

Birding with NatureAlaska © ***“More than just birds, our trademark”***

“The Specs are back.” Prudhoe Bay, along the Dalton Highway, is the most reliable place in Alaska to see Spectacled Eider.

Prudhoe Bay is the biogeographic center of arctic Alaska’s coastal tundra, where the full sweep of eiders, shorebirds, waterfowl and specialties are found in early June in their full breeding plumage.

Adak in the Aleutian Islands and Kenai Peninsula are the two other critical biogeographic regions.



Spectacled Eider at Prudhoe Bay

For the best Alaska birding – where and when

.....late May to late June • Dalton Highway • Adak Island • Kenai Peninsula

For the best birding, a tour must plan where to go, **and** when to go. Timing is critical as northern ecosystems have about two weeks each when birds are in full breeding behavior, flying and singing. Conditions needed for the best birding, begin in late May and extend to late June when the North American breeding bird survey concludes. July is **not** a time for serious birding.

On **Adak Island**, Whiskered Auklets feed in rip tides in late May; along the **Dalton Highway** in early June Spectacled Eider, Bluethroat and Boreal Chickadee are in full breeding displays; and the **Kenai Peninsula** where Red-faced Cormorants and Thick-billed Murres nest on seacliffs..

Why the Dalton Highway, Adak Island and Kenai Peninsula?

...the greatest diversity of birds, wildlife and wilderness for the time and money

The Dalton Highway encompasses three biogeographic regions, six ecosystems and 14 habitats: more than any week-long birding tour in Alaska. Prudhoe to Denali to Kenai is a single north-south route that crosses the major ecosystems of Alaska, with no time lost in Anchorage waiting on airplanes. We visit Denali to see Mt. McKinley only, as it is a difficult place for birding. Nome is for groups only. Adak far surpasses the Pribilofs for Asiatic rarities, plus has the Whiskered Auklet.

Barrow and the Pribilofs have a special appeal, but limited as tours lump them into complicated itineraries., expensive, with duplicative checklists and frequent air travel.

Birding with friends as a group

Birding as a group with friends, from Audubon chapters, local bird clubs, international birding societies, travel companies and with friends is an important and cost effective way to join Birding with NatureAlaska. Group size from four to 14. Custom itineraries are arranged.

The trademark of a pioneer birding company

NatureAlaska Tours is my way of nurturing a broader context for birders to birds and birding through a better awareness of habitat and conservation, peoples, places and lifestyles of the North. Finding the birds is fun and challenging, but not the only reward.

Finding birds, as well as new birding destinations, has been my trademark. From leading the first birding tours across all of arctic Alaska along the Dalton Highway in 1981 to Adak in the Aleutians in 2003. From being the first birding tour to locate Bristle-thighed Curlew at Nome in 1988, to leading the first birders to sea in the new Kenai Fjords National park.

I work hard to sort through the maze of marshes, muskeg, meadows and mountains to help you find the birds of Alaska. And to help acquire new perspectives, new habitat identification skills you can take with you to other destinations. A goal is to take the mystery – the random pursuit – out of finding the birds.

Here in Alaska, the dark days of winter are upon us. Soon, I'll trade mukluks and mittens for bird books and binoculars. **Birding with NatureAlaska in 2006** will celebrate 26 years of real adventures in the real Alaska with your real Alaskan guide.

Come North with me and learn for yourself that your first trip can be as interesting, fun, rewarding and adventurous as mine have been these many decades. Each June, when the birds are back at Prudhoe, I'll be there ready to look for your first Spectacled Eider.

Dan L. Wetzel, NatureAlaska Tours, LLC
call (907) 488-3746, write dwetzel@alaska.net or visit www.NatureAlaska.com