



HARLEQUIN DUCK
149-01-2005 Presque Isle S.P. Erie Co
JERRY McWilliams

149-01-2005

Harlequin Duck
Histrionicus histrionicus

Location: Presque Isle State Park, Erie County, Pa.

Date: December 16, 2005

Time: 9:00 to 9:30 AM

Weather: Variably cloudy, wind southwesterly to 20 mph

Observer: Jerry McWilliams

Optics: 10 X 40 Zeiss binocular and Kowa TSN 4 spotting scope at 30X

Viewing distance: as close as 100 yards.

Viewing conditions: good

Details of sighting and description:

I was conducting the waterbird count when two all medium-sized all dark ducks flew in from the east along the shoreline and landed at the east end of breakwater #55. I immediately trained my scope on the birds and identified them as a male and a female Harlequin Duck. Based upon the males plumage it appeared to be a first winter bird.

The male was mostly brownish-gray overall, except the neck and head which was more bluish-gray in color. In better light the mantle appeared to have some bluish-gray feathers as well. Some rusty-colored flank feathers were also visible. There were two white angular spots directly behind the stubby gray bill. The upper spot was about half the size of the lower spot and both nearly joined in the middle. There was a prominent round white spot directly behind the eye. On the side of the birds thick neck was a faint bluish-white vertical bar and below that there was a bold white bar bordered by black that crossed the side of the breast. The female was more of a brownish color overall than the male and the white patches behind the bill were washed with pale brown and rather irregular in shape. The round white spot behind the eye of the female was nearly as bold as the white round spot behind the eye of the male. When they flew in I could see that their bellies were quite pale gradually fading to dark brown along the breast, flanks, and undertail coverts. Their upper wings were entirely dark brown resembling the wings of a dark-winged scoter. Their tails were rather long, especially compared to the stubby tails of dark-winged scoters, and all dark.

They swam around and preened some before swimming west going from breakwater to breakwater. I managed to obtain some photographs before they swam off.

I have seen several Harlequin Ducks at Presque Isle and many more along the Atlantic and Pacific coasts

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation – Round One

Species: Harlequin Duck (*Histrionicus histrionicus*)

Date of Sighting: 16 December 2005 to 16 December 2005

Location: PRESQUE ISLE STATE PARK

County : ERIE

Observer(s): Jerry McWilliams

Date of Submission: 2005

Submitted by: Jerry McWilliams

Written Description: Yes

Photo: Yes

Specimen: No

Recording: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A	Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	Abstain
R. Wiltraut								
A. Guarente	X							
P. Guris	X							
J. Stanley	X							
E. Witmer	X							
J. Heller	X							
M. Sharp	X							
TOTALS	6							
DECISION	X							

Comments: 6/0

Signature (Secretary)



Date:

7/24/05