

Little Stint

Calidris minuta

Category A

Very rare vagrant.

12 records

Breeds in high-arctic coastal tundra in northern Norway and northern Russia eastwards across Siberia to the Chukotskiy peninsula. Winters mainly in Africa, around the Indian Ocean and in Europe in variable numbers, notably around the Mediterranean Basin. Occurs on passage in Britain in spring and autumn (Snow & Perrins, 1998).



Little Stint with Dunlin at Nickolls Quarry (Ian Roberts)

It is a regular passage migrant in Kent, with a few overwintering in most years (KOS, 2020).

It was first recorded locally in 1956, when Geoffrey Manser found one at the site now known as Nickolls Quarry on the 9th September, and there were further sightings in the two subsequent years, with Roger Norman noting one on the 17th September 1957, with two there the next day and three on the 19th September, and a spring bird on the 9th May 1958.

Over 30 years elapsed before a further sighting occurred at this site, with one present on the 13th September 1992. The next record involved three flying in off the sea at Abbotscliffe on the 21st September 1996 which were part of a major influx of Little Stints and Curlew Sandpipers to the eastern coast of Britain at this time, with a flock of three of the latter species seen flying east over Capel Battery on the following day.

Little Stints were then recorded at Nickolls Quarry in five consecutive years from 1998. During this time an area of shallow water, islets and mud existed at the site, which attracted a range of migrant waders, but the habitat has since been filled in. On the 11th May 2002 the site hosted singles of both Little and Temminck's Stint, offering a unique opportunity to see both species together in the Folkestone and Hythe area.

A decade after the last at Nickolls Quarry, one was attracted to a flooded field at the Willop Basin in October 2012, with another there the following November.

The records by year are shown in figure 1.

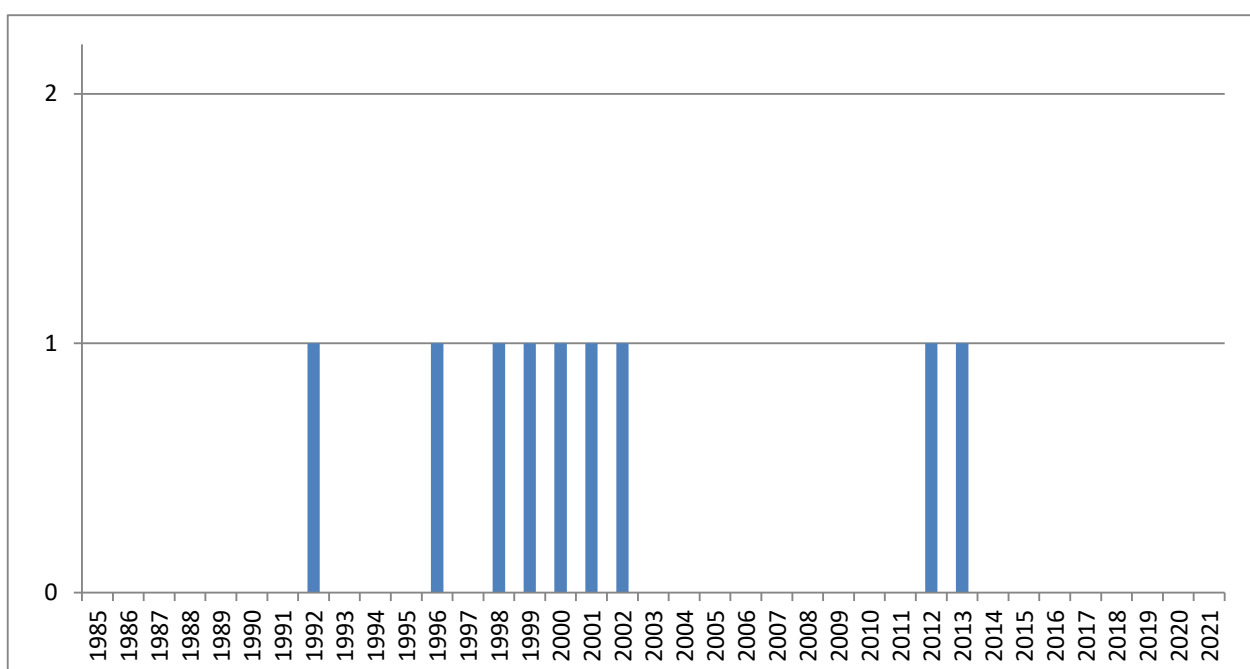


Figure 1: Little Stint records at Folkestone and Hythe since 1985

The records by week are given in figure 2. The majority have occurred between the 8th and the 25th September (weeks 36 to 39) with two records in spring (in May 1958 and May 2002), one in early autumn (in July 2000) and the most recent two in October and early November.

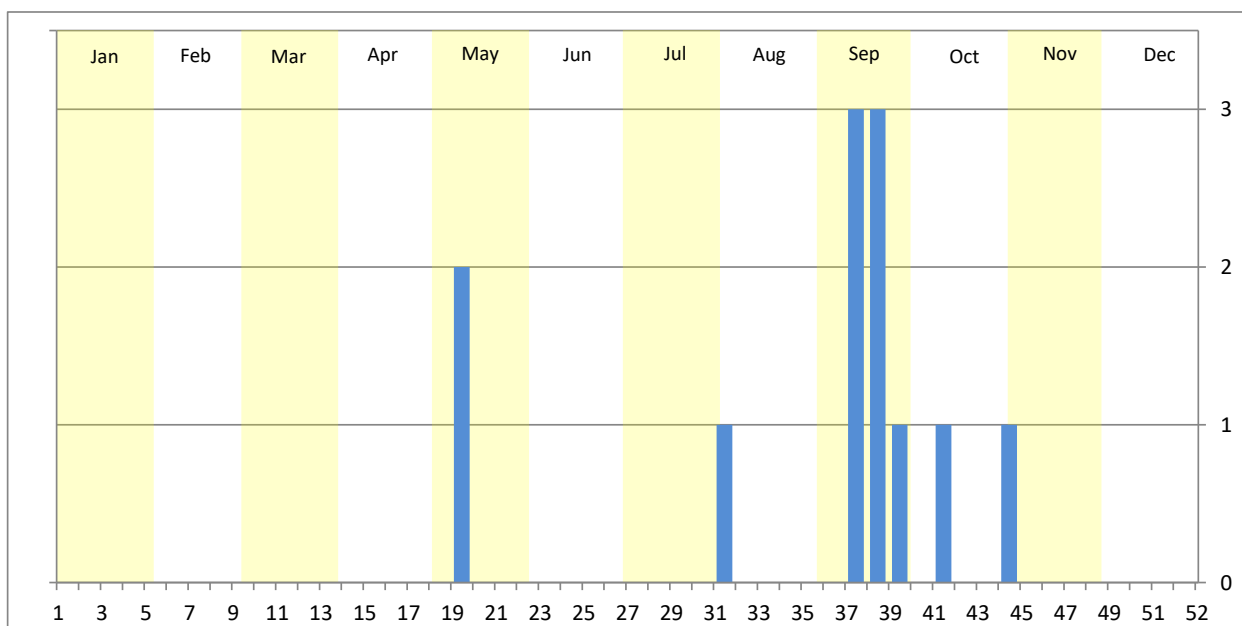


Figure 2: Little Stint records at Folkestone and Hythe by week

Figure 3 shows the distribution of records by tetrad. All records have been from Nickolls Quarry with the exception of the flock of three that were seen flying in off the sea at Abbotscliffe (in September 1996) and the most recent two records at the Willop Basin (in October 2012 and November 2013).

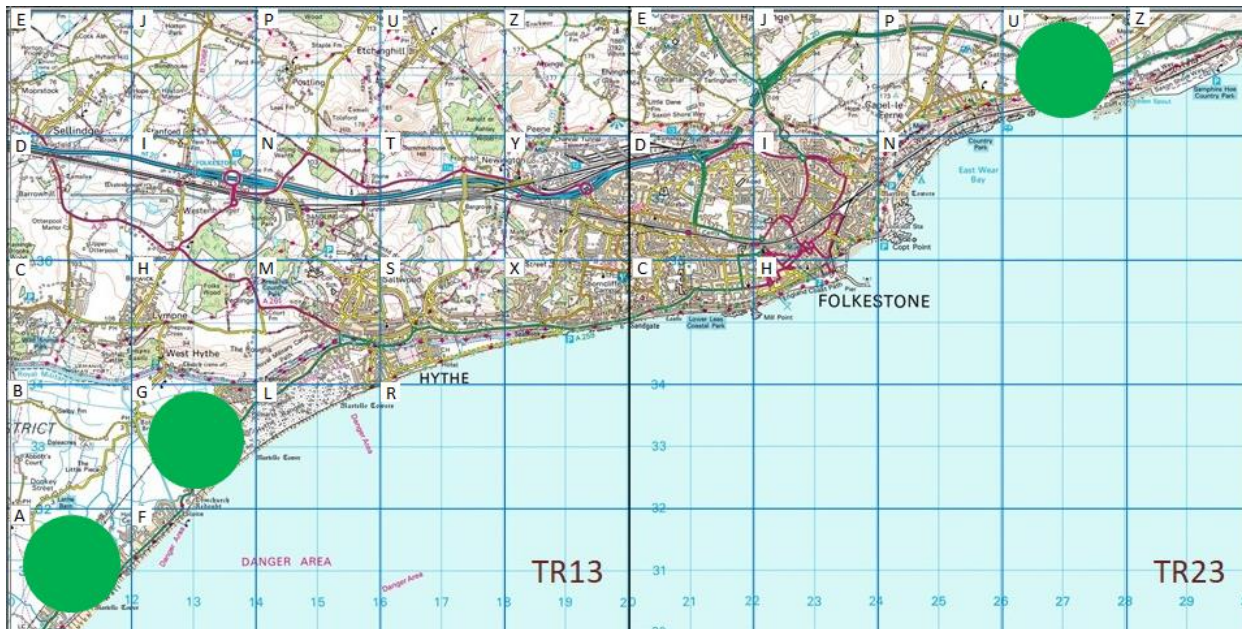


Figure 3: Distribution of all Little Stint records at Folkestone and Hythe by tetrad

The full list of records is as follows:

- 1956** Nickolls Quarry, one, 9th September (G. E. Manser)
- 1957** Nickolls Quarry, one, 17th September, increasing to two on the 18th and three on the 19th (R. K. Norman)
- 1958** Nickolls Quarry, one, 9th May (R. K. Norman)
- 1992** Nickolls Quarry, one, 13th September (R. K. Norman)
- 1996** Abbotscliffe, three flew in off the sea, 21st September (D. A. Gibson, J. A. Gibson)
- 1998** Nickolls Quarry, two, 16th September (R. K. Norman)

- 1999** Nickolls Quarry, juvenile, 25th to 26th September (I. A. Roberts)
2000 Nickolls Quarry, one, 30th to 31st July (D. A. Gibson, R. K. Norman, P. Haines)
2001 Nickolls Quarry, one, 18th September (R. K. Norman)
2002 Nickolls Quarry, one, 11th May, photographed (I. A. Roberts)
2012 Willop Basin, one, 13th October (I. A. Roberts, B. Harper)
2013 Willop Basin, one, 2nd to 3rd November (B. Harper, I. A. Roberts)

In addition, two unidentified stints, presumably either this species or Temminck's Stint, flew east past Copt Point on the 8th May 2001.



Little Stint with Dunlin at Nickolls Quarry (Ian Roberts)

References

Kent Bird Reports. 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](#).