

# Ruddy Duck

*Oxyura jamaicensis*

Category C

Very rare vagrant

7 records

A native of the Americas, it became established in Britain in Somerset from escaped captive birds from the 1960s. Slowly spread west, first reaching Kent in 1970, with regular records from the late 1970s.

Following a considerable increase and breeding in the county, a nationwide eradication programme aimed at preventing interbreeding with White-headed Duck in southern Europe was implemented. The latest report from this programme concludes that fewer than 100 remain in the UK and confirms that the cull has been extended to complete the task, so future records are now extremely unlikely.



Ruddy Duck at Nickoll’s Quarry (Ian Roberts)

First recorded at Folkestone and Hythe in 1985, there were records in four consecutive years in the mid-1990s, with the most recent in 2003, as shown in figure 1.

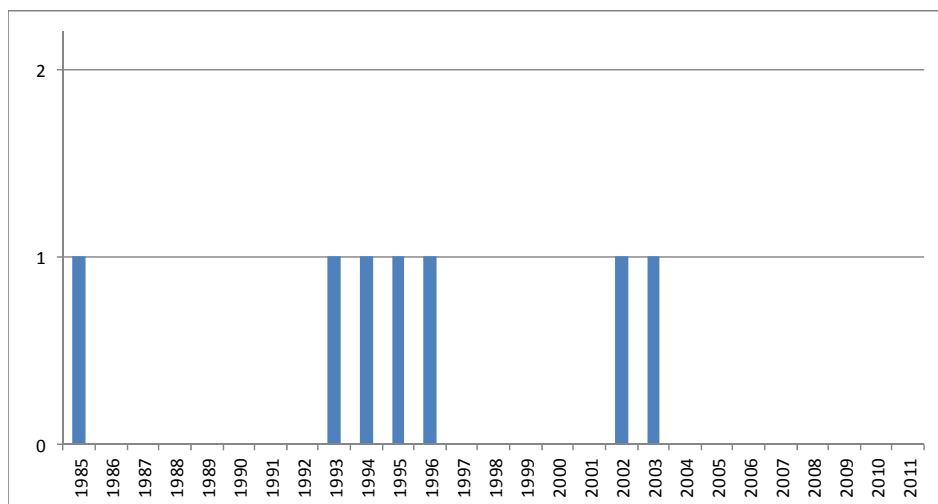


Figure 1: Ruddy Duck records at Folkestone and Hythe

Apart from singles on 18<sup>th</sup> September and 8<sup>th</sup> May, all have arrived between the 21<sup>st</sup> November (week 47) and 23<sup>rd</sup> February (week 8), as shown in figure 2. Some, though not all, records were associated with cold weather.

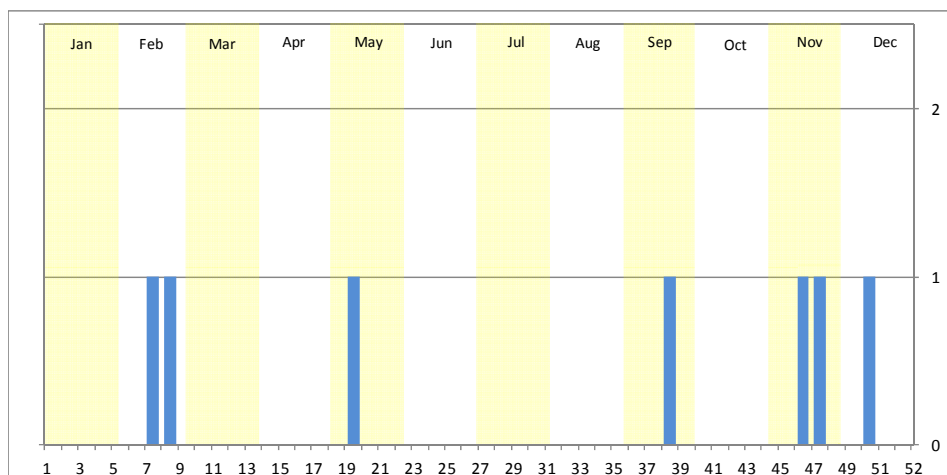


Figure 2: Ruddy Duck records at Folkestone and Hythe by week

All records are from Nickoll's Quarry, and all but one were seen on just a single date, with the other lingering for 51 days.

The full list of records is as follows:

- 1985** Nickoll's Quarry, four, 17<sup>th</sup> February (R. & S. Philpott)
- 1993** Nickoll's Quarry, immature/female, 21<sup>st</sup> November (R. K. Norman)
- 1994** Nickoll's Quarry, immature/female, 18<sup>th</sup> September (R. K. Norman)
- 1995** Nickoll's Quarry, immature/female, 10<sup>th</sup> December (R. K. Norman)
- 1996** Nickoll's Quarry, immature/female, 23<sup>rd</sup> February (R. K. Norman)
- 2002** Nickoll's Quarry, female, 15<sup>th</sup> November to 5<sup>th</sup> January 2003, photographed (R. K. Norman, I. A. Roberts)
- 2003** Nickoll's Quarry, male, 8<sup>th</sup> May (R. K. Norman)