

## Rose-coloured Starling

*Pastor roseus*

Category A

Very rare vagrant

2 records

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.

It is an annual vagrant to Britain, mostly involving adults in late spring or early summer and juveniles in autumn. There had been 823 records nationally to the end of 2001 when the British Birds Rarities Committee removed it from the list of species which it assessed due to the increasing frequency with which it was occurring.



Rose-coloured Starling at Samphire Hoe (Phil Smith)

There had been a steady increase from 3.4 per year in the 1950s to 18 in the 1990s before there were two remarkable influxes of 45 in 2000 and 67 in 2001 (BBRC, 2020). The following year saw an even more exceptional influx of 195 (which is still a record total to date) with another 67 in 2003, and the mean for the 2000s was 56, with 37 in the 2000s to 2017, White & Kehoe, 2019).

There had been 37 Kent records to the end of 2018, including a record total of six in the spring/early summer of 2018 (KOS, 2020). The majority (59%) of the dated records have occurred in spring/summer, with 31% in autumn and the others in the winter period.

There have been two area records, both in the last decade, as shown in figure 1.

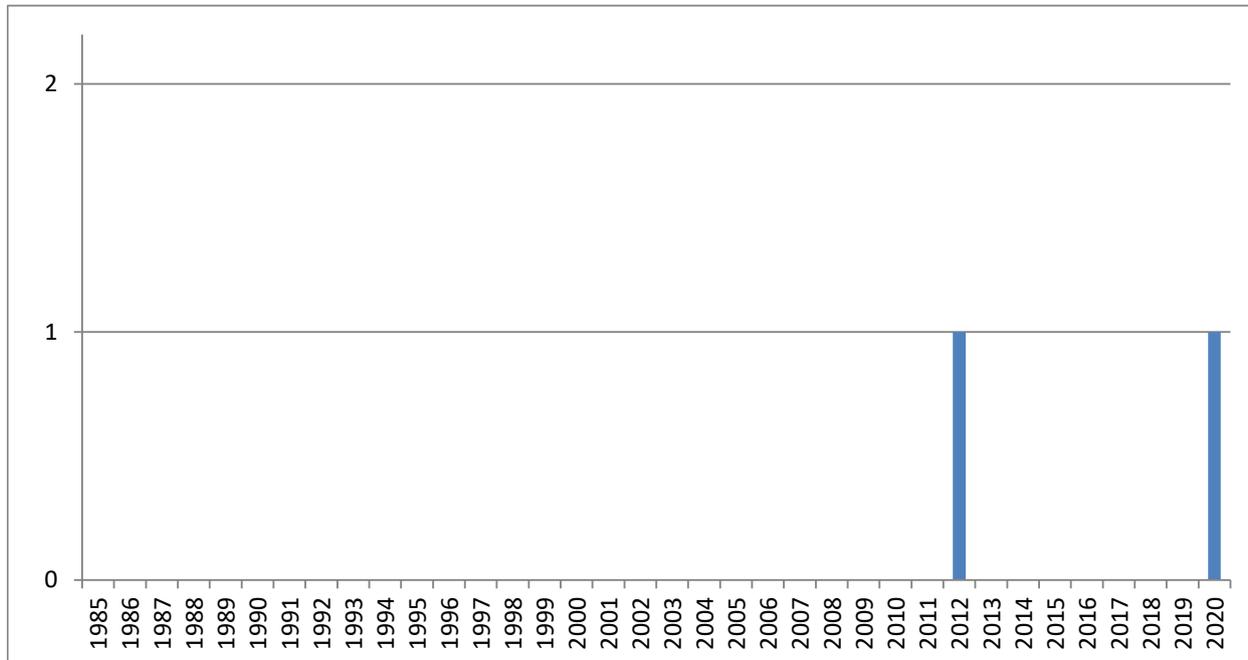


Figure 1: Rose-coloured Starling records at Folkestone and Hythe

There have been single records in June and September, as shown in figure 2.

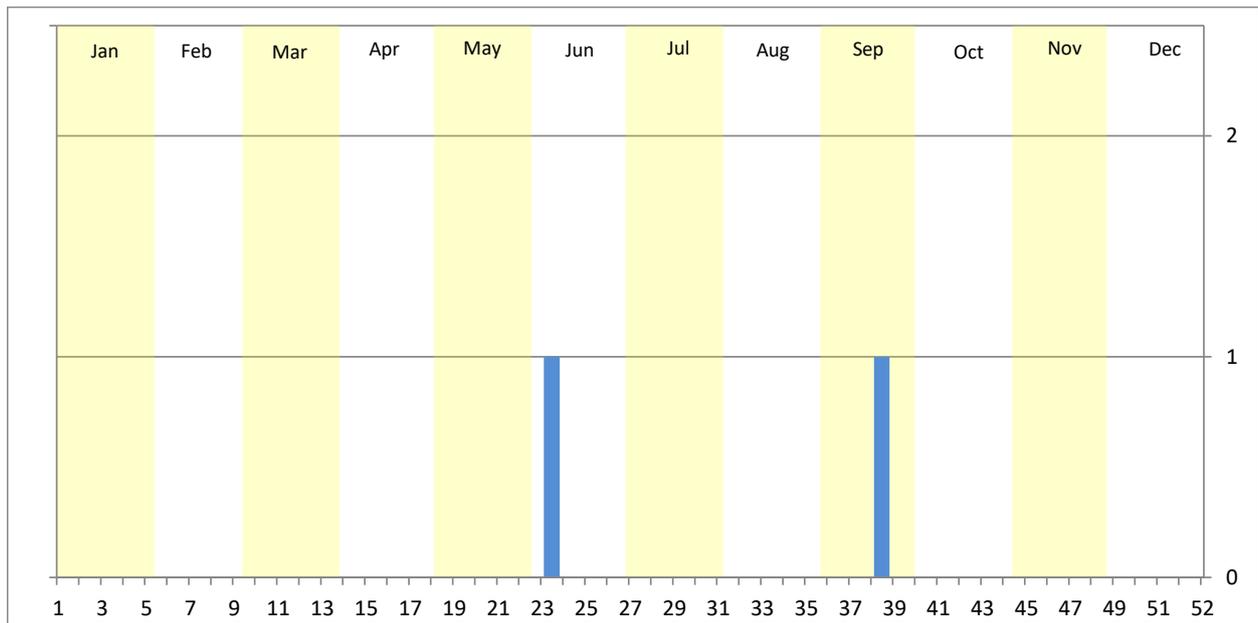


Figure 2: Rose-coloured Starling records at Folkestone and Hythe by week

Figure 3 shows the distribution of records by tetrad.

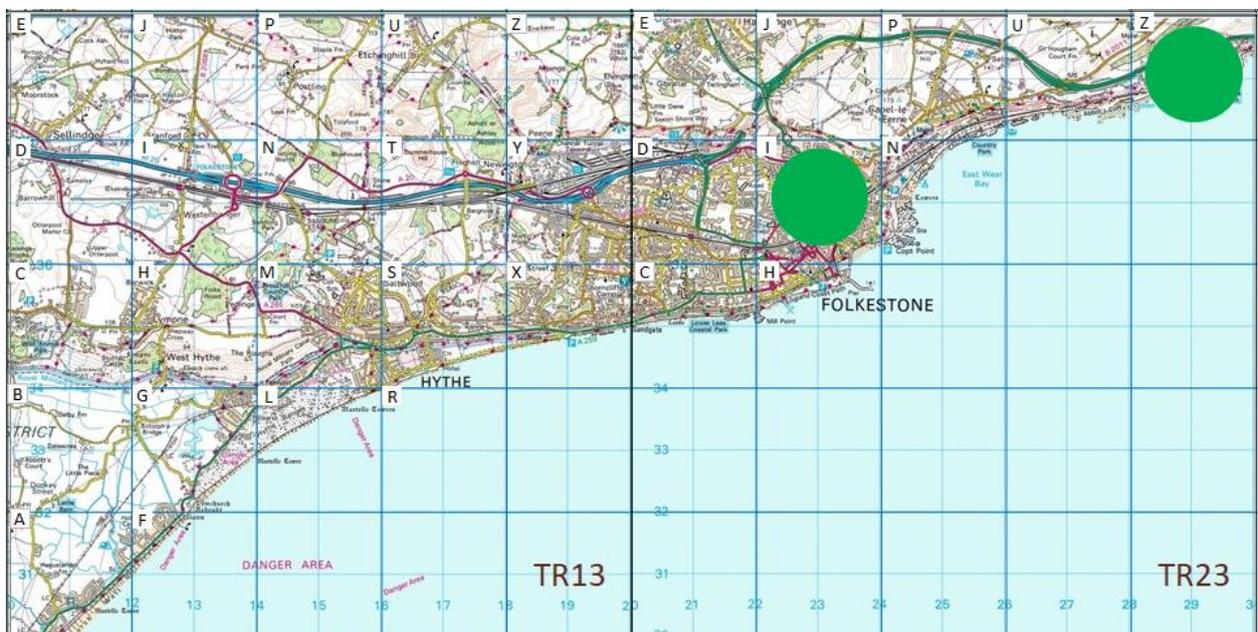


Figure 3: Distribution of all Rose-coloured Starling records at Folkestone and Hythe by tetrad

The full list of records is as follows:

- 2012** Saphire Hoe, juvenile, 20<sup>th</sup> September, photographed (G. J. A. Burton, P. Holt, I. A. Roberts *et al*)
- 2020** Near Tram Road, Folkestone, probably first-summer, 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> June, photographed (A. & M. Fletcher)

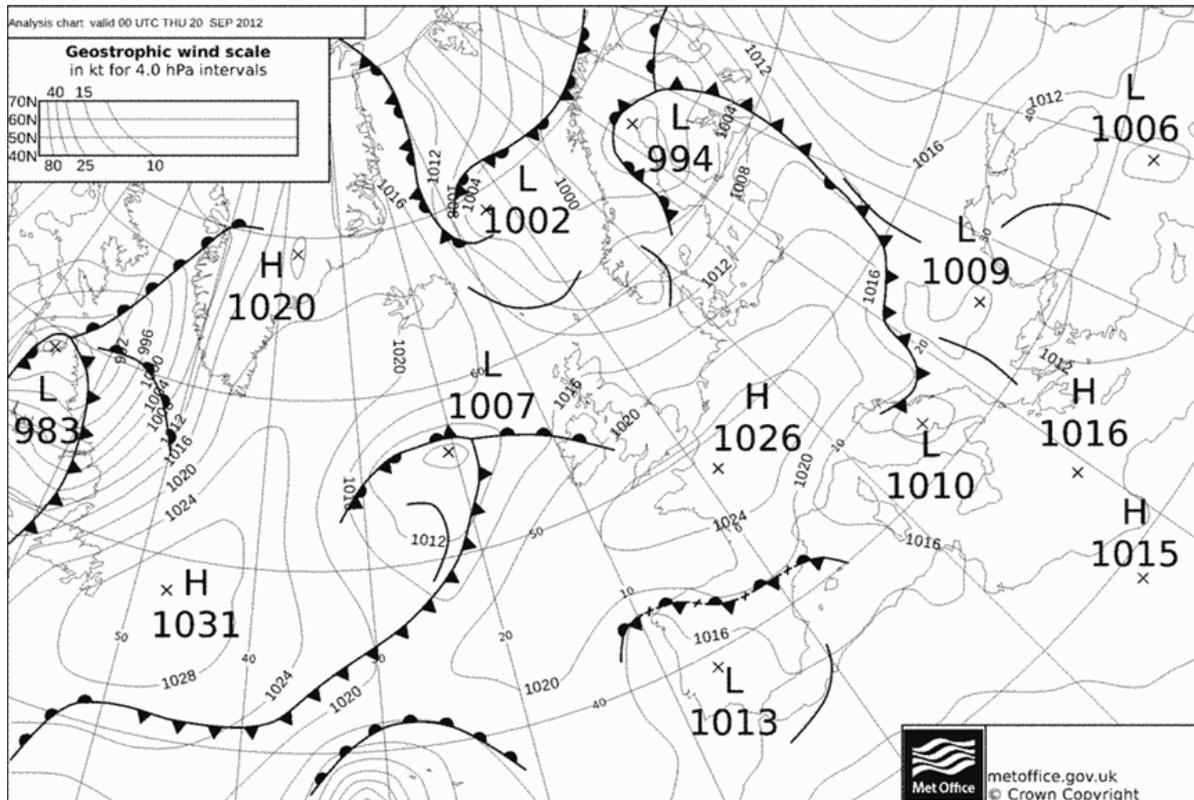
An account of the first area record is given below.

## Rose-coloured Starling at Samphire Hoe 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012

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

### Weather conditions:

The night of the 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> 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 and appears in their bird report for the year.

## **References**

BBRC statistics: <https://www.bbrc.org.uk/main-information/statistics> (accessed 2020)

Kent Bird Report, 2012. Kent Ornithological Society

KOS Kent list: <https://kentos.org.uk/kent-list> (accessed 2020)

White, S. & Kehoe, C., 2019. Report on scarce migrant birds in Britain in 2017. *British Birds*: 112: 444-468.

## **Acknowledgements**

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



Rose-coloured Starling at Folkestone (Alison Fletcher)



Rose-coloured Starling at Samphire Hoe (Ian Roberts)



Rose-coloured Starling at Samphire Hoe (Ian Roberts)