

# Balearic Shearwater

*Puffinus mauretanicus*

Category A

Rare passage migrant

42 records

Breeds only on the Balearic Islands. After breeding it disperses into Mediterranean then through Straits of Gibraltar into the Atlantic. The majority winter in the Bay of Biscay, with some as north as the Irish and North Seas. Most of the population leave the Mediterranean from May, peaking off Gibraltar in late June, and present in English Channel and North Sea mainly July to October (occasionally as early as mid-May or as late as December) (Snow & Perrins, 1998). A scarce but regular summer and autumn visitor to Kent, particularly off Dungeness (KOS, 2020).

It was not recorded in the Folkestone and Hythe area until 1995, but there have now been 42 sightings over the last 26 years, with a particularly good spell from 1997 to 1999 (with a total of 15), as shown in figure 1.

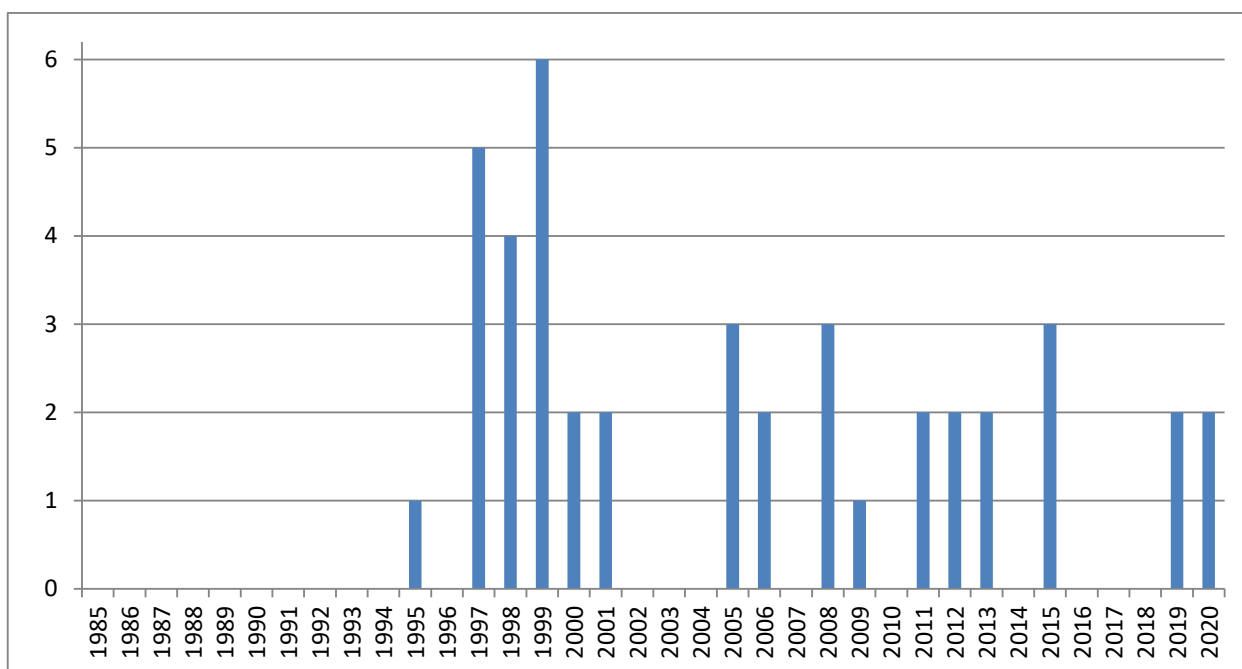


Figure 1: Balearic Shearwater records at Folkestone and Hythe

The records by week are given in figure 2.

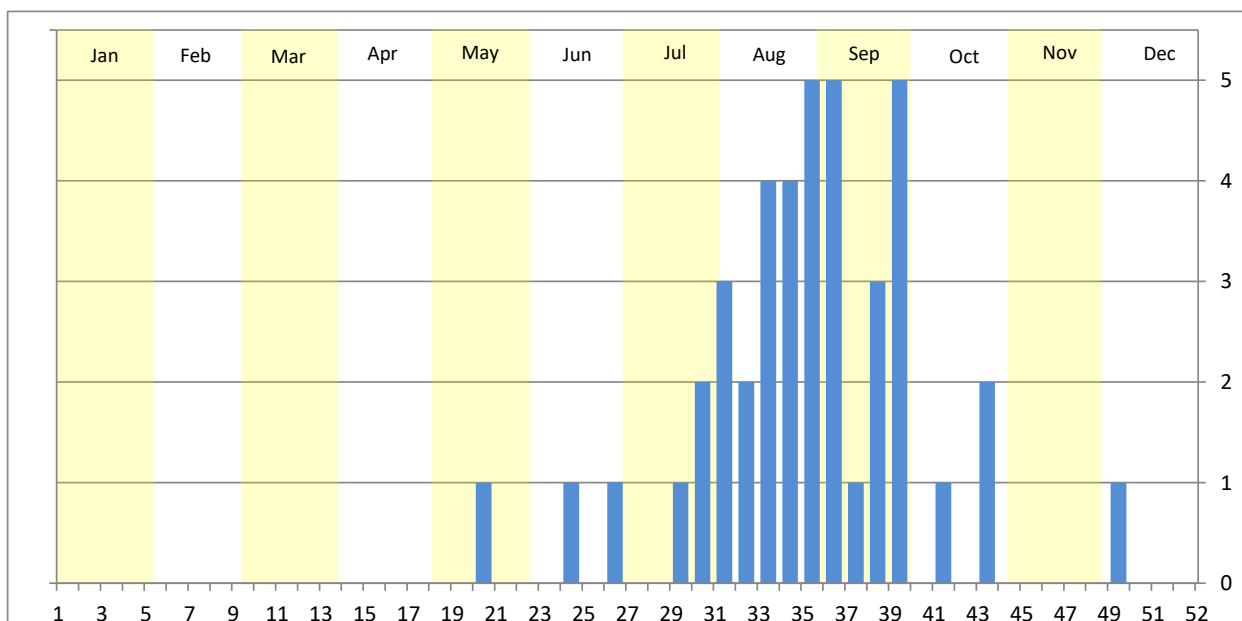


Figure 2: Balearic Shearwater records at Folkestone and Hythe by week

The majority of records (30) refer to single birds but the other 12 involve multiple sightings, with a maximum of four on the 18th September 1999 and 18th August 2013.

Figure 3 shows the distribution of records by tetrad.



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

The majority of records are from Copt Point (25), with nine at Samphire Hoe, three at Hythe, three in the Hythe Ranges/Hythe Redoubt area and two at Mill Point.

The full list of records is as follows:

- 1995** Copt Point, one flew west, 5<sup>th</sup> September (D. A. Gibson)
- 1997** Copt Point, one flew east, 29<sup>th</sup> August (D. A. Gibson)
- 1997** Copt Point, three flew west, 30<sup>th</sup> August (D. A. Gibson, I. A. Roberts)
- 1997** Copt Point, one, 31<sup>st</sup> August (D. A. Gibson)
- 1997** Copt Point, one flew west, 4<sup>th</sup> September (D. A. Gibson)
- 1997** Copt Point, one flew west, 8<sup>th</sup> October (D. A. Gibson)
- 1998** Copt Point, two flew west, 27<sup>th</sup> June (D. A. Gibson, I. A. Roberts)
- 1998** Copt Point, one flew west, 23<sup>rd</sup> July (I. A. Roberts)
- 1998** Copt Point, two flew east, 9<sup>th</sup> September (D. A. Gibson)
- 1998** Copt Point, one flew west, 24<sup>th</sup> October (I. A. Roberts)
- 1999** Copt Point, one flew east, 18<sup>th</sup> May (D. A. Gibson)
- 1999** Mill Point, one flew west, 20<sup>th</sup> July (I. A. Roberts)
- 1999** Copt Point, one flew west, 14<sup>th</sup> August (I. A. Roberts)
- 1999** Copt Point, one flew west, 18<sup>th</sup> August (D. A. Gibson)
- 1999** Copt Point, four flew west, 18<sup>th</sup> September (D. A. Gibson, I. A. Roberts)
- 1999** Copt Point, two flew east, 20<sup>th</sup> September (D. A. Gibson)
- 2000** Copt Point, two flew west, 19<sup>th</sup> September (D. A. Gibson, I. A. Roberts)
- 2000** Copt Point, one flew west, 27<sup>th</sup> September (I. A. Roberts)
- 2001** Hythe Redoubt, one flew east, 6<sup>th</sup> August (R. K. Norman)
- 2001** Copt Point, one flew west, 18<sup>th</sup> August (I. A. Roberts)
- 2005** Mill Point, one flew west, 15<sup>th</sup> June (I. A. Roberts)
- 2005** Copt Point, one flew west, 25<sup>th</sup> August (I. A. Roberts)
- 2005** Samphire Hoe, one flew east, 11<sup>th</sup> September (I. A. Roberts)
- 2006** Copt Point, one flew west, 31<sup>st</sup> July (I. A. Roberts)
- 2006** Copt Point, one flew east then west, 3<sup>rd</sup> September (I. A. Roberts)
- 2008** Samphire Hoe, one on sea, 23<sup>rd</sup> July (I. A. Roberts)
- 2008** Samphire Hoe, two flew west, 1<sup>st</sup> August (I. A. Roberts)

**2008** Samphire Hoe, one flew west, 3<sup>rd</sup> August (I. A. Roberts)  
**2009** Hythe Ranges, one flew west, 6<sup>th</sup> December (I. A. Roberts)  
**2011** Hythe Ranges, one offshore, 11<sup>th</sup> August (S. McMinn)  
**2011** Copt Point, one flew west, 6<sup>th</sup> September (I. A. Roberts)  
**2012** Copt Point, six flew west, 27<sup>th</sup> August (I. A. Roberts)  
**2012** Copt Point, two flew east, 23<sup>rd</sup> September (D. A. Gibson)  
**2013** Samphire Hoe, four flew west, 18<sup>th</sup> August (I. A. Roberts)  
**2013** Samphire Hoe, one flew west, 25<sup>th</sup> October (I. A. Roberts)  
**2015** Hythe, two flew west, 25<sup>th</sup> August (I. A. Roberts)  
**2015** Hythe, two flew west, 26<sup>th</sup> August (I. A. Roberts)  
**2015** Hythe, one flew west, 24<sup>th</sup> September (I. A. Roberts)  
**2019** Copt Point, one flew west, 27<sup>th</sup> September (M. J. Varley)  
**2019** Samphire Hoe, one flew west, 29<sup>th</sup> September (S. M. Cutt)  
**2020** Samphire Hoe, one flew east, 22<sup>nd</sup> August (S. M. Cutt)  
**2020** Samphire Hoe, two flew west, 30<sup>th</sup> August (S. M. Cutt)

In addition, there is a record of three unidentified shearwaters which flew west past Folkestone Pier on the 19<sup>th</sup> August 2013 which seems very likely to relate to this species.

### ***References***

Kent Bird Reports, 2018. Kent Ornithological Society

Snow, D. & Perrins, C.M., 1998. The Birds of the Western Palearctic. Oxford University Press.

### ***Acknowledgements***

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