

Nightjar

Caprimulgus europaeus

Category A

Very rare vagrant

3 records

Breeds widely across Europe, wintering in Africa. A scarce summer visitor to Kent, with occasional coastal migrants also recorded. Nesting areas are generally associated with chestnut coppice or conifer plantations, with the species favouring the more open areas with isolated, mature trees, often near bracken or newly planted conifers.

Henry Ulyett in his *Rambles of a Naturalist Round Folkestone* (1880) included the species in a list of those recorded in the neighbourhood of Folkestone, within a radius of six miles from the town hall. However this range extends further inland than the current Folkestone and Hythe area, so is not conclusive evidence of occurrence here.

On the 27th September 1953 the late William Nevin found a dead Nightjar in a garden in Hythe, which was assumed to have flown into some object while on nocturnal migration.

The only modern records are of one found roosting by day by Dale Gibson in Folkestone Warren on the 17th September 1996 and one which flew over Seabrook on 12th September 2014.

The two modern records are shown in figure 1.

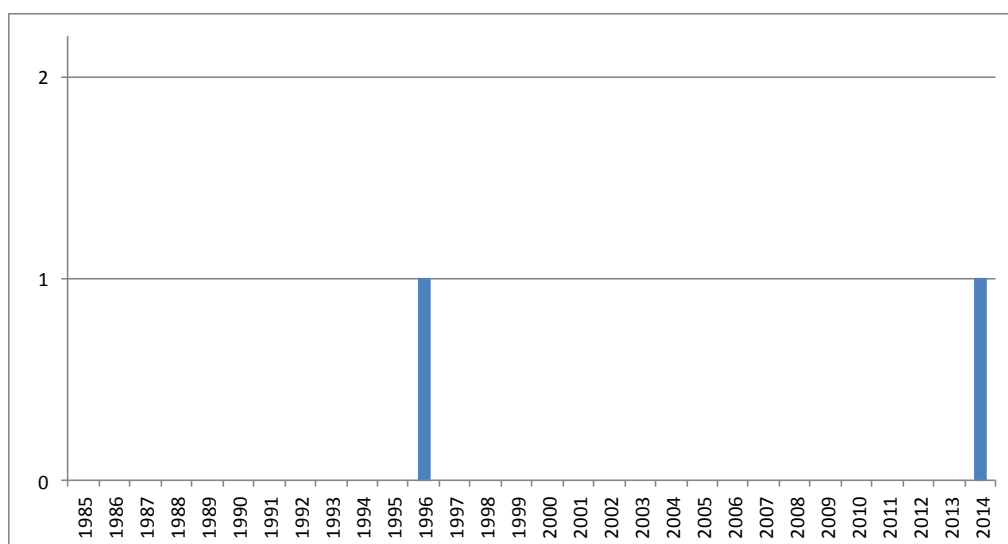


Figure 1: Nightjar records since 1985 at Folkestone and Hythe

All records occurred in September, between the 12th (week 37) and 27th (week 39), as shown in figure 2.

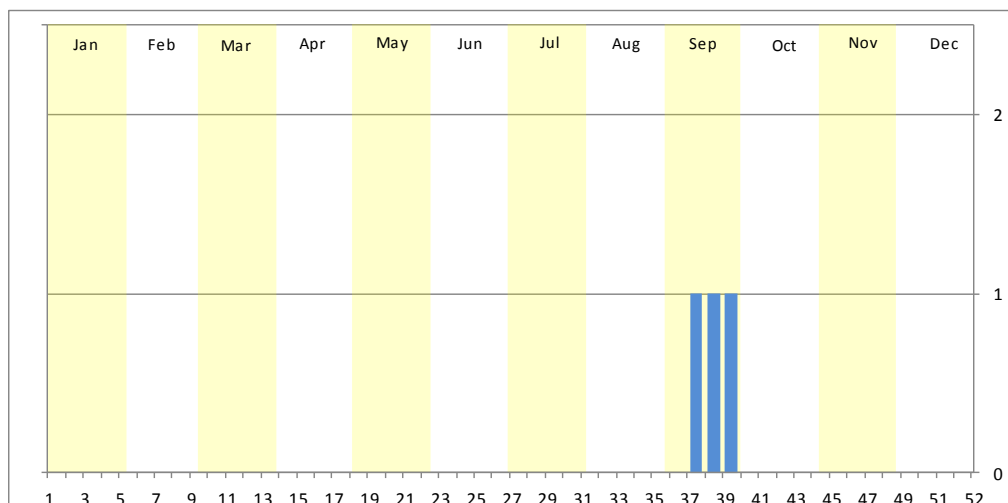


Figure 2: Nightjar records at Folkestone and Hythe by week

The full list of dated area records is as follows:

1953 Hythe, one found dead, 27th September (W. S. Nevin)

1996 Folkestone Warren, one, 17th September (D. A. Gibson, J. A. Gibson, I. A. Roberts, A. F. Roberts)

2014 Seabrook, one flew over, 12th September (A. Jupp)