

## Dipper

*Cinclus cinclus*

Category A

Very rare vagrant

5 records

The race *gularis* breeds in northern and western Britain and undertakes only limited movements, vacating mountain streams in favour of lower reaches, and continuing to coasts and estuaries in severe weather. The nominate form breeds in Fenno-Scandia and is subject to medium- or long-distance partial migration, with some birds staying in breeding areas as long as water continues to flow, others moving into Denmark, southern Sweden and the Baltic states, and a very small number occasionally crossing the North Sea to the British east coast. The form *aquaticus* occurs in middle and southern Europe but is not known to have occurred in Britain.

A rare winter migrant to Kent, with 26 Kent records to end of 2010, the most recent being one at Herne Bay in 1999. The first eleven were considered to be the British *gularis* whilst all records since 1950 have either been of the Black-bellied form *cinclus* or of undetermined race.

Ticehurst in his *A History of the Birds of Kent* (1909) records that “in the Folkestone Museum there is a Dipper shot many years ago on the Royal Military Canal at Hythe, part of the collection of the late Major H. W. Deedes, of Saltwood Castle”. There was another in the Tournay collection at Hythe, which may have been collected locally, though Ticehurst considered “doubtfully acceptable” as a Kentish specimen. Ticehurst considered the specimens which he examined to be of the British race. Ticehurst places in square brackets a record of a specimen of the nominate race said to have been shot at Folkestone, and in the museum of that town, as he was unable to confirm it.

The first dated record refers to one seen on the Hythe Canal by William Nevin from the 22<sup>nd</sup> February to the 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1955, which was also the first confirmed record of the nominate form in the county.

Another bird of the nominate form was found by D E Chittenden at Sandling Park on the 20<sup>th</sup> January 1974, and was still only the fourth county record of this race.

The third dated record related to a long-staying, though elusive, bird thought also to have been of the nominate race, was seen intermittently in the Brockhill Country Park area between the 11<sup>th</sup> January and 31<sup>st</sup> March 1989.

Most recently another bird of the nominate form was seen at Beachborough Lakes on the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2016.

The two modern records are shown in figure 1.

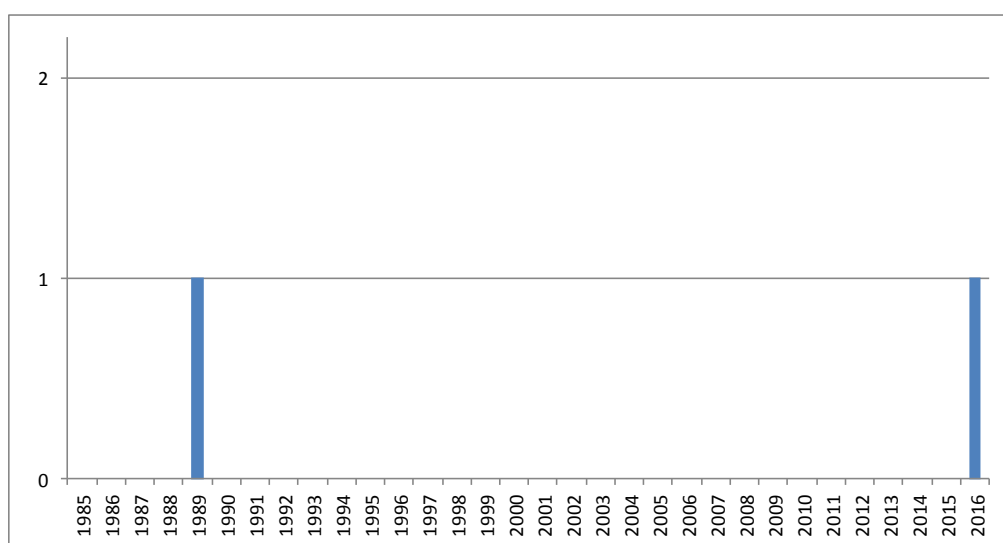


Figure 1: Dipper records since 1985 at Folkestone and Hythe

Two of the dated records have been found in January, with the others in February and November, as shown in figure 2.

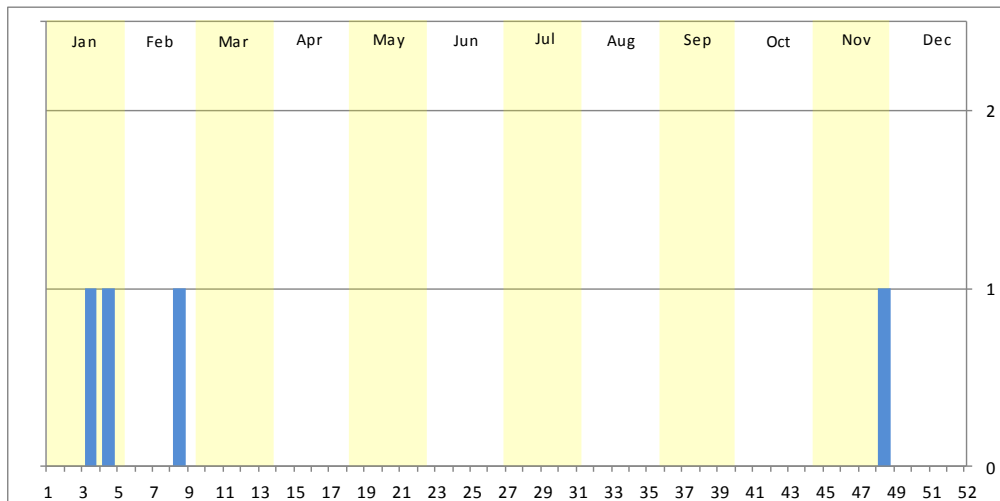


Figure 2: Dipper records at Folkestone and Hythe by week

The full list of dated area records is as follows:

**1955** Hythe Canal, one, 22<sup>nd</sup> February to 3<sup>rd</sup> March (W. S. Nevin)

**1974** Sandling Park, one, 20<sup>th</sup> January (D. E. Chittenden)

**1989** Brockhill Country Park, one, 25<sup>th</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> March (C. Lock, J. P. Siddle *et al*)

**2016** Beachborough Lakes, one, 29<sup>th</sup> November (S. Tomlinson)