

PENNSYLVANIA RARE BIRD REPORT FORM

This form is presented as a convenience and guide. It can be used if desired, but is not necessary for submitting a report. Species requiring documentation are those on the Review List or not on the Official List of Birds of Pennsylvania. Send documentation to:

Nick Pulcinella, Secretary
Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee
613 Howard Ave.
West Chester, PA 19380
nickpulcinella@verizon.net

SPECIES (common and scientific name) Harlequin Duck, *Histrionicus histrionicus*
Subspecies (if known) None recognized by AOU

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS 1 **SEX(ES)** Female

AGE(S) AND PLUMAGE(S) (e.g. immature; adult in breeding plumage; year for gulls; basic or alternate if you prefer those terms; state of molt if applicable): Age is not discernible after September of hatch year

DATE OF OBSERVATION 14 March 2015 **TIME** 1000 – 1030, 1300 to 1330, and 1500 to 1530

LOCATION (city, borough, township) City of Warren, Warren County

EXACT SITE (e.g. name of park, lake, road) On the Allegheny River in downtown Warren, just downstream from the confluence of Conewango Creek and the Allegheny River, behind the TAWC Bus Station.

OBSERVER REPORTING:

Name: Stephen Dowlan
Address: PO Box 114
City: Warren
State: PA ZIP: 16352 e-mail (optional) Owlhooter@aol.com
phone (optional): 814-968-3085

OTHER OBSERVERS (only those who saw and identified the bird with you): Robert Sundell

HABITAT (e.g. mowed field, woodland edge, any other details) Large river channel with swift current and riffles

DISTANCE TO BIRD No more than 100 feet at the closest proximity.

VIEWING CONDITIONS (sky, weather, position of sun relative to you) Overcast, occasional fog, light drizzle, view was from the north, northwest and southeast of the bird.

OPTICAL EQUIPMENT USED Nikon Fieldscope EDIII with 20 – 60X zoom eyepiece. Photographed with a Nikon D7100 with 80-400mm VR zoom lens at 400mm.

DESCRIPTION (Include as much detail as you observed – size relative to other species present; “jizz”= e.g. posture, body shape, and proportions; colors and patterns of plumage; bill, eye, and leg characteristics; other features relevant to this individual): The bird was in a mixed flock of mostly Buffleheads, Common Mergansers, Greater Scaup, Common Goldeneyes, and Redheads. It was slightly longer than close-by female Buffleheads, but appeared to have a proportionally smaller head, and the body base color was brown rather than black, as with the female Bufflehead. It was much smaller than nearby Common Mergansers. The bird had steep forehead shape, though not as “blocky” as with the female Bufflehead. The face had two white spots - one irregular and indistinct larger spot or “patch” behind the bill that extended to the top of the eye, and one smaller, brighter spot at the back of the head just above the base of the head. The white spot in front of the eye had a brownish inclusion between the eye and the front of the face. The bird had no wing bars or any other contrasting markings on the body or wings – it was seen on the water at full rest and in flight. The bill appeared to be greyish, and the legs and feet (seen in flight) did not contrast markedly with the body color. Numerous photos were acquired.

BEHAVIOR (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing). The bird was actively feeding in the riffles with the associated species. It often dove in synchrony with a female Common Goldeneye or nearby Bufflehead. It flushed briefly several times, but never flew more than about 100 feet.

VOCALIZATIONS: None were heard

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE IF ANY: Photograph: Many Video recording _____ Audio recording _____ Drawing _____ Photographer/recorder/illustrator:

Name: Steve Dowlan

Address: PO Box 114

City: Tiona **State:** PA **ZIP:** 16352

e-mail (optional): Owlhooter@aol.com **phone:** (optional)814-968-3085

Please include a copy of the photograph or recording with your report, and accompany it with a complete written documentation if the identification is obvious to you. If you made a drawing, please include it.

IF THIS IS A DEAD BIRD:

General condition Not applicable **If collected (by permit), location and number of specimen if known:** Not applicable

SEPARATION FROM SIMILAR SPECIES (how you eliminated others): The bird could easily be distinguished from a female white-winged scoter by the steep forehead, body size (close to Bufflehead, but much smaller than Common Merganser), small bill and lack of white speculum on the wing.

DISCUSSION – Anything else relevant to the observation that will aid the committee in evaluating it: NONE

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND/OR SIMILAR SPECIES: Please see the following references:

Dowlan, S. 2003. Harlequin Duck (*Histrionicus histrionicus*). In Marshall, D.B., M.G. Hunter and A.L. Contreras, eds. Birds of Oregon: a general reference. Oreg. State Univ. Press, Corvallis, OR. 115-118.

Wright, K.K., H. Bruner, J.L. Li, R.L. Jarvis, and S. Dowlan. 2000. The Distribution, Phenology and Prey of Harlequin Ducks, *Histrionicus histrionicus*, in a Cascade Mountain stream, Oregon. *Canad. Field Natur.* 114:187-195.

Dowlan, S. 1996. The Breeding Status and Distribution of Harlequin Ducks in Oregon: A Summary of Observations and Survey Efforts. *Oreg. Birds* 22:2, 42-47.

Thompson, J. R., R. Goggans, P. Greenlee, and S. Dowlan. 1993. Abundance, Distribution and Habitat Associations of the Harlequin Duck in the Cascades Mountains, Oregon. Unpublished. A cooperative report prepared for: Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Willamette National Forest, Mt. Hood National Forest, and Bureau of Land Management, Salem District.

REFERENCES CONSULTED:

During observation: Extensive personal experience

After observation: Numerous photos acquired

DATE OF THIS REPORT: 15 March 2015



SIGNATURE OF OBSERVER

Female Harlequin Duck, 14 March 2015, City of Warren, Warren County, Pennsylvania. Photos from 1300 to 1330.

