

009-01-1990

EARED GREBE
(Podiceps nigricollis)
in Erie County

On Monday October 29, 1990 while scanning Presque Isle Bay I discovered 2 Eared Grebes swimming together. The diagnostic shape was easily seen at a distance of about 100 feet. I was using a 10 X 40 Zeiss Binocular and later studied it more closely with a 25X Bushnell Spotting Scope.

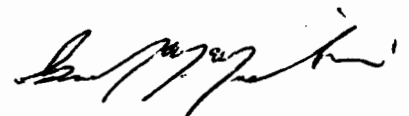
The most striking features of the birds were their long necks, short and very rounded heads, and very thin and pointed bills. Since both birds were nearly identical in shape and plumage I will describe the birds as one. The grebe was approximately the same size as a Horned Grebe (Podiceps auritus). The upper mandible was about 2/3 as long as the head and was all dark, thin, and straight tapering gradually to a fine point. The lower mandible was all dark and nearly the same thickness as the upper mandible at its base and at approximately 2/3 from the base the lower mandible angled sharply upwards meeting the upper mandible at its point which gave the bill the appearance of being upturned. A lateral view of a Horned Grebes bill is wider than an Eared Grebe and Horned Grebes usually have gray tipped bills. The head was round, with the highest point being at the center of the crown not flat-topped like Horned Grebe. The back of the head did not protrude past the neck as in Horned Grebe. When the grebe looked straight at me the width of the head was only slightly wider than the neck whereas the Horned Grebes head is noticeably wider than the neck. The entire head was dusky brown with a white chin connected to a diffuse pale crescent shaped area behind the eye, but not extending above the eye. There was no white spot in front of the eye as in Horned Grebe. The throat was dusky down to the upper breast where it was white. The dusky area of the throat became darker as it blended along the sides of the neck and became as dark on the back of the neck as on the head and mantle. The flanks and undertail coverts showed areas of white similar to Horned Grebe.

Viewing conditions were good under mostly cloudy skies (cumulostratus) at 12:15 PM. The grebes were studied and photographed for 30 minutes.

I have seen 9 of the 13 birds of this species that have been recorded in Erie Co. and have photographed most of those. I have also seen many in the western states.

I saw an Eared Grebe on Presque Isle in the same area on Nov. 11 and 2 Eared Grebes on Nov. 17 which I believe were probably the same birds as the 2 seen on Oct. 29.

Jerry McWilliams



Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # of

Species: **Eared Grebe**

Date of Sighting: **October 29, 1990**

Observer(s): **Jerry McWilliams**

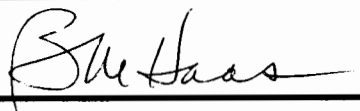
Date of Submission: **1990 Erie**

Submitted by: **Jerry McWilliams**

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V		
					A	B	C
E. Kwater			X				
B. Haas			X				
F. Haas			X				
R. Leberman			X				
G. McWilliams			X				
S. Santner			X				
P. Schwalbe			X				
TOTALS			7				
DECISION			X				

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):



Date:

3-24-91