

# Ruff

*Calidris pugnax*

Category A

Rare migrant and winter visitor

33 records

A scarce and localised breeding species in Britain (c.10 females in suitable habitat annually but breeding not confirmed since 2007), France and the Low Countries, with much larger numbers in Fenno-Scandia and Russia. The total winter range extends from western Europe and West Africa eastwards to India, but by far the largest numbers winter in Africa.

A regular passage migrant and winter visitor to Kent. Breeding was suspected in the past, but never proven.

First recorded in the Folkestone and Hythe area in the old pit at Nickolls Quarry 1952, with further records in the Nickolls Quarry / West Hythe area in 1957 (2), 1958 (2) and 1960.



Ruff over Crete Road East (Brian Harper)

There was a gap of over 30 years however until the next, in 1991, but since then it has been recorded with some regularity, particular in the late 1990s and first half of the following decade, as shown by figure 1. An exceptional total of six records occurred in 2003 and there were three in 2014.

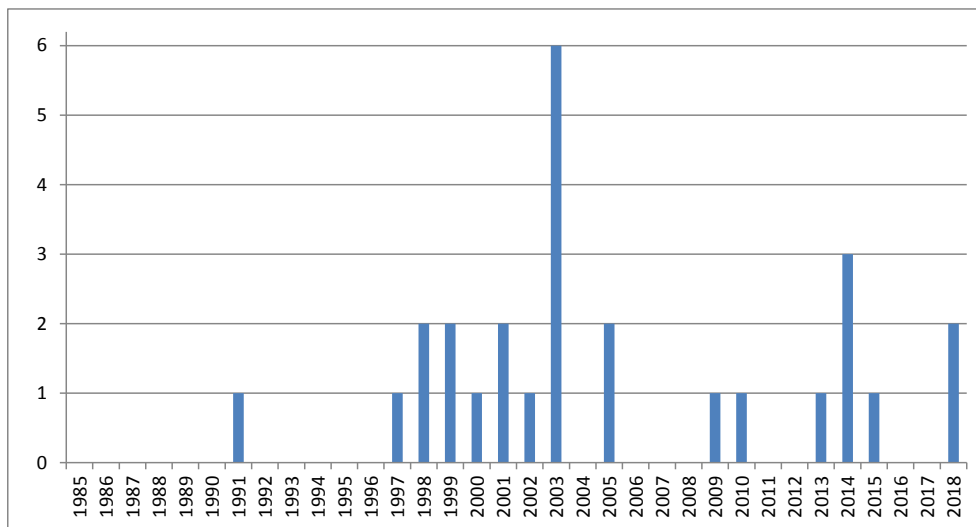


Figure 1: Ruff records since 1985 at Folkestone and Hythe

Figure 2 shows the arrival dates by week. The Ruff has been recorded in most months of the year, though there are distinct peaks in early March (with seven records between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>) and late August / early September (with ten records between 20<sup>th</sup> August and 9<sup>th</sup> September).

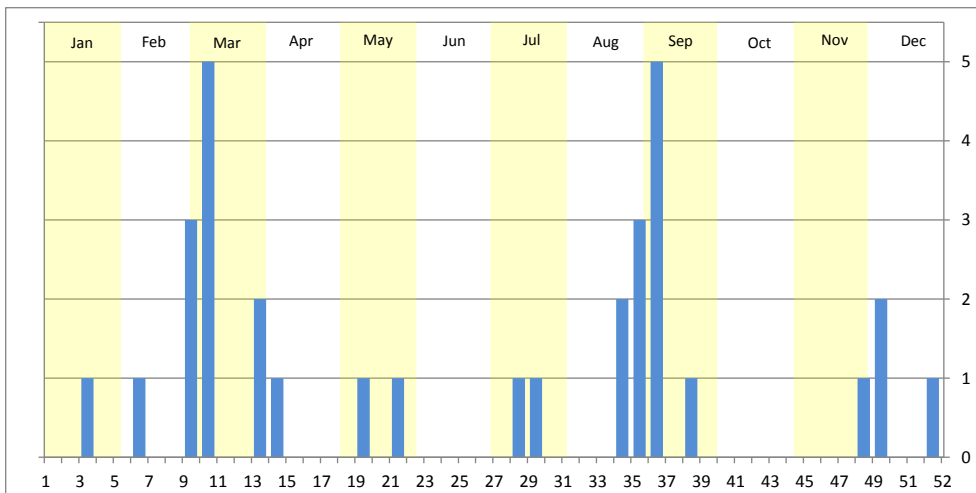


Figure 2: Ruff records at Folkestone and Hythe by week

Most of the early records were from Nickolls Quarry but there have been no sightings there since 2003. The Willop Basin has hosted seven of the nine most recent records, one of which fell within the BTO/KOS Atlas recording period (2007 – 2012), as shown in figure 3.

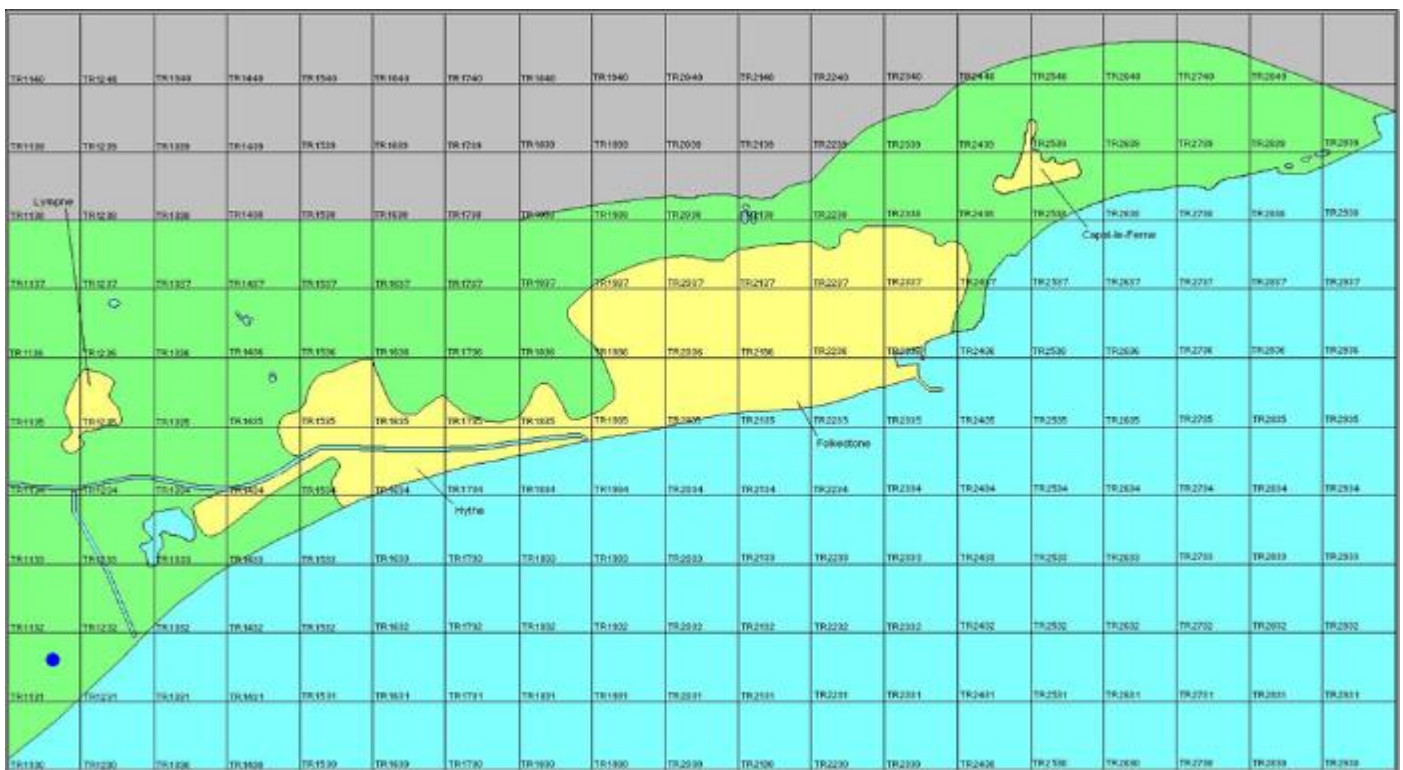


Figure 3: Wintering distribution of Ruff at Folkestone and Hythe (2007 – 2012 BTO/KOS Atlas)

The full list of records is as follows:

- 1952** Nickolls Quarry, two in the old pit, 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> August, 1 to 27<sup>th</sup> August (R. K. Norman)
- 1956** West Hythe, one seen in “winter 1956/1957” (E. J. Pilcher)
- 1957** Hythe, two at Pennypot farm, 28<sup>th</sup> December (R. K. Norman), site now developed as housing estate
- 1958** Nickolls Quarry, one in the old pit, 2<sup>nd</sup> April (R. K. Norman)
- 1958** Nickolls Quarry, five in the old pit, 22<sup>nd</sup> May (R. K. Norman)
- 1960** Nickolls Quarry, one in the new pit, 27<sup>th</sup> March (R. K. Norman)
- 1991** Botolph’s Bridge, two, 20<sup>th</sup> January (R. K. Norman)
- 1997** Capel-le-Ferne Café, moulting adult flew in off the sea, 10<sup>th</sup> July (D. A. Gibson)
- 1998** Nickolls Quarry, one, 4<sup>th</sup> September (R. K. Norman)
- 1998** Abbotscliffe, pair flew in off the sea, 17<sup>th</sup> September (D. A. Gibson)
- 1999** Nickolls Quarry, two, 23<sup>rd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> August (R. K. Norman)

- 1999** Church Hougham, juvenile in fields by Hougham Court, 27<sup>th</sup> August (I. A. Roberts)
- 2000** Abbotscliffe, two flew east, 3<sup>rd</sup> September (I. A. Roberts)
- 2001** Willop Outfall, one, 4<sup>th</sup> March (I. A. Roberts)
- 2001** Nickolls Quarry, one, 7<sup>th</sup> May (R. K. Norman)
- 2002** Nickolls Quarry, one, 1<sup>st</sup> September (R. K. Norman)
- 2003** Nickolls Quarry, eight, 1<sup>st</sup> March (R. K. Norman)
- 2003** Botolph's Bridge, one, 8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> March (I. A. Roberts)
- 2003** Nickolls Quarry, one, 26<sup>th</sup> March (I. A. Roberts)
- 2003** Nickolls Quarry, one, 16<sup>th</sup> July (R. K. Norman, I. A. Roberts)
- 2003** Nickolls Quarry, male, 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> September (R. K. Norman)
- 2003** Nickolls Quarry, female, 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> September (R. K. Norman)
- 2005** West Hythe (Donkey Street), two, 4<sup>th</sup> March, photographed (I. A. Roberts)
- 2005** West Hythe (Burmarsh Road), three, 5<sup>th</sup> March, with one remaining to 7<sup>th</sup> (R. K. Norman, I. A. Roberts), possibly same as above
- 2009** Willop Outfall, one, 7<sup>th</sup> February (I. A. Roberts)
- 2010** Willop Outfall, one, 5<sup>th</sup> December (I. A. Roberts)
- 2013** Willop Outfall, one, 29<sup>th</sup> November, photographed (I. A. Roberts, B. Harper)
- 2014** Crete Road East, three flew east, 7<sup>th</sup> September, photographed (B. Harper)
- 2014** Princes Parade, Seabrook, one flew west, 9<sup>th</sup> September (N. Webster)
- 2014** Willop Outfall, three, 6<sup>th</sup> December, with one remaining to 7<sup>th</sup> December (R. K. Norman, B. Harper)
- 2015** Willop Outfall, two males and a female, 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> March (B. Harper, I. A. Roberts)
- 2018** Willop Outfall, one, 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> March (I. A. Roberts, R. K. Norman)
- 2018** Willop Outfall, two, 11<sup>th</sup> March (B. Harper)



Ruff at the Willop Basin (Ian Roberts)