

Whimbrel

Numenius phaeopus

Regenbrachvogel - Zarapito trinador - Courlis corlieu - Chiurlo piccolo – Regenwulp - Sredny

Common passage migrant, mainly in spring

The first arrivals normally appear by mid April and numbers quickly build up to reach a spring peak during the last week of April or first week of May. This is when there are very few of the larger Curlew here. Numbers then rapidly decline and few are recorded in June, but birds reappear in July and a few stay into August and September. This is one of the largest roosts of this species in Britain and Rye Bay is an important staging post between their African wintering and Arctic breeding grounds.

During the day Whimbrel feed on invertebrates in saltmarsh and sheep grazed pasture throughout Rye Bay, but at dusk they form a single roost within the electric fenced areas of the Nature Reserve, and they depart at first light. Ternery Pool was formerly the main roosting site, although the Quarry has been the favoured locality in recent years following excavation work there during the early 1990s. Numbers have increased considerably since 1980, and have been especially high since 1994 with increased counting effort at dawn.



Peak Counts

601 on 4 May 1996

416 on 2 May 1994

410 on 2 May 1991

Early Dates

29 Mar 1999

3 Apr 1985 & 2007

5 Apr 1982 & 1986

Late Dates

4 Nov 2004

20 Oct 1997

19 Oct 1989

Annual Maximum Spring Counts of Whimbrel at Rye Harbour

