

149-01-1967 Rec'd 3/11/92  
The Sandpiper 9(3): 4-5. 1967.

A Sight Record of the Harlequin Duck in Warren County, Pa.

Harris Johnson and Ted Grisez

On Feb. 11, 1967 at about 1:00P.M., Harris Johnson of Warren, Pa., and Lawrence Peterson of Bradford, Pa. stopped on the high bank overlooking the Allegheny River about 5 miles west of Warren to observe a small group of Common Goldeneyes. They noticed two dark ducks farther upstream. With the aid of binoculars and a Bolex with 15-20-30-power lenses, the following field marks were noted on both ducks: dark brownish upperparts, breast and flanks with a lighter shade of brown, and three white spots on the side of the head--one in front of the eye, one below the eye, and one back of the eye. No wing patch could be seen. They had relatively short bills, similar to a Bufflehead's--not at all like a scoter's. As they neared the group of goldeneyes, they appeared slightly smaller in size. The observers could only conclude that the ducks were Harlequins, either adult females or juvenals.

The observations were made from a distance of about 300 feet at first, then about 150 feet. The weather was overcast with intermittent snow flurries. After watching them for one half hour, the birds were left undisturbed.

William Highhouse, Charles Neel, Malcom Waite and Ted Grisez came out about an hour later and found the ducks in the same place. The identity of the ducks was confirmed. Later the ducks swam upriver, then flushed when followed. They flew toward the observers before turning, and the uniform, dark wings and lighter underparts could be clearly seen.

On Feb. 13, Grisez sighted a single Harlequin, apparently one of the pair, about a mile farther upriver.

Poole (1964) recorded only two previous sight records for the harlequin duck in Pennsylvania, but these were called "not convincing".

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Poole, Earl L. 1964. Pennsylvania birds--an annotated list. Livingston Pub. Co., Narbeth, Pa. 94p.

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It may be worth noting that on Feb. 7 and 8, a storm with severe cold, snow, and gale-force winds struck the Atlantic Coast. The same weekend, two other species of waterfowl rarely seen in the Warren area were found on the Allegheny River: a red-throated Loon and a White-winged Scoter.

The above record was made by birders with up to 35 years' field experience.

Record No.: 149-01-1967

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

Species: **Harlequin Duck**

Date of Sighting: **11 February 1967 to 13 February 1967**

Observer(s): **Harris Johnson, Ted Grisez**

Date of Submission: **1992**

Submitted by: **Ted Grisez**

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V		
					A	B	C
E. Kwater			X				
B. Haas			X				
F. Haas		X					
R. Ickes			X				
G. McWilliams			X				
S. Santner			X				
J. Skinner			X				
TOTALS		1	6				
DECISION			X				

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

*B. M. Haas*

Date:

2-27-93