

# Serin

*Serinus serinus*

Category A

Rare migrant.

27 records

Breeds across central and southern Europe from France eastwards to the Baltic States, and south to the northern coast of Africa and Israel. Southern and western populations are largely sedentary but most birds vacate the northern and eastern parts of the range to winter further south and west, although small numbers may remain to overwinter. There was a major, mainly northward, expansion of its range which began in the nineteenth century and continued into the twentieth, reaching northern France in the 1950s. This led to an increase in records in Britain after 1960 and it first bred in 1967, but only ever sporadically (with up to two pairs breeding per annum until 2003) and did not become established. It appears to show a reluctance to cross open water, also being very scarce in Fenno-Scandia (Snow & Perrins, 1998, Holling *et al*, 2009).

It was formerly very rare in Britain and was considered to be a national rarity to the end of 1983, when the British Birds Rarities Committee removed it from the list of species which it assessed (Grant *et al*, 1982). At this time there was an average of 19 records per annum in Britain and this continued to increase to 37 per annum in the 1980s and 68 per annum in the 1990s, but there has been a subsequent decline to 51 per annum in the 2000s and 39 per annum between 2010 and 2018 (White & Kehoe, 2019). This would appear to reflect a decrease in the breeding population across Europe of 42% since 1980, which includes a sharp decline in the Netherlands (PECBMS 2017).

It is a scarce but regular coastal passage migrant in Kent (KOS, 2020), which has bred on occasion, most recently in 1996 (Holling *et al*, 2009).

It was first recorded locally on the 12<sup>th</sup> April 1993, when Dale Gibson saw one flying north-west over Capel Battery, but this was followed by three further sightings in spring (one flying in off the sea at Copt Point on the 24<sup>th</sup> April and singles flying west at Copt Point and Mill Point on the 10<sup>th</sup> May) and one in autumn (at Abbotscliffe on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October). The total of five remains the record in one year to date. It was thereafter recorded with some regularity and it occurred annually until 1998, with three more in 2000, but has become less frequent since, with just nine further records. The records by year are shown in figure 1.

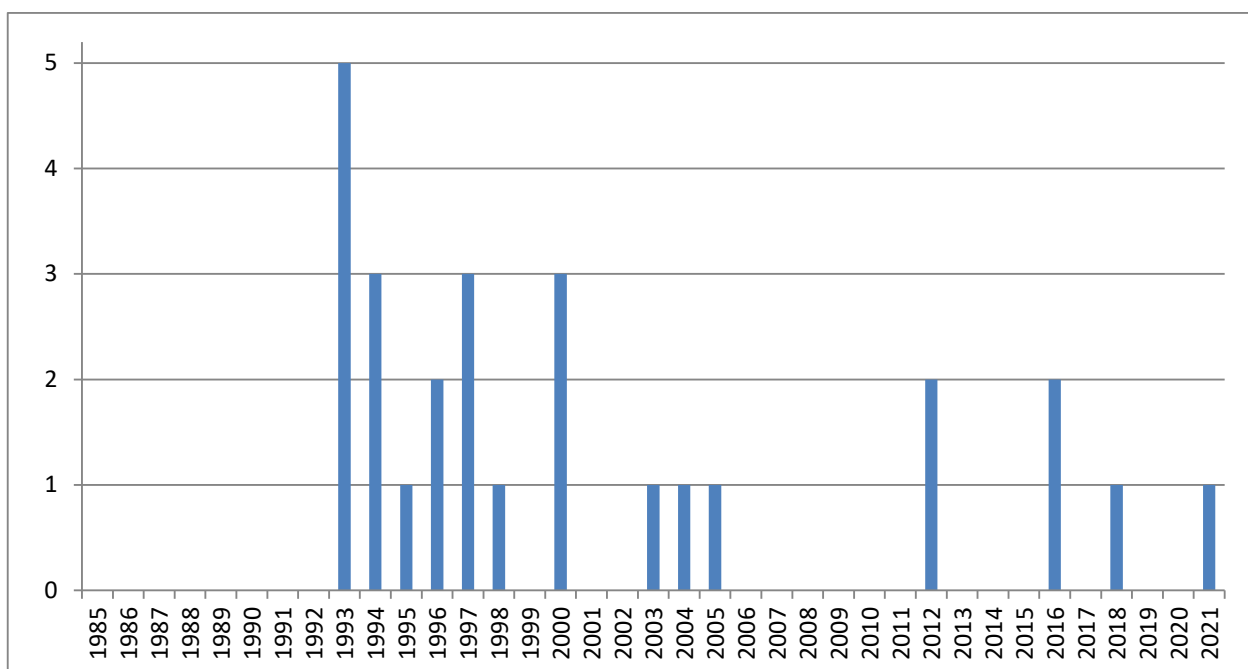


Figure 1: Serin records at Folkestone and Hythe

The records by week are given in figure 2. The majority (78%) of records have been in spring or early summer, between the 3<sup>rd</sup> April (week 14) and the 1<sup>st</sup> June (week 22). There has been one mid-summer record (on the 25<sup>th</sup> July 2012), with the others being noted in autumn, between the 22<sup>nd</sup> October (week 43) and 21<sup>st</sup> November (week 47). The records by week are given in figure 2.

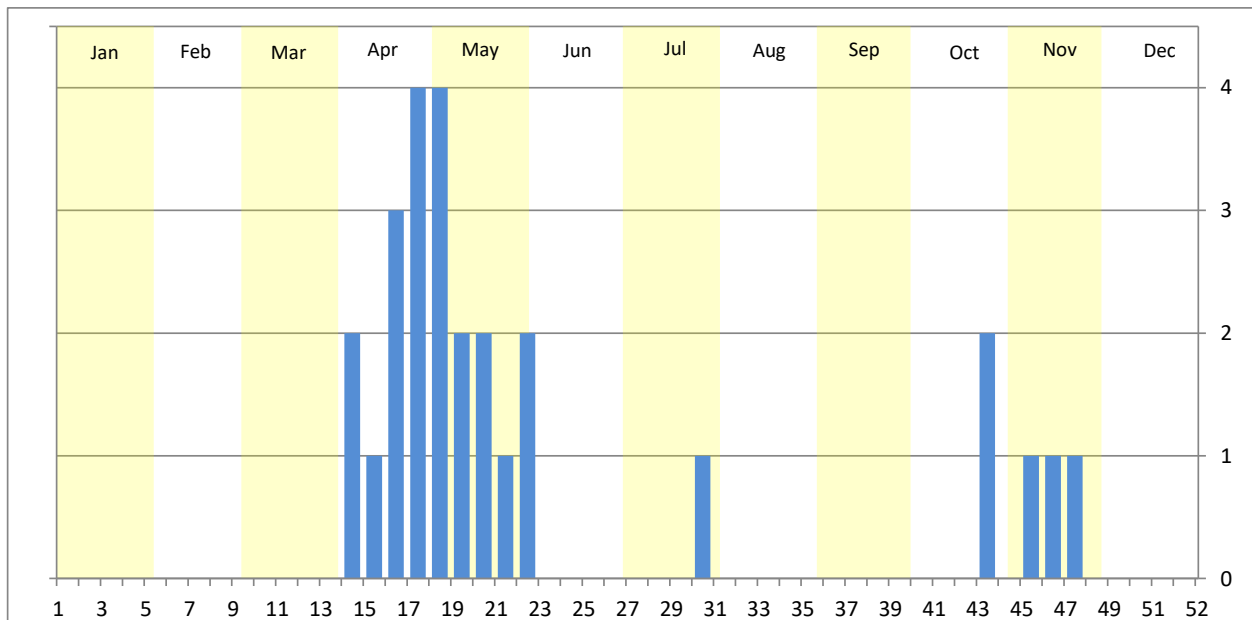


Figure 2: Serin records at Folkestone and Hythe by week

Figure 3 shows the distribution of records by tetrad. Fifteen records have been at the cliffs, between Capel Battery and Abbotscliffe, with a further six at Copt Point and two at Samphire Hoe. The other sightings relate to singles at Folkestone Harbour, Mill Point, Cheriton and Hythe.



Figure 3: Distribution of all Serin records at Folkestone and Hythe by tetrad

The full list of records is as follows:

- 1993** Capel Battery, one flew north-west, 12<sup>th</sup> April (D. A. Gibson)
- 1993** Copt Point, female flew in off the sea, 24<sup>th</sup> April (D. A. Gibson)
- 1993** Mill Point, one flew west, 10<sup>th</sup> May (I. A. Roberts)
- 1993** Copt Point, one flew west, 10<sup>th</sup> May (D. A. Gibson), different to above based on times of observation
- 1993** Abbotscliffe, one, 22<sup>nd</sup> October (D. A. Gibson)
- 1994** Capel-le-Ferne, male, 29<sup>th</sup> April (D. A. Gibson)
- 1994** Capel-le-Ferne, one flew east, 1<sup>st</sup> May (D. A. Gibson)
- 1994** Capel Battery, one flew west, 1<sup>st</sup> June (D. A. Gibson)
- 1995** Copt Point, male flew in off the sea, 14<sup>th</sup> May (D. A. Gibson)
- 1996** Capel-le-Ferne, one flew west north-west, 8<sup>th</sup> November (D. A. Gibson)
- 1996** Copt Point, one flew west, 21<sup>st</sup> November (D. A. Gibson)

**1997** Abbotscliffe, female, flew north-west, 3<sup>rd</sup> April (D. A. Gibson)  
**1997** Capel-le-Ferne Café, one flew in/west, 8<sup>th</sup> April (I. A. Roberts)  
**1997** Copt Point, male flew in off the sea, 3<sup>rd</sup> May (D. A. Gibson, I. A. Roberts)  
**1998** Abbotscliffe, one flew in/east, 27<sup>th</sup> April (I. A. Roberts)  
**2000** Samphire Hoe, one, 16<sup>th</sup> May (P. Holt)  
**2000** Abbotscliffe, one flew in off the sea, 20<sup>th</sup> May (D. A. Gibson, I. A. Roberts)  
**2000** Samphire Hoe, one, 27<sup>th</sup> May (P. Holt)  
**2003** Abbotscliffe, one, 15<sup>th</sup> November (I. A. Roberts)  
**2004** Copt Point, one flew east, 27<sup>th</sup> April (I. A. Roberts)  
**2005** Capel-le-Ferne, male singing briefly near Royal Oak pub, 30<sup>th</sup> April (I. A. Roberts)  
**2012** Cheriton, one flew north, 25<sup>th</sup> July (D. A. Gibson)  
**2012** Abbotscliffe, one flew east, 24<sup>th</sup> October (I. A. Roberts)  
**2016** Abbotscliffe, one flew east, 17<sup>th</sup> April (I. A. Roberts)  
**2016** Hythe, one flew in/west, 5<sup>th</sup> May (S. McMinn)  
**2018** Folkestone Harbour, singing male, 19<sup>th</sup> April (per BirdGuides)  
**2021** Abbotscliffe, one flew east, 19<sup>th</sup> April (I. A. Roberts)

### **References**

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### **Acknowledgements**

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