

Garganey

Spatula querquedula

Category A

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

29 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.

In Kent it is a passage migrant and decreasing summer visitor, breeding annually in small numbers (KOS, 2020).



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 9th 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 25th August to 3rd 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 15th March, with then up to 3 pairs present (including two birds in 'airfield' dykes) until at least 27th 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 12th May and one was reported at Lympe on the 18th April 1982.

A pair were seen flying east past Mill Point on the 30th April 1990 and it has been recorded with some regularity since, with 23 records in the subsequent 30 years, as demonstrated by figure 1.

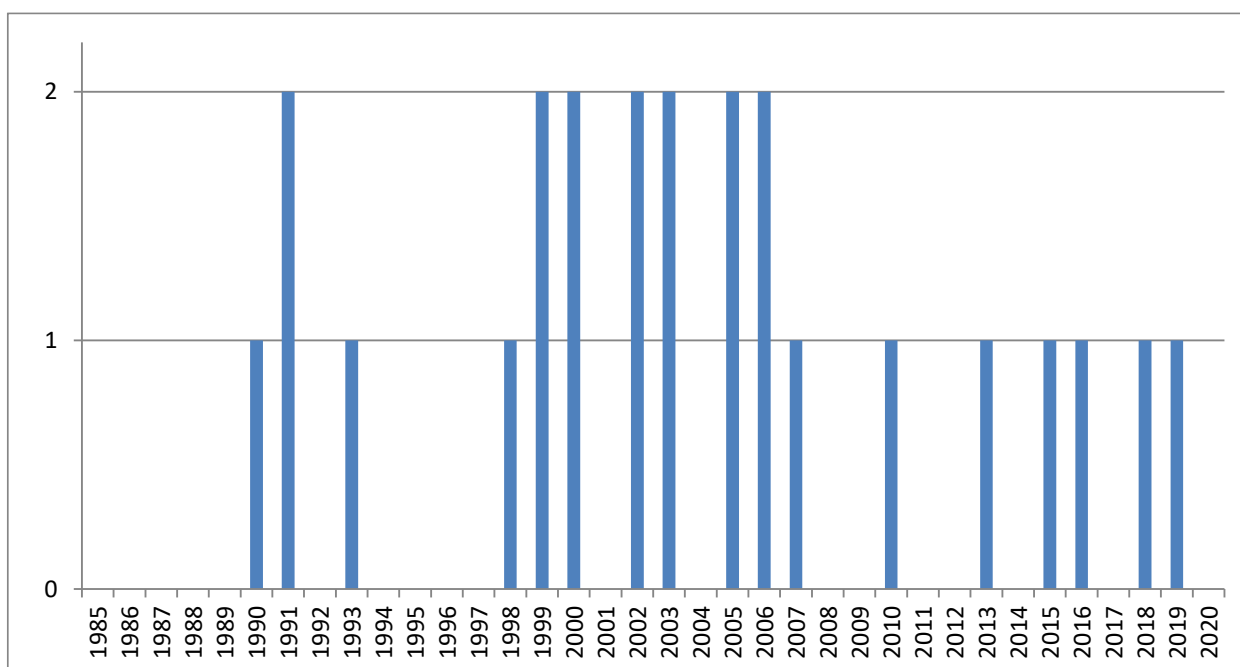


Figure 1: Garganey records at Folkestone and Hythe since 1985

The majority of records have occurred in spring, between 15th March (week 11) and 21st 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 7th October 1998 and a male at Horn Street Lake on the 4th September 2000. The other record was an exceptional winter sighting of a drake at Nickolls Quarry on the 17th January, with presumably the same bird again there on the 14th February.

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

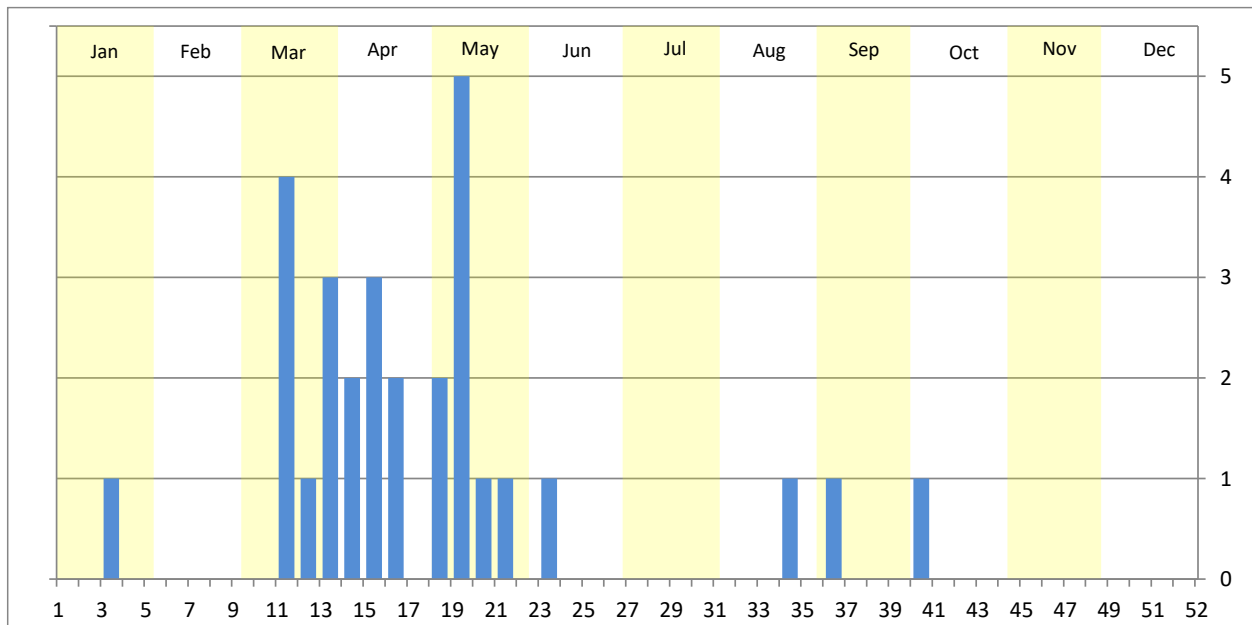


Figure 2: Garganey records at Folkestone and Hythe by week



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 (13), 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, 9th June (R. K. Norman)
- 1957** Nickolls Quarry, four to six birds present daily, from 25th August to 3rd September (R. K. Norman)
- 1960** Nickolls Quarry, a pair, 15th March, then three pairs until at least 27th March (R. K. Norman)
- 1978** Sandling Park, a pair, 12th May (C. R. Tuff)
- 1982** Lympne, one, 18th April (Reported)
- 1990** Mill Point, a pair flew east, 30th April (I. A. Roberts)
- 1991** Oak Arm (north of Nickolls Quarry), three (one male, two females), 28th March (R. K. Norman)
- 1991** Willop Basin (on sewer between Botolph's Bridge and the Willop Basin), two, 7th April (R. K. Norman)
- 1993** Horn Street Lake, male, 28th to 29th March (I. A. Roberts)

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

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

The tetrad map images were produced from the Ordnance Survey [Get-a-map service](#) and are reproduced with kind permission of [Ordnance Survey](#).