

# Garganey

*Spatula querquedula*

Category A

Rare migrant, mainly in spring,  
possibly bred in the past

30 records

A widespread summer visitor across Europe, crossing the Sahara to winter in Africa (Snow & Perrins, 1998). A rare breeding species in Britain, with Holling *et al* (2019) providing an estimate of around 100 breeding pairs in 2017, which is considered to be stable.



Garganey at Botolph's Bridge (Brian Harper)

The first two records occurred in 1957, when Roger Norman flushed a female from an 'airfield' dyke in the Nickolls Quarry area on the 9<sup>th</sup> June (the same day as a pair of small duck, either Garganey or Teal, were briefly seen flying away from the 'old' pit), followed by a record of four to six birds present daily in the area from 25<sup>th</sup> August to 3<sup>rd</sup> September. These events suggest breeding might have occurred locally. Furthermore in 1960 at the same site, the same observer found a pair in the 'old' pit on 15<sup>th</sup> March, with then up to 3 pairs present (including two birds in 'airfield' dykes) until at least 27<sup>th</sup> March, after which unfortunately there was no coverage until June.

There were no further records until 1978 when pair were seen at Sandling Park on the 12<sup>th</sup> May and one was reported at Lympe on the 18<sup>th</sup> April 1982.

A pair were seen flying east past Mill Point on the 30<sup>th</sup> April 1990 and it has been recorded with some regularity since, with 24 records in the subsequent 31 years, as demonstrated by figure 1.

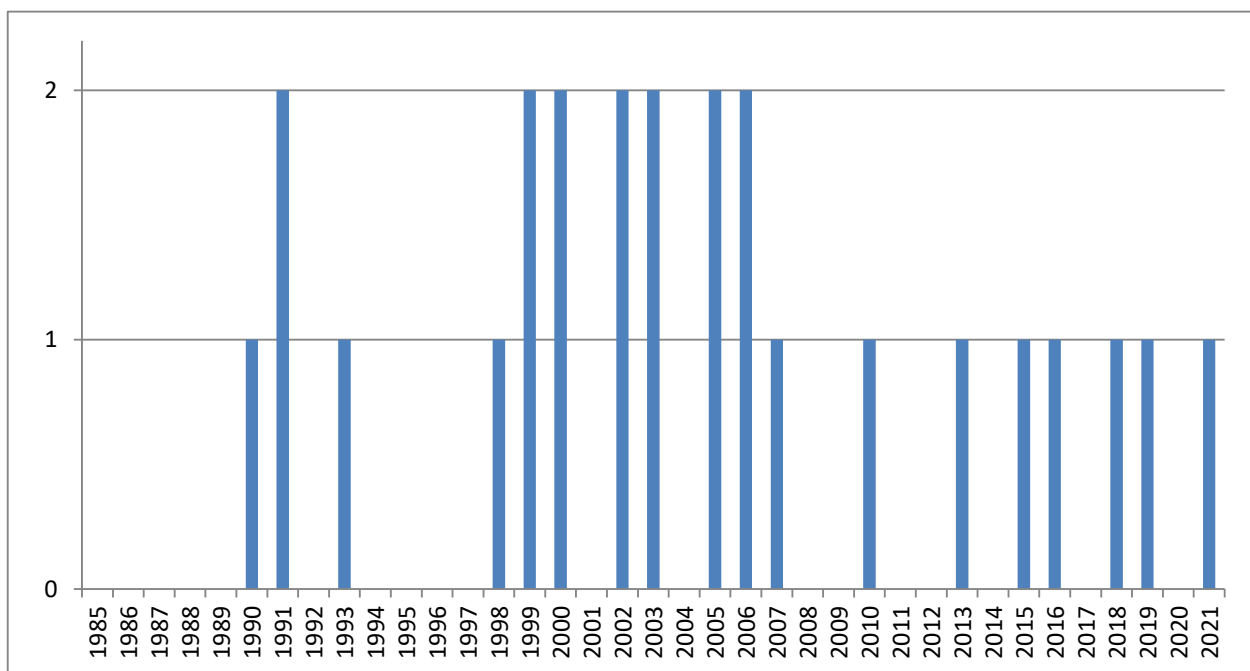


Figure 1: Garganey records at Folkestone and Hythe since 1985

The majority of records have occurred in spring, between 15<sup>th</sup> March (week 11) and 21<sup>st</sup> May (week 21), as demonstrated by figure 2. There have only been three records from outside of this period (in addition to the August sighting in 1957). Two of these were autumn migrants: a female/immature at Nickolls Quarry on the 7<sup>th</sup> October 1998 and a male at Horn Street Lake on the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2000. The other record was an exceptional winter sighting of a drake at Nickolls Quarry on the 17<sup>th</sup> January, with presumably the same bird again there on the 14<sup>th</sup> February.

The records by week are given in figure 2 and figure 3 shows the distribution of records by tetrad.

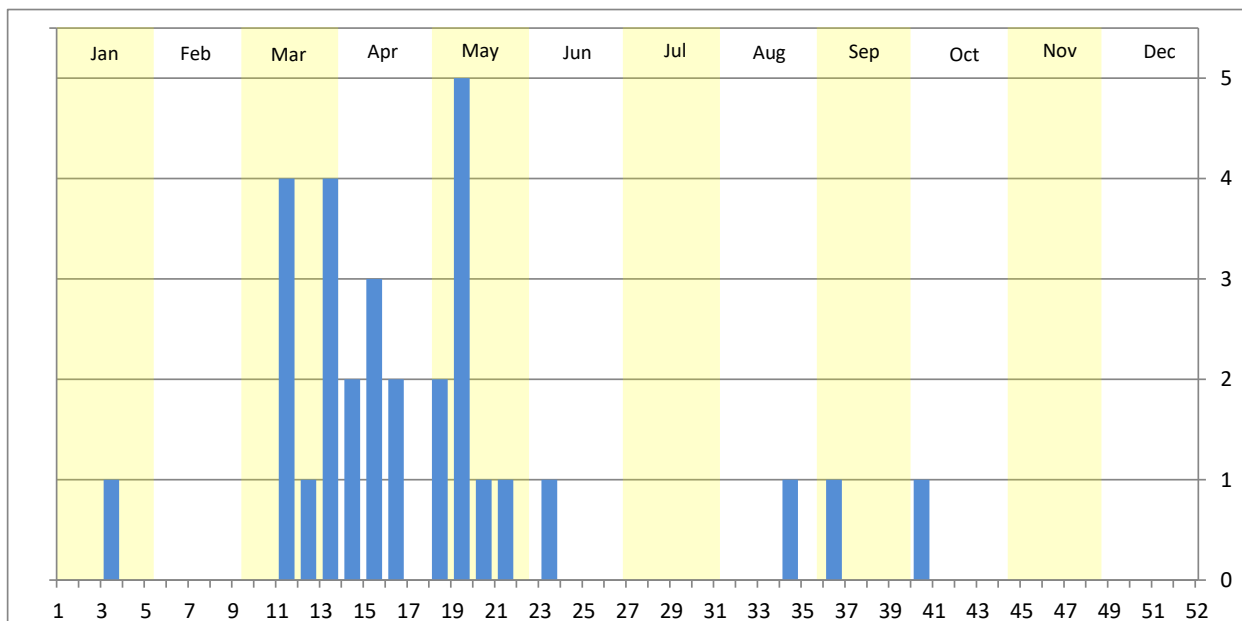


Figure 2: Garganey records at Folkestone and Hythe by week

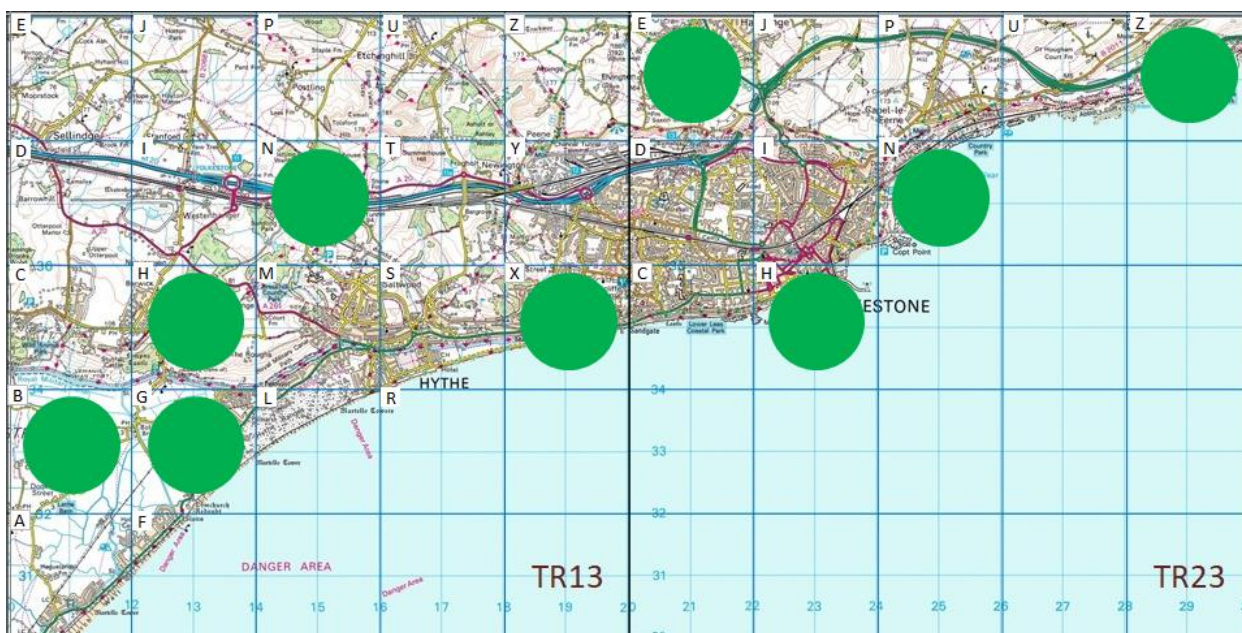


Figure 3: Distribution of all Garganey records at Folkestone and Hythe by tetrad

The majority of records have been from Nickolls Quarry (eight, with a further two on the Oak Arm sewer just to the north), or coastal seawatching points (14), with the others at Horn Street (2), Folkestone Reservoirs, Lympne, Sandling Park and the Willop Basin.

The full list of records is as follows:

- 1957** Nickolls Quarry, female, 9<sup>th</sup> June (R. K. Norman)
- 1957** Nickolls Quarry, four to six birds present daily, from 25<sup>th</sup> August to 3<sup>rd</sup> September (R. K. Norman)
- 1960** Nickolls Quarry, a pair, 15<sup>th</sup> March, then three pairs until at least 27<sup>th</sup> March (R. K. Norman)
- 1978** Sandling Park, a pair, 12<sup>th</sup> May (C. R. Tuff)
- 1982** Lympne, one, 18<sup>th</sup> April (Reported)
- 1990** Mill Point, a pair flew east, 30<sup>th</sup> April (I. A. Roberts)
- 1991** Oak Arm (north of Nickolls Quarry), three (one male, two females), 28<sup>th</sup> March (R. K. Norman)
- 1991** Willop Basin (on sewer between Botolph's Bridge and the Willop Basin), two, 7<sup>th</sup> April (R. K. Norman)
- 1993** Horn Street Lake, male, 28<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> March (I. A. Roberts)

- 1998** Nickolls Quarry, female/immature, 7<sup>th</sup> October (R. K. Norman)
- 1999** Nickolls Quarry, male 17<sup>th</sup> January, presumed same 14<sup>th</sup> February (R. K. Norman, I. A. Roberts)
- 1999** Nickolls Quarry, one 21<sup>st</sup> May (R. K. Norman)
- 2000** Copt Point, male flew east, 1<sup>st</sup> May (D. A. Gibson, I. A. Roberts)
- 2000** Horn Street Lake, male, 4<sup>th</sup> September (P. Howe)
- 2002** Copt Point, male flew east, 9<sup>th</sup> May (D. A. Gibson)
- 2002** Nickolls Quarry, male, 10<sup>th</sup> May (R. K. Norman, I. A. Roberts)
- 2003** Mill Point, pair flew east, 15<sup>th</sup> March (I. A. Roberts)
- 2003** Copt Point, 13 flew east, 15<sup>th</sup> April (I. A. Roberts)
- 2005** Mill Point, a pair flew east, 20<sup>th</sup> March (I. A. Roberts)
- 2005** Samphire Hoe, 12 flew east (in three flocks), 2<sup>nd</sup> April (I. A. Roberts)
- 2006** Samphire Hoe, five flew east, 14<sup>th</sup> March (I. A. Roberts)
- 2006** Samphire Hoe, male flew east, 14<sup>th</sup> May (I. A. Roberts)
- 2007** Samphire Hoe, male flew east, 21<sup>st</sup> April (I. A. Roberts)
- 2010** Folkestone Reservoirs (Castle Hill), female, 14<sup>th</sup> March (P. Holt)
- 2013** Oak Arm (north of Nickolls Quarry), pair, 11<sup>th</sup> April, photographed (B. Harper)
- 2015** Nickolls Quarry, pair, 9<sup>th</sup> April, photographed (I. A. Roberts, B. Harper)
- 2016** Mill Point, male flew east with Common Scoters, 6<sup>th</sup> May (B. Harper), also seen off Copt Point (D. A. Gibson) and Samphire Hoe (I. A. Roberts)
- 2018** Samphire Hoe, two flew east, 8<sup>th</sup> May (I. A. Roberts)
- 2019** Samphire Hoe, four flew east, 1<sup>st</sup> April (S. Cutt)
- 2021** Folkestone Beach, male flew east, 1<sup>st</sup> April (I. A. Roberts)

### **References**

Holling, M. & the Rare Breeding Birds Panel, 2019. Rare breeding birds in the UK in 2017. *British Birds*, 112: 706-758

Kent Bird Reports. Kent Ornithological Society

Snow, D. & Perrins, C.M., 1998. *The Birds of the Western Palearctic*. Oxford University Press.



Garganey at Nickolls Quarry (Ian Roberts)

## ***Acknowledgements***

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