

One VOLUNTEER FIELD ASSISTANT (BIRDS) position available: Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge in north-central Alaska is looking for a volunteer field assistant in a project investigating the breeding biology of Whimbrels on the Refuge. The Whimbrel is a large tundra-breeding shorebird recognized as a species of conservation concern in Alaska and throughout its range. The research will investigate the nesting ecology and habitat use of a local population of Whimbrels about 130 miles northwest of Fairbanks. Research activities include re-sighting of marked birds, territory mapping, nest searching and monitoring, capture/markings of adults and chicks, and habitat descriptions. The study area is typical of the boreal forest biome with rivers, many wetlands, muskeg, tussock meadows, spruce forest, burn scars, etc. In addition to the vibrant bird life there, the full complement of boreal mammals occurs, including: moose, black and brown bears, wolf, red fox, lynx, river otter, marten, beaver, etc. Continuous fieldwork will run from May 1, 2012 through brood-rearing (mid- to late July). The crew leader will be heading out May 1 by helicopter from Fairbanks but understands that a potential student volunteer could not likely begin until after spring semester ends. Arrangements could be made to bring a student out later. The selected volunteer would ideally be current in mandatory USFWS/DOI safety trainings (e.g., first aid/CPR, watercraft, aircraft, firearms/bear); otherwise, such training will necessarily be provided by the refuge before heading to the field. Kanuti NWR will pay for travel between the Lower 48 (or Anchorage, AK) and Fairbanks, and between Fairbanks and the cabin. The refuge will provide for lodging and food both in Fairbanks and in the field. The refuge will provide most camping and field gear (but not clothing). Potential candidates should be mature and self-motivated, and work well in a small crew in a remote setting. Preference will be given to those with demonstrated experience in bird surveys/research and remote field work. Candidate should expect challenging environmental conditions (heat, rain, insect harassment), hiking long distances over uneven terrain with a moderately sized daypack, considerable canoeing and boating, intermittent primitive camping stints of 2-4 days, and potential bear encounters. The cabin has comfortable amenities such as propane cook stove, wood stove, bedrooms, solar electric power system, refrigeration, but no running water. Contact with the outside world will be via satellite phone and two-way radio. Any questions can be directed to Chris Harwood (email: christopher_harwood @ fws.gov or phone: toll-free at 1-877-220-1853; or 907-455-1836). Submit by email (if possible) a letter of interest, resume, and the names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses of three references **by 31 January 2012**.