

Thrush Nightingale

Luscinia luscinia

Category A

Very rare vagrant

1 record

Breeds from southern Norway, Denmark and northern Germany east through Poland and eastern Austria, into Russia and the former soviet states. Winters entirely in eastern Africa, largely south of the equator. The Thrush Nightingale extended its range west and north during the twentieth century and first bred in the Netherlands in 1995. Germany, Poland and Fenno-Scandia have all seen recent increases and a spread to the south-west.

There had been 187 records in Britain to the end of 2010. As shown in the graph below there was an increase in British records between 1950 and 1970 but numbers since have been relatively constant, though 2008 was a record year, with 13.

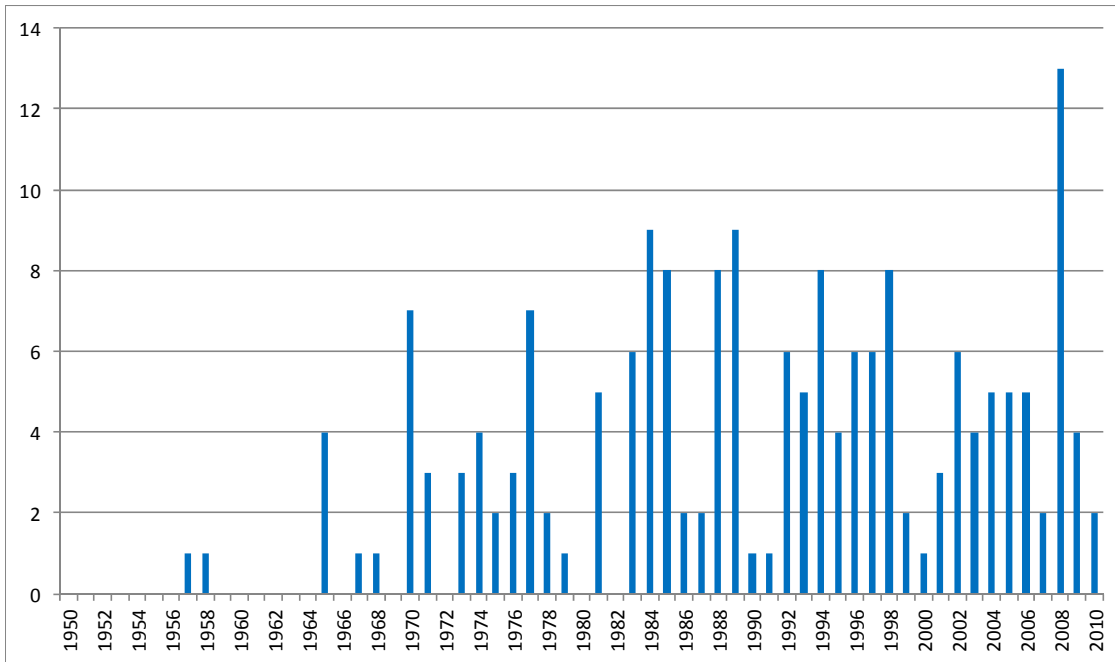


Figure 1: Thrush Nightingales in Britain since 1950

There have been seven Kent records, with the first in 1968, and the others since 1988. The first county record occurred in August, but all subsequent records have been in late spring, between 11th May and 9th June.

The only area record is as follows:

2008 Saltwood, male in song, 9th June (S. McMinn)

An account of the first area record is given below.

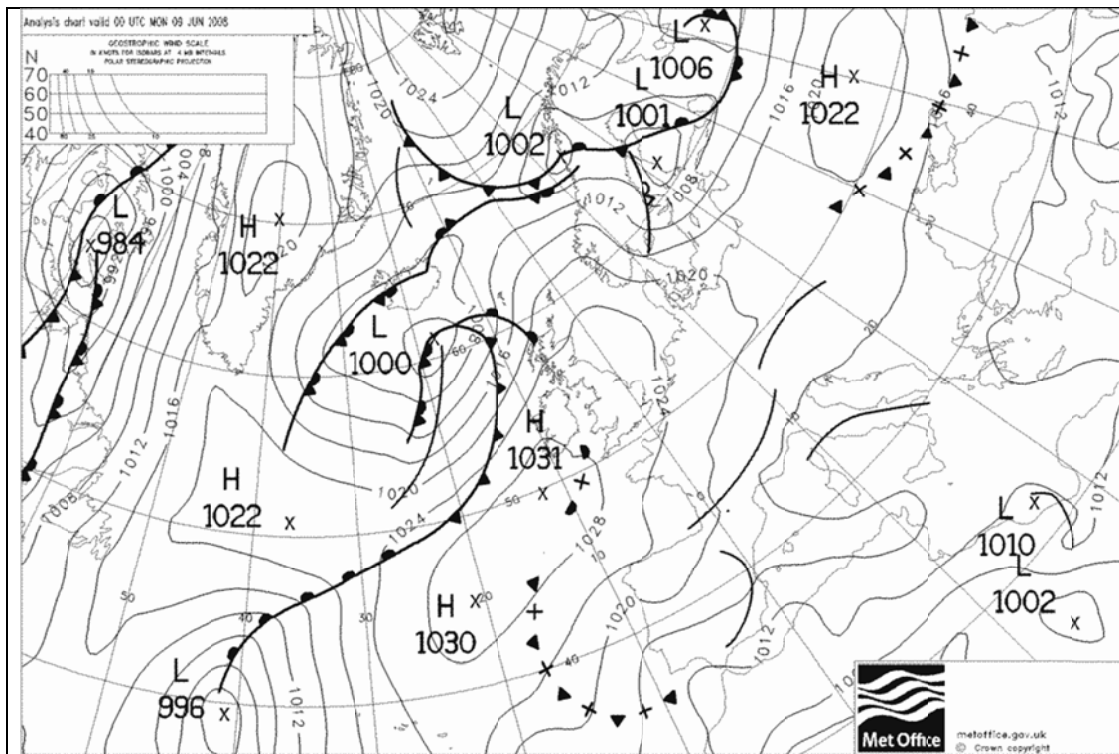
Thrush Nightingale at Saltwood

9th June 2008

(Sean McMinn)

Weather conditions:

High pressure stretched across from Asia, as the chart overleaf shows, with easterly winds encouraging birds to wander west.



Circumstances of the find:

On 9th June 2008 Sean McMinn was undertaking an environmental survey near to Saltwood Castle when he heard a Thrush Nightingale singing from an area of dense woodland. The bird could not be seen but was tape-recorded. It was not seen or heard subsequently.