

#### 48. TURNING A MILLION EYES AND EARS ACROSS ALASKA TO WORK FOR BIRD CONSERVATION

Karla Hart

Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Watchable Wildlife Program, PO Box 25526, Juneau, AK 99802,  
karla\_hart@fishgame.state.ak.us.

By their sheer numbers, birders make a difference for bird conservation and science and open doors to unique partnerships and projects. For the past three years, under the umbrella of Wings Over Alaska, we have been working on various projects to help get more people involved in birding; to encourage birders to take their skills to a higher level; to encourage birders to explore and discover more of Alaska; and to encourage people to become more interested in birds and bird conservation. We are presently partnering with Department of Commerce, the Economic Development Administration and many others to develop birding tourism in the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta region. We continue to encourage birders to enter their data into eBird. We serve as another way for birders (especially casual and visiting birders) to connect with the research community (e.g., where to report banded birds, what to do with the Virginia Rail a cat killed in Sitka, and who wants to know about beak deformities). Continued communication and outreach with birders can help with many research projects. Birder data collection is often not systematic; however, the value of opportunistic sightings and reports should be appreciated.



# 11<sup>th</sup> Alaska Bird Conference and Workshops



February 7-9, 2006  
Juneau, Alaska