

Rose-coloured Starling

Pastor roseus

Category A

Very rare vagrant

1 record

Within the Western Palearctic the core of its range is in Russia and Turkey, with smaller numbers into Greece and Albania. However it is an erratic, irruptive visitor to central and western Europe, with occasional breeding to the west of the usual limits, including an exceptional influx to the Hortobágy area of Hungary in 1995 when up to 1,700 pairs bred. It is an annual vagrant to Britain, mostly involving adults in late spring or early summer and juveniles in autumn. There had been 486 records nationally to the end of 2001 when the British Birds Rarities Committee removed it from the list of species which it assessed.



Rose-coloured Starling at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)

There had been 26 previous records in Kent. Only 14 of these occurred since 1970 but there have now been five in the last 5 years. Of the records since 1970 five were in spring/summer and eight in autumn, with the majority (5) in September. Where the age of the birds in autumn was given two were adults and four juveniles.

The only area record is as follows:

2012 Samphire Hoe, juvenile, 20th September, photographed (G. J. A. Burton, P. Holt, I. A. Roberts *et al*)

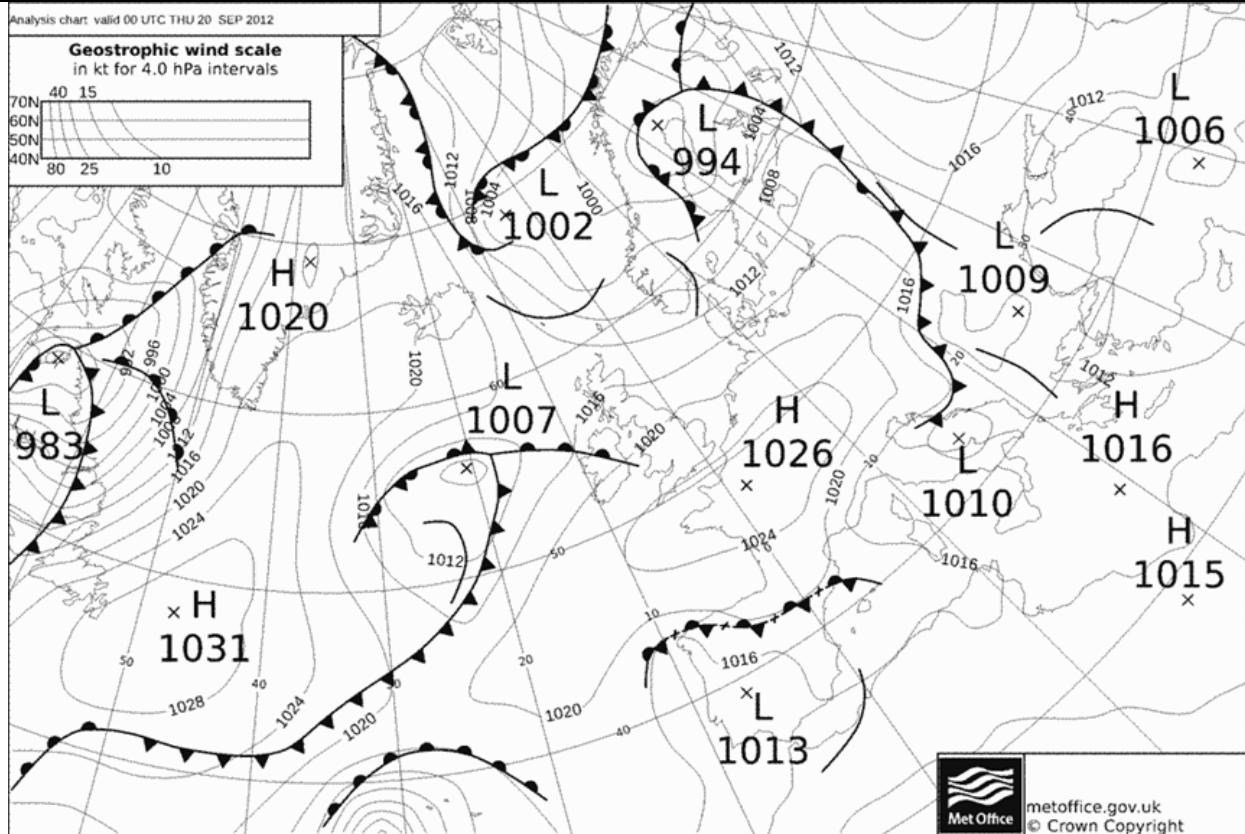
An account of the first area record is given below:

Rose-coloured Starling at Samphire Hoe 20th September 2012

(Geoff Burton, Paul Holt, Ian Roberts *et al*)

Weather conditions:

The night of the 19th/20th September was fairly cool and clear, with a light to moderate westerly wind. The synoptic chart at midnight shows an area of high pressure over the near continent.



Circumstances of the find:

At around 09:00 I received a call from Geoff Burton to say that he had found a Rose-coloured Starling at Samphire Hoe. Within 20 minutes I was on site and pleased to find the bird still present and showing well, and also being watched by Paul Holt. Over the next hour a number of local birders arrived and all were able to get good views as it showed well in the brambles above the back car park and in the bushes above the back track, where it had been first seen. The bird was still present in the early afternoon, but it, nor the small Starling flock with which it was associating, could be not located in the late afternoon.

Description of the bird:

Head and upperparts: Pale dun-brown, with whitish throat and eye-ring. Darker wing feathers with prominent pale fringes. Paler rump.

Underparts: Paler than upperparts, though with faint darker speckling, tending to whitish on belly. Darker underwings.

Bare parts: Relatively short, thick bill with prominent yellow base. Pale pinkish legs.

The record was accepted by the Kent Ornithological Society as published on their website:
<http://www.kentos.org.uk/Records/RoseColouredStarling.htm>.



Rose-coloured Starling at Samphire Hoe (Ian Roberts)



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