

Collared Dove

Streptopelia decaocto

Category A

Breeding resident and passage migrant.

The Collared Dove appears to have its origins in the Indian subcontinent and then to have spread both east, to northern China, and west to Turkey before the nineteenth century. The reason for its range expansion is not obvious and it has been suggested that it may have been introduced by man to the Balkans during the period of the Ottoman Empire. From Turkey it began to colonise Europe during the 1930s and reached Britain in 1955 where it first bred in Norfolk (Snow & Perrins, 1998, Clements *et al*, 2015).

It was first recorded in Kent in 1957, when a pair bred, and numbers increased greatly in the county in 1960, when the first local sighting occurred with two seen by David Musson at Etchingham on the 21st June.



Collared Dove at West Hythe (Brian Harper)

Roger Norman recalled that it had been present in the Hythe area since 1961 and noted the first at Nickolls Quarry on the 18th July 1965. The Kent Bird Report for 1966 mentioned “large numbers at Folkestone during the year”, whilst a flock of 330 were seen at Cheriton on the 29th October 1967, in which year there were also “large numbers at Folkestone and Hythe”.

Breeding distribution

Figure 1 shows the breeding distribution by tetrad based on the results of the 2007-13 BTO/KOS atlas fieldwork.

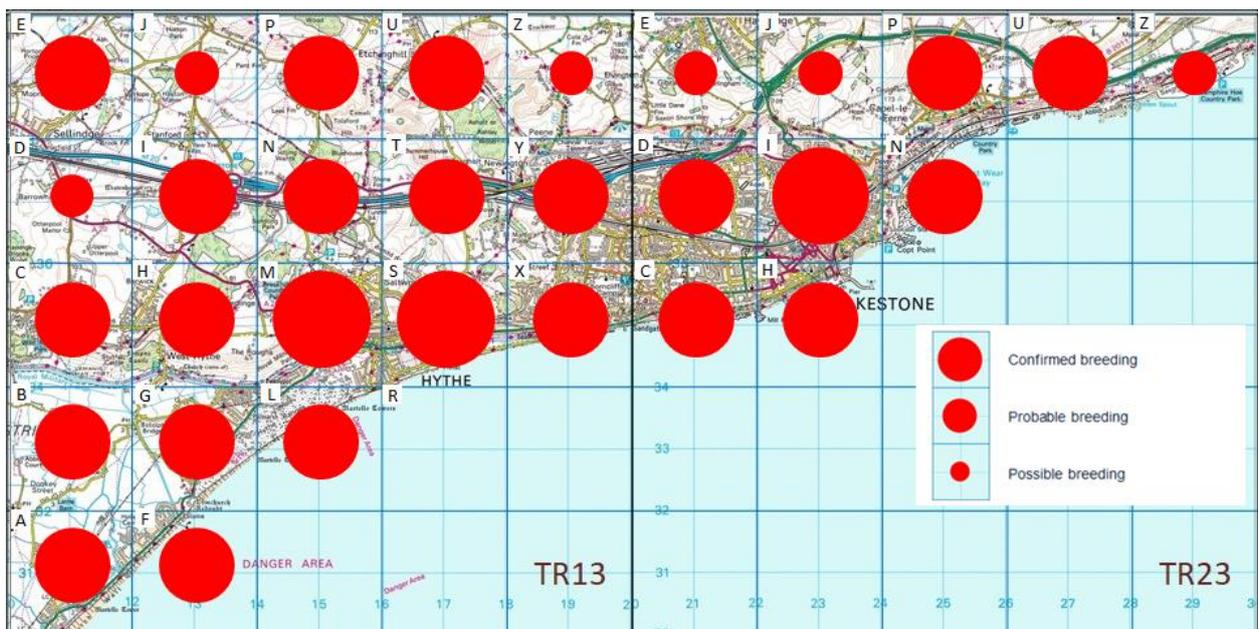


Figure 1: Breeding distribution of Collared Dove at Folkestone and Hythe by tetrad (2007-13 BTO/KOS Atlas)

Breeding was confirmed in three tetrads, with probable breeding in 21 more and possible breeding in six others. The table below shows how this compares to previous atlases (Taylor *et al* 1981, Henderson & Hodge 1998). The confirmed and probable breeding categories have been combined to account for differing definitions of these in the first atlas.

Breeding atlases	1967 - 1973		1988 - 1994		2007 - 2013	
Possible	5	(16%)	1	(3%)	6	(19%)
Probable/Confirmed	20	(65%)	27	(87%)	24	(77%)
Total	25	(81%)	28	(90%)	30	(97%)

It was already widespread by the end of the first atlas survey and the few remaining gaps have since been infilled. They reach highest density in suburban areas with large gardens, typically nesting in ornamental conifers and the latest county estimate is around 50,000 breeding pairs.

Non-breeding distribution

Figure 2 shows the distribution of all records of Collared Dove by tetrad, with records in 30 tetrads (97%).

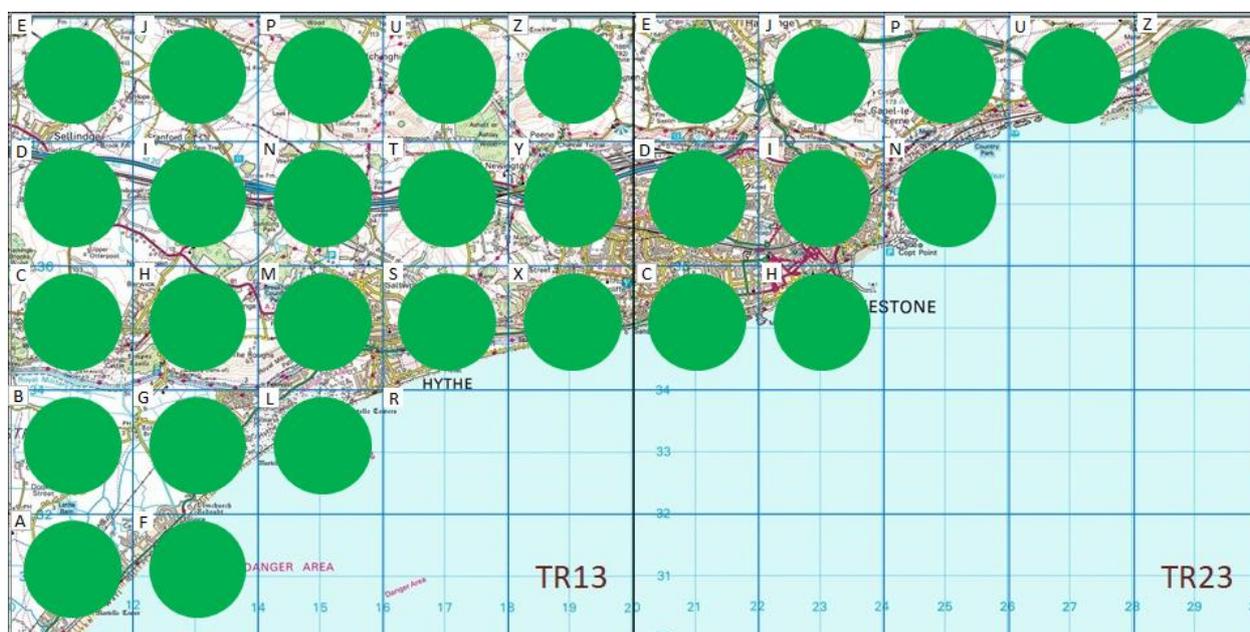


Figure 2: Distribution of all Collared Dove records at Folkestone and Hythe by tetrad

The huge numbers noted in the 1960s have not been matched in recent years and counts of 50 or more have been noteworthy. In the 1990s the highest counts came from the Capel-le-Ferne area, where there were 60 in January 1993, 60 in November 1997 and 66 in September 1998, with 59 in stubble at nearby Crete Road East in September 2000.



Collared Dove at Hythe Redoubt (Brian Harper)



Collared Dove at West Hythe (Brian Harper)

In August 2002, 52 were counted along the Botolph's Bridge Road and the following autumn the remains of a sweetcorn crop in a field on the western side of Nickolls Quarry attracted up to 120 in September. In December 2015 up to 50 were at Grange Farm, Saltwood.



Collared Dove at West Hythe (Brian Harper)



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Small numbers noted at coastal sites in spring and autumn either involve dispersal or perhaps continuing immigration from the continent. Most records involve ones and twos but larger counts in spring have involved four arriving in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 22nd April 1992, three in/east there on the 1st June 1992, three east there on the 12th March 1997, three east there on the 19th May 1999 and four east at Capel-le-Ferne on the 14th May 2016.

In autumn movements of five or more are of note: 9 west at Capel-le-Ferne on the 22nd October 2000, 12 west there on the 26th October 2000, 7 in/west at Abbotscliffe on the 10th October 2003, 9 west there on the 23rd October 2005, 14 west there on the 5th November 2005, 6 west there on the 27th October 2006 and 5 east there on the 14th October 2012.



Collared Dove at West Hythe (Brian Harper)



Collared Dove at Samphire Hoe (Ian Roberts)

References

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Henderson, A. & Hodge, T. 1998. The Kent Breeding Bird Atlas 1988-94. *Kent Bird Report* 1996: 134-272.

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Taylor, D., Davenport, D. & Flegg, J. 1981. *Birds of Kent*. Kent Ornithological Society

Acknowledgements

The tetrad map images were produced from the Ordnance Survey [Get-a-map service](#) and are reproduced with kind permission of [Ordnance Survey](#).