

## Harlequin Duck

*Histrionicus histrionicus*

Observer: Jerry McWilliams

Location: Sunset Point, Presque Isle S.P., Erie, Pa.

Date: November 29, 2017

Time: about 8:30 AM

Weather: Clear, wind WNW to 20 mph, temp. 46 F

Viewing distance: about 150 feet

Optics: Kowa TSN 4 at 30 X

Details: While conducting the waterbird I saw a female Harlequin Duck zoom past the watch in an easterly direction low over the water just offshore along the breakwaters. It was a little larger than a Bufflehead with entirely all dark brown upperside including wings. The neck was short and thick with a rounded head. It had a distinctive white patch at the base of the bill and a white round spot behind the eye. Surf Scoter was ruled out because they are larger with a different head profile, slower wing beats and with less distinctive pale patches on the face. I am quite familiar with both species, since I see them every year, especially Surf Scoters often in numbers.