

# Curlew Sandpiper

*Calidris ferruginea*

Category A

Very rare vagrant

8 records

Breeds in arctic Siberia, migrating through Europe to winter in sub-Saharan Africa.

A scarce spring and regular autumn passage migrant to Kent. In certain conditions, when easterly winds are prevalent in autumn, large numbers can occur in the county and on the British east coast in general.

First recorded at Folkestone and Hythe in 1957, but with a thirty year gap until the next in 1988. It has occurred on six subsequent occasions, as shown in figure 1, with three records at Nickoll's Quarry in 2002 when an area of shallow water, islets and mud existed at the site, attracting a range of migrant waders. However the habitat has since been altered and is no longer attractive to the species, so there have been no records there since 2004.

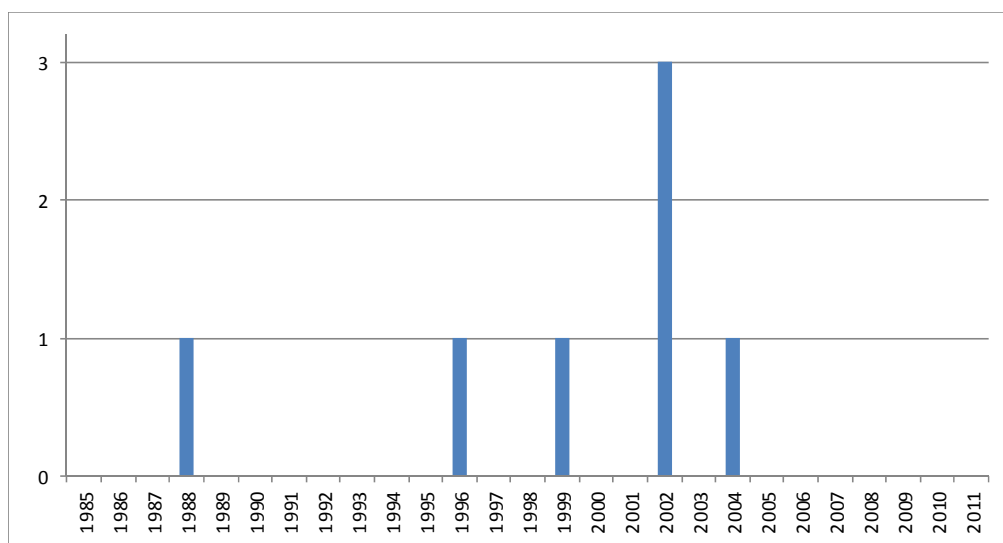


Figure 1: Curlew Sandpiper records since 1985 at Folkestone and Hythe

Records fall into two distinct arrival periods, as demonstrated by figure 2, with three between 27<sup>th</sup> July and 2<sup>nd</sup> August (week 30-31) and four between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> September (weeks 36-39).

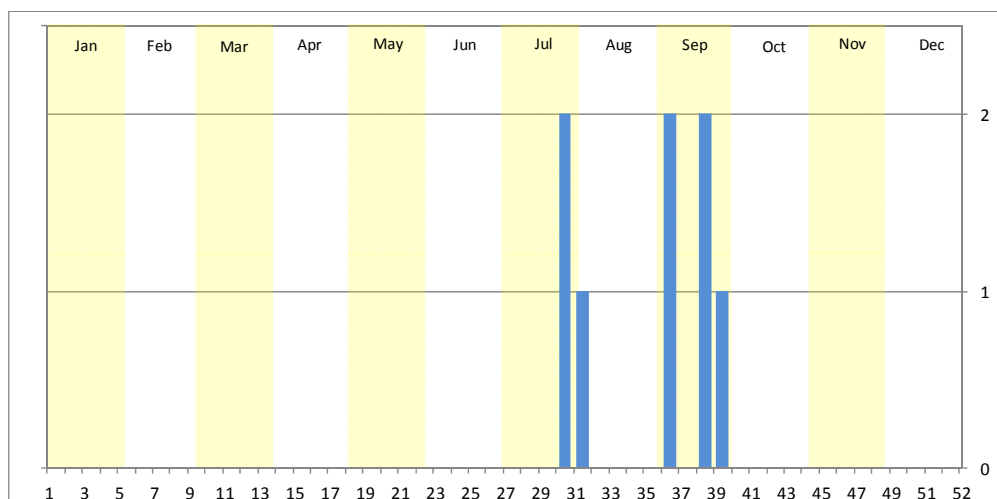


Figure 2: Curlew Sandpiper records at Folkestone and Hythe by week

Most records are from Nickoll's Quarry with the exception of a flock of three seen flying east past Mill Point in August 1988 and another flock of three which were seen flying east over Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site in September 1996. These latter birds 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 former species seen flying over Abbotscliffe the day before. The same conditions also produced good numbers of passerine migrants in the Folkestone and Hythe area, including an Oortolan Bunting and over 40 Ring Ouzels.

The full list of records is as follows:

- 1957** Nickoll's Quarry, one, 17<sup>th</sup> September (R. K. Norman)
- 1988** Mill Point, three flew east, 2<sup>nd</sup> August (I. A. Roberts)
- 1996** Capel-le-Ferne Gun Site, three flew east, 22<sup>nd</sup> September (I. A. Roberts)
- 1999** Nickoll's Quarry, one, 3<sup>rd</sup> September (R. K. Norman)
- 2002** Nickoll's Quarry, one, 27<sup>th</sup> July (R. K. Norman)
- 2002** Nickoll's Quarry, one, 6<sup>th</sup> September, video-recorded (I. A. Roberts)
- 2002** Nickoll's Quarry, one, 30<sup>th</sup> September (R. K. Norman)
- 2004** Nickoll's Quarry, one, 27<sup>th</sup> July (I. A. Roberts)