure 3. The previous records were all from the area between Folkestone Harbour and Copt Point.

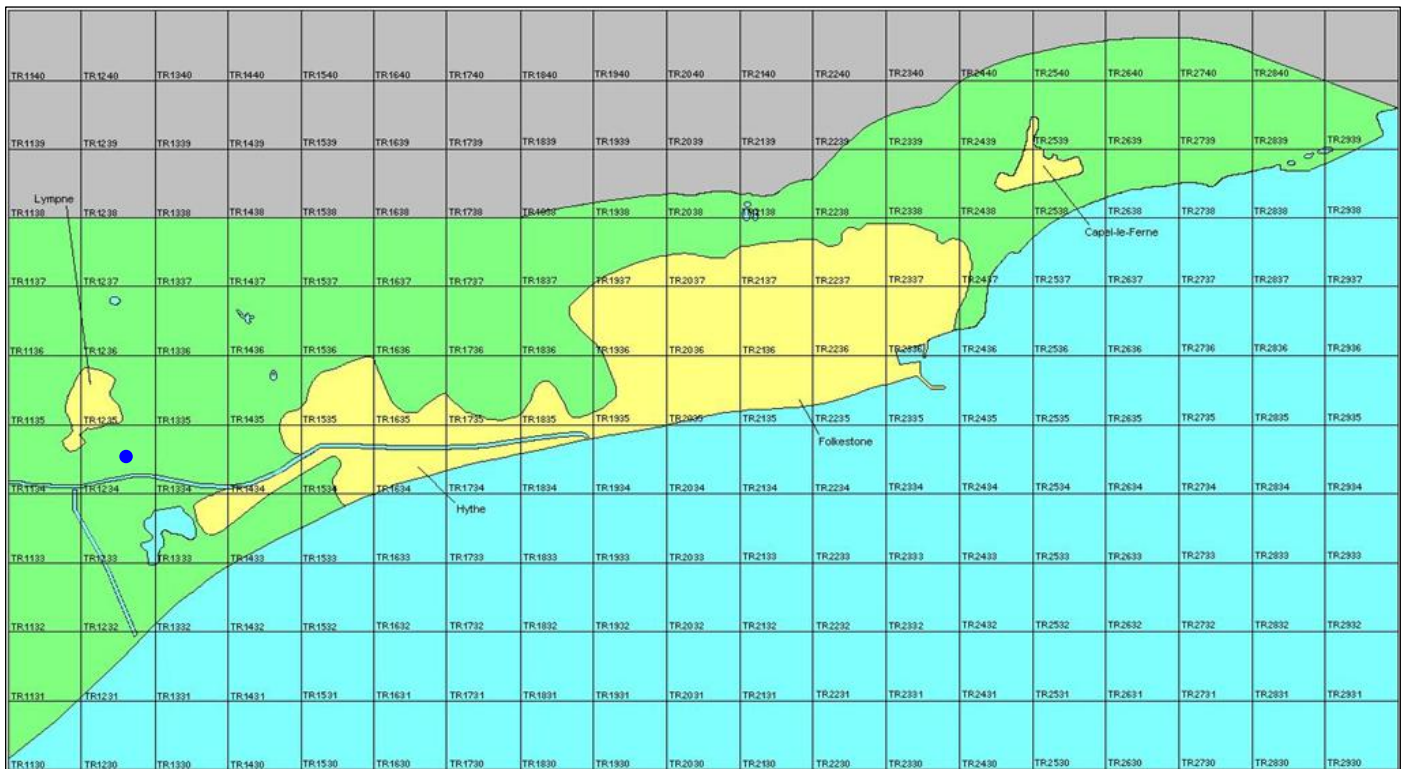


Figure 3: Wintering distribution of Grey Phalarope at Folkestone and Hythe (2007 – 2012 BTO/KOS Atlas)

The full list of area records is as follows:

- 1870** Hythe Canal, three shot, October (per Ticehurst)
- 1966** Folkestone Sands, one, 2<sup>nd</sup> December, fully described (T. Grant)
- 1981** Folkestone Harbour, one, 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> January (R. G. W. Heselden, M. P. Sutherland, L. F. Woollard)
- 2003** Copt Point, one flew east, 23<sup>rd</sup> October, (I. A. Roberts)
- 2009** West Hythe, one, 25<sup>th</sup> November, photographed (M. Terry)



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