

Kittiwakes - a good season ahead

Contributed by Charleen O'Donoghue
Tuesday, 30 June 2009

Source RSPB

"The first chicks have begun to hatch at Seaford's Splash Point, East Sussex, indicating a successful year for this important seabird colony.

Kittiwakes, medium-sized gulls with black wing tips, only come to shore once a year to breed. The East Sussex cliff-top colony, made up of around 700 pairs, has become increasingly significant in recent years as Kittiwakes struggle to breed in strongholds along the coast of Northern England, Scotland and Wales.

Declines at these larger colonies are thought to be connected with a lack of sand-eel fish in the seas around the sites, most likely linked to climate change. The sand-eel is the Kittiwake's main food source. Population declines have led to the Kittiwake being amber listed as species of conservation concern."

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