

Curlew Sandpiper

Calidris ferruginea

Category A

Very rare vagrant.

8 records

Breeds in arctic Siberia, with some migrating through Europe to winter in sub-Saharan Africa and others migrating through Asia to the coasts of the Indian Ocean, south-east Asia and Australasia (Snow & Perrins, 1998). In Kent it is a passage migrant, scarce in spring but common in autumn (KOS, 2020).

It was first recorded locally on the 17th September 1957, when Roger Norman found one at Nickolls Quarry, but over thirty years elapsed until the next sighting in 1988, when Ian Roberts saw three flying east past Mill Point on the 2nd August.



Curlew Sandpiper at Nickolls Quarry (Ian Roberts)

The next record involved three seen flying east over Capel Battery on the 22nd September 1996 which were part of a major influx of Curlew Sandpipers and Little Stints to the eastern coast of Britain at this time, with a flock of three of the latter species seen flying over Abbotscliffe the day before.

It has occurred on five subsequent occasions, with all records coming from Nickolls Quarry between 1999 and 2004, when an area of shallow water, islets and mud existed at the site, attracting a range of migrant waders. This area was filled in shortly after and there have been no further sightings.

The records by year are shown in figure 1.

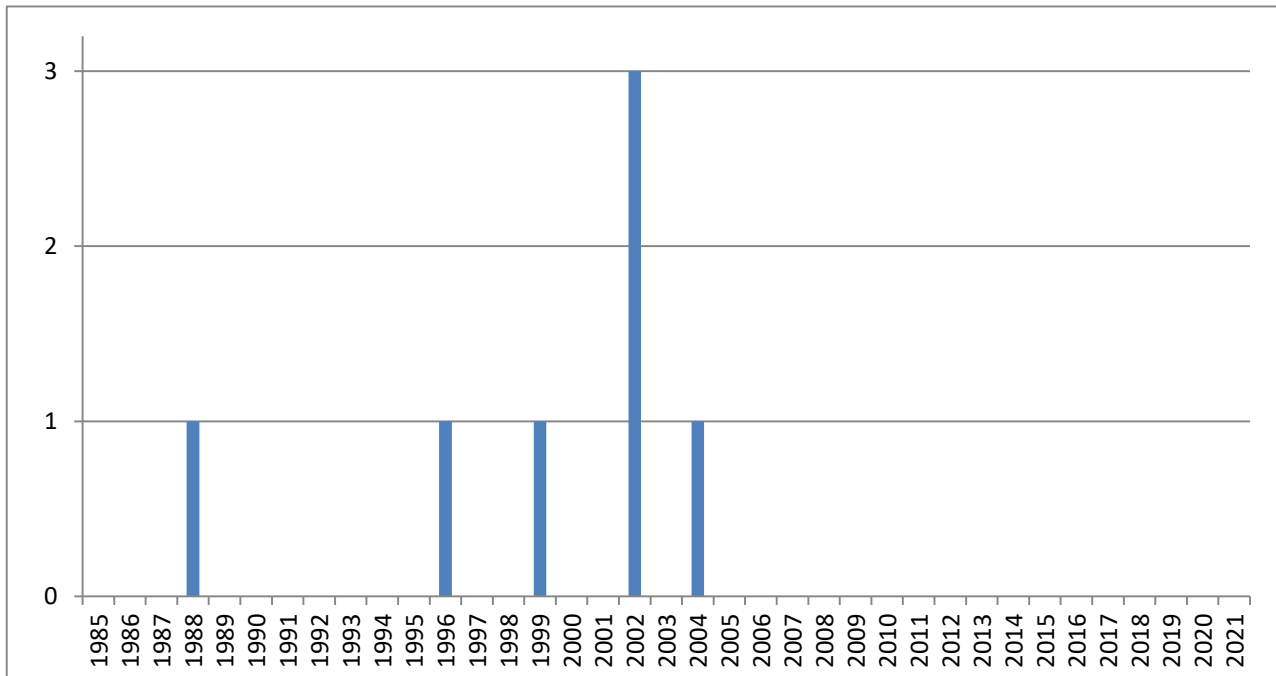


Figure 1: Curlew Sandpiper records at Folkestone and Hythe since 1985

Records fall into two distinct arrival periods, as demonstrated by figure 2, with adults recorded on three occasions between 27th July and 2nd August (week 30-31) and juveniles on four dates between 3rd and 30th September (weeks 36-39).

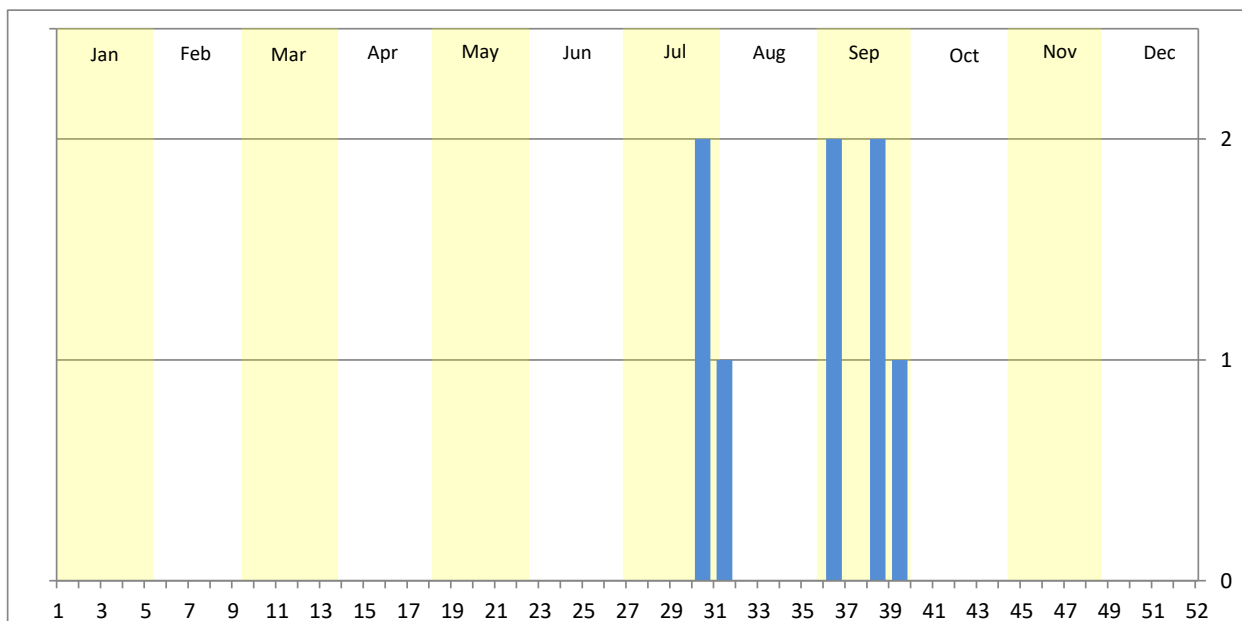


Figure 2: Curlew Sandpiper records at Folkestone and Hythe by week

Figure 3 shows the distribution of records by tetrad.



Figure 3: Distribution of all Curlew Sandpiper records at Folkestone and Hythe by tetrad

The full list of records is as follows:

- 1957** Nickolls Quarry, juvenile, 17th September (R. K. Norman)
- 1988** Mill Point, three adults flew east, 2nd August (I. A. Roberts)
- 1996** Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site, three juveniles flew east, 22nd September (I. A. Roberts)
- 1999** Nickolls Quarry, juvenile, 3rd September (R. K. Norman)
- 2002** Nickolls Quarry, adult, 27th July (R. K. Norman)
- 2002** Nickolls Quarry, juvenile, 6th September, video-recorded (I. A. Roberts)
- 2002** Nickolls Quarry, juvenile, 30th September (R. K. Norman)
- 2004** Nickolls Quarry, moulting adult, 27th July (I. A. 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](#).