

Richard's Pipit

Anthus richardi

Category A

Very rare vagrant

16 records

Breeds in Siberian, wintering from Pakistan to Indo-China south to Malaysia. A scarce but regular visitor to western Europe, which occurs with quite high frequency considering its breeding range, even wintering regularly in southern Iberia.

A rare but regular passage migrant to Kent, particularly in the autumn. There had been 119 county records to the end of 2010, 55% of which were in the last twenty years.



Richard's Pipit at Abbotscliffe (Ian Roberts)

Harrison, in his *The Birds of Kent* (1953), makes mention of a record which "really has no value, as it is recorded as a 'probable' example. It relates to an alleged bird seen near Seabrook on 24th April, 1930 (*Brit. Birds*, xxiv, p.28)". He goes on to state that such uncertainties would really be far better left unrecorded. This would have been the first spring record for the county though it is not unknown at this season, with Harrison detailing one at Shellness on 23rd April 1950 and the later *Birds of Kent* (1981) mentioning three others between 15th April and 8th May.

The first confirmed record in the Folkestone and Hythe area was in 1990, when one was found at Church Hougham on the 22nd September by Mark Kennett. Since then however it has occurred with some regularity, with another 14 records in the subsequent 22 years, all of which have occurred at Abbotscliffe in October. The records by year are shown in figure 1. Of the two large pipits, Richard's is marginally more regular, and has a mean arrival date almost three weeks later in the autumn (12th October). The 2012 record was the latest to date.

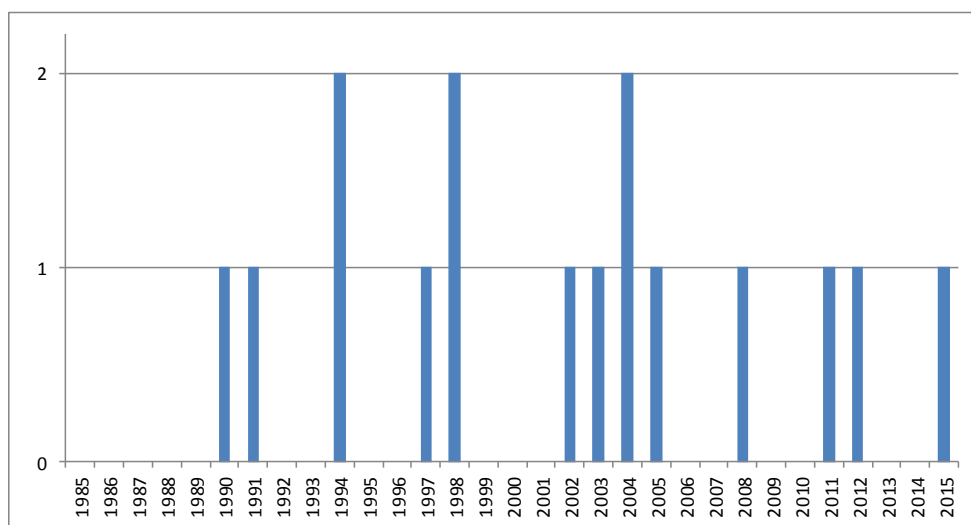


Figure 1: Richard's Pipit records at Folkestone and Hythe

Apart from the first record, which was on the 22nd September (week 38), all others have been recorded in October, between the 1st and the 28th (weeks 40-44), as demonstrated by figure 2.

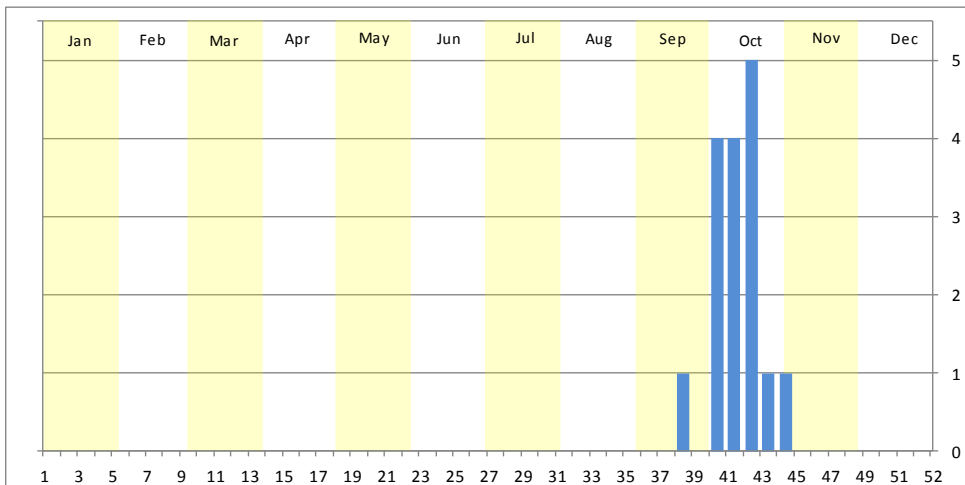


Figure 2: Richard's Pipit records at Folkestone and Hythe by week

As mentioned above, aside from the first record (which was at Church Hougham), all others have been from Abbotscliffe, though the most recent was also probably seen at Creteway Down.

The full list of records is as follows:

- 1990** Church Hougham, one, 22nd September (M. D. Kennett, S. Kennett, D. E. Smith)
- 1991** Abbotscliffe, two, 21st October, one remaining to the 22nd (I. A. & A. F. Roberts, D. A. Gibson, J. P. Siddle)
- 1994** Abbotscliffe, two, 1st October (D. A. Gibson)
- 1994** Abbotscliffe, one flew west, 24th October (D. A. Gibson)
- 1997** Abbotscliffe, one flew east, 13th October (D. A. Gibson)
- 1998** Abbotscliffe, one flushed from gully, then flew west, 6th October (D. A. Gibson)
- 1998** Abbotscliffe, one flew west, 13th October (D. A. Gibson, I. A. Roberts)
- 2002** Abbotscliffe, one flew east, 4th October (I. A. Roberts)
- 2003** Abbotscliffe, one, 19th October (I. A. Roberts, D. A. Gibson, T. Scotland)
- 2004** Abbotscliffe, one, 15th to 16th October (I. A. Roberts, J. A. Gibson)
- 2004** Abbotscliffe, one, 17th October, considered different to above (D. A. Gibson)
- 2005** Abbotscliffe, one flew west, 3rd October (I. A. Roberts)
- 2008** Abbotscliffe, one flushed from gully, then flew north-west, 9th October (D. A. Gibson, J. A. Gibson)
- 2011** Abbotscliffe, one, 17th October, photographed (I. A. Roberts)
- 2012** Abbotscliffe, one, 28th October (P. Edmondson, D. A. Gibson)
- 2015** Abbotscliffe, one flew east, 12th October, also probably seen earlier at Creteway Down (I. A. Roberts, D. A. Gibson)



Richard's Pipit at Abbotscliffe (Ian Roberts)