

## PA Rare Bird Report

<b>Submission Date</b>	2019-03-01 13:18:22
<b>Observer's Name</b>	Ian Gardner
<b>E-mail</b>	gardnie07@gmail.com
<b>Observer's Address</b>	United States
<b>Names of additional observers</b>	Chester Zook, Chuck Berthoud
<b>Species (Common Name)</b>	Harris's Sparrow
<b>Species (Scientific Name)</b>	Zonotrichia querula
<b>Number of individuals</b>	1
<b>Age(s) and Plumage(s) and Sex (if known)</b>	1st winter, basic plumage
<b>Observation Date and Time</b>	02-13-2019 1:30 PM
<b>Did you submit this sighting to eBird?</b>	Yes
<b>Link to eBird checklist</b>	<a href="https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S52661521">https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S52661521</a>
<b>County</b>	Dauphin
<b>Location (City, Borough, Township)</b>	Lykens Township
<b>Exact Site (E.g. Name of park, lake, road)</b>	751 W Middle Road, Lykens, PA
<b>GPS coordinates of sighting</b>	40.619385, -76.765353
<b>Habitat</b>	Old field, narrow tree line, and gravel lane adjacent to narrow paved road
<b>Distance to bird</b>	20 feet
<b>Viewing conditions</b>	Conditions varied between clear blue skies and strong snow squalls when visibility dropped to 20-30 feet
<b>Optical equipment used</b>	Swarovski 8.5x40 binoculars
<b>Description</b>	Large sparrow, larger than the other two Zonotrichia species (White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows). Orange bill, tan face, dense black spots on crown, white throat with thin black malar stripes, black necklace with dense black triangle in the middle upper part of breast, black streaks down the flanks on an otherwise white underside. Mantle was streaked black/gray/brown very similar to a White-throated Sparrow. Two white wing bars on brown and black wings. Long brown tail with white under tail coverts. Orange legs.

**Behavior (be as detailed as possible about what the bird was doing)**

Associating with large mixed (mostly sparrow) flock of about 70 birds that would spend about 15 minutes foraging through seed mix that was spread on the gravel lane adjacent to the road. Then the flock would disperse to the surrounding old field and small spring-fed stream for about 20-30 minutes before returning to the seed pile. Harris's Sparrow was never the first to return to the seed pile and would be almost the last bird to eat every time. All the birds would keep a wary eye out for predators or the next snow squall. An adult Cooper's Hawk dove through the flock at one point, but did not catch any prey.

**Separation from similar species (How you eliminated others)**

Somewhat similar to immature White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows, but the black triangle on the breast and distinct tan face distinguished this bird from other species. No other sparrows were as large.

**Are you positive of your identification ? (Why or why not)**

Yes, I've seen several Harris's Sparrows both in migration in the Dakotas and a few wintering birds in PA. Very cooperative individual that allowed viewers to take many good quality photos.

**During**

Sibley App

**Supporting evidence (check all that apply)**

Photograph

**Upload images, audio, video or drawings**



[HASP2.jpg](#)



[HASP3.jpg](#)



[HASP4.jpg](#)



[HASP5.jpg](#)



[HASP6.jpg](#)



[Zonotrichia1.jpg](#)

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