

Glaucaous Gull

Larus hyperboreus

Category A

Rare migrant and winter visitor

27 records

Breeds along arctic coasts of North America, Asia, Greenland and Europe (in Iceland, Russia and Spitsbergen). Winters in Britain and Ireland annually in variable numbers, mainly in the north, with greatest concentrations in severe weather.

An uncommon but regular passage migrant and winter visitor to Kent.

First recorded at Folkestone and Hythe in 1961 when a first-winter was seen at Folkestone on the 1st March. Following almost a gap of almost 20 years one was reported at Copt Point in 1980, but it has since occurred fairly regularly, with 25 subsequent records, 19 of which have been since 1985, as shown in figure 1.



Glaucaous Gull at Hythe (Ian Roberts)

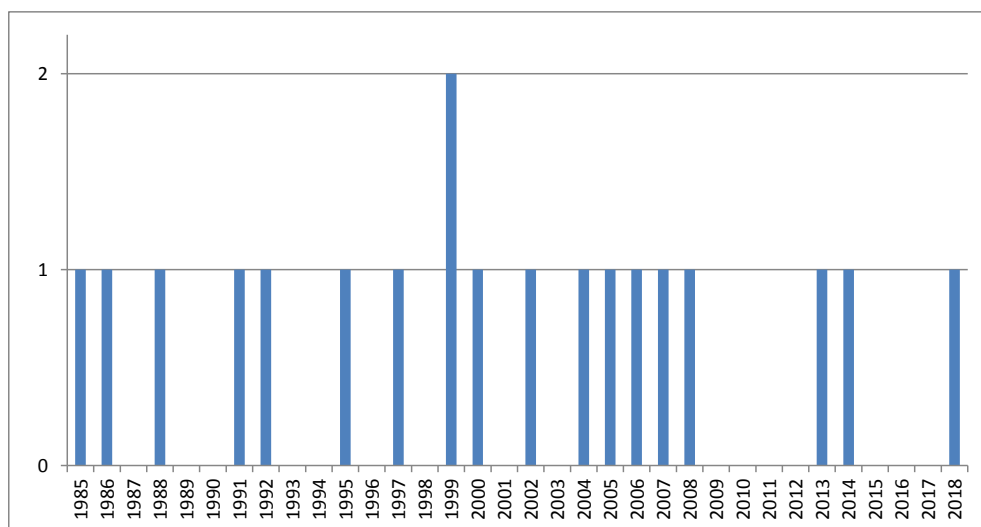


Figure 1: Glaucaous Gull records since 1985 at Folkestone and Hythe

Arrival dates have been between the 13th November (week 46) and 10th May (week 19), though with a peak in late January / early February (weeks 4 to 7). Arrivals by week are shown in figure 2.

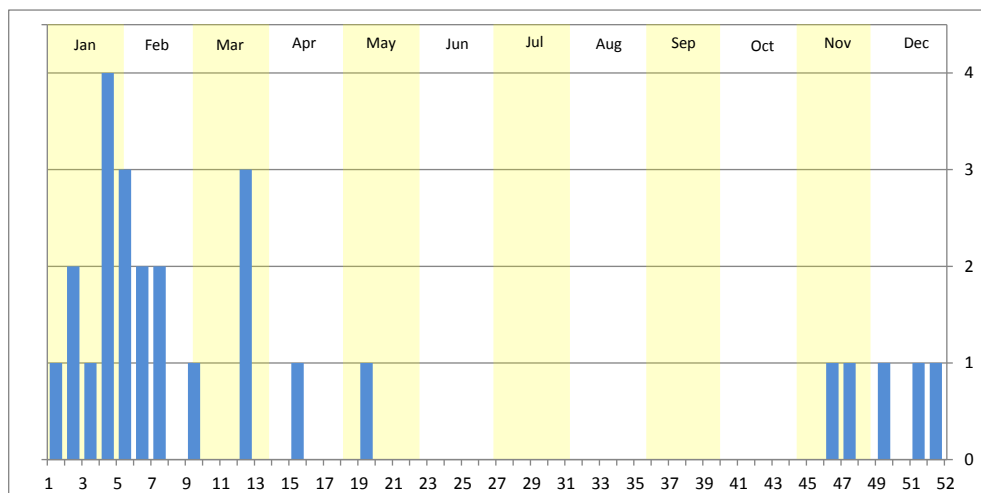


Figure 2: Glaucaous Gull records at Folkestone and Hythe by week

The distribution of winter records recorded in the BTO/KOS Atlas (2007 – 2012) is shown in figure 3. The records shown relate to the 2008 long-staying individual which was seen at various locations within the Samphire Hoe area and the two seen at Hythe in November 2007. The majority of the other records are from the Copt Point / Folkestone Harbour area, with 3 at Nickolls Quarry, 3 at Samphire Hoe, 2 at Mill Point and another at Hythe.

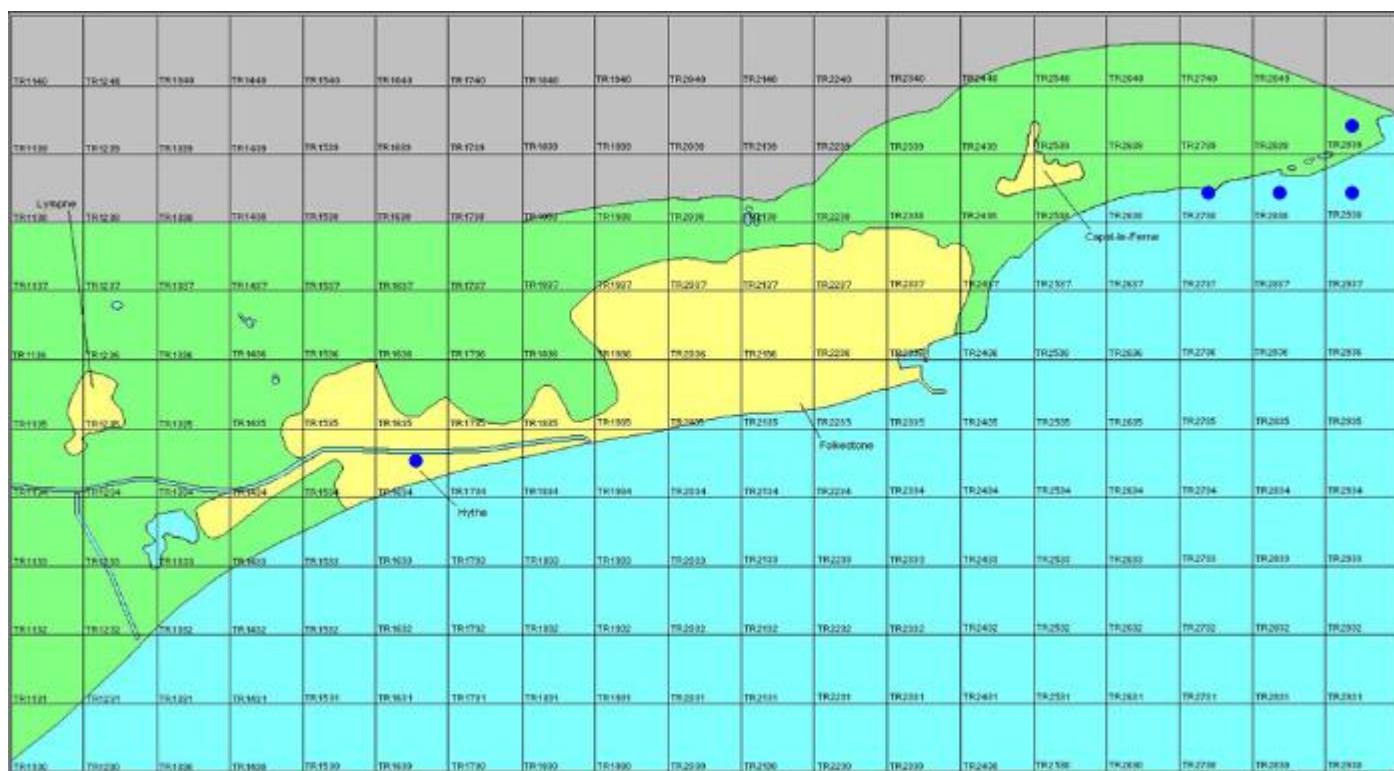


Figure 3: Wintering distribution of Glaucous Gull at Folkestone and Hythe (2007 – 2012 BTO/KOS Atlas)

The full list of records is as follows:

- 1961** Folkestone, immature, 1st March (D. F. Musson)
- 1980** Copt Point, first-winter, 26th January (R. F. Henson)
- 1981** Copt Point, sub-adult, 2nd February (A. Parker)
- 1983** Folkestone, second-winter, 21st March (P. Howe, R. Hollingsworth)
- 1983** Copt Point and Folkestone Harbour, first-winter, 3rd December to at least 14th April 1984 (R. Henson *et al*)
- 1984** Copt Point, first-winter (additional bird), 16th February (D. Weaver)
- 1984** Copt Point, first-winter (additional bird), 8th April (J. Tomlinson)
- 1985** Copt Point, one, 5th February (P. Howe)
- 1986** Copt Point, sub-adult, 10th January to 9th February (per Kent Bird Report)
- 1988** Copt Point, first-winter, 13th February (per Kent Bird Report)
- 1991** Mill Point, second-summer flew east, 10th May (I. A. Roberts)
- 1992** Copt Point, first-winter flew to Folkestone Harbour, 6th February (S. McMinn)
- 1995** Copt Point, first-winter, 13th January, presumed same flying over east Cheriton towards Copt Point on 26th January, also at Copt Point again on 13th February (D. A. Gibson)
- 1997** Samphire Hoe, first-winter roosting on Hoe then flew towards Dover, 25th January (D. A. Gibson)
- 1999** Folkestone Harbour, first-winter flew into outer harbour from east, then flew back east, 16th January (I. A. Roberts)
- 1999** Nickolls Quarry, adult on western side, 23rd January (R. K. Norman)
- 2000** Nickolls Quarry, immature on western side, 19th March (R. K. Norman)
- 2002** Copt Point, first-winter, 29th January (R. F. Henson)
- 2004** Folkestone Harbour, first-winter, 1st February (R. F. Henson)
- 2005** Mill Point, first-winter flew in from east and landed on sea, 21st March (I. A. Roberts)
- 2006** Nickolls Quarry, first-winter, 24th November (R. K. Norman)
- 2007** Hythe, two first-winters on beach opposite Stade Court, 13th November, photographed (I. A. Roberts)
- 2008** Samphire Hoe, first-winter, seen on six occasions between 1st January and 9th April (I. A. Roberts), commuting from in Dover Harbour where present from late December

2013 Samphire Hoe, first-winter flew east, 20th December (I. A. Roberts)

2014 Hythe, first-winter flew west, 27th December (I. A. Roberts)

2018 Samphire Hoe, first-winter flew west, 23rd January (P. Smith)



The two first-winter Glaucous Gulls at Hythe on 13th November 2007 (Ian Roberts)