

Long-tailed Skua

Stercorarius longicaudus

Category A

Very rare vagrant

9 records

Breeds in northern Fenno-Scandia and Russia. Wintering areas poorly known, though evidently all in the southern hemisphere. Generally migrates via an Atlantic route with only small numbers tending to use the English Channel / North Sea.

A passage migrant to Kent, which is rare in spring and scarce in autumn.

First recorded at Folkestone and Hythe in 1996, with eight subsequent records as shown in figure 1.

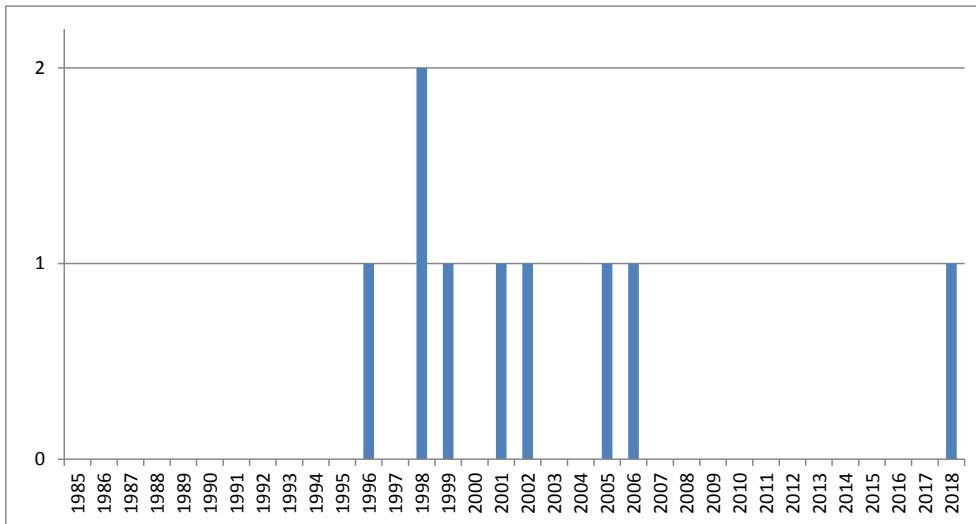


Figure 1: Long-tailed Skua records at Folkestone and Hythe

Records fall into two distinct periods, with three in spring (all in May) and six in autumn, between the 24th August (week 34) and 24th October (week 43), as demonstrated by figure 2.

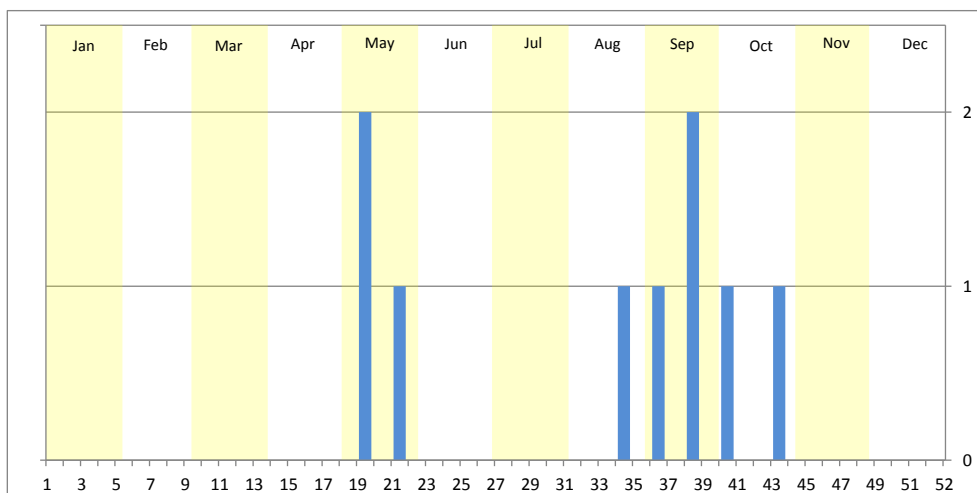


Figure 2: Long-tailed Skua records at Folkestone and Hythe by week

All but one was found at Folkestone, with seven at Copt Point with one at Mill Point, and the other at Hythe (which was later seen off Mill Point as well).

The full list of records is as follows:

- 1996** Copt Point, juvenile flew west, 24th August (D. A. Gibson)
- 1998** Copt Point, adult flew east, 10th May (D. A. Gibson, I. A. Roberts)
- 1998** Copt Point, juvenile offshore then flew east, 5th September (D. A. Gibson)

- 1999** Copt Point, juvenile flew east, 20th September (I. A. Roberts)
- 2001** Copt Point, adult flew east, 10th May (I. A. Roberts)
- 2002** Copt Point, juvenile flew east, 23rd September (I. A. Roberts)
- 2005** Mill Point, juvenile flew east, 24th October (I. A. Roberts)
- 2006** Copt Point, juvenile flew west, 6th October (I. A. Roberts)
- 2018** Hythe, adult, 24th May (I. A. Roberts), later flew east past Mill Point (B. Harper)