



A New Name for the Kauai Amakihi (Drepanidinae: *Hemignathus*)

H. Douglas Pratt

The Kauai Amakihi was originally described by Wilson (1890) as *Himatione stejnegeri*. The species was removed from *Himatione* and placed in a new genus *Chlorodrepanis* by Wilson and Evans (1899), based on a manuscript later published by Perkins (1903). Amadon (1950) combined a number of previously recognized genera of Drepanidinae, including *Chlorodrepanis*, in *Loxops*, and in addition reduced *stejnegeri* to a subspecies of *Loxops virens*. Berger (1981) kept the subspecies status of *stejnegeri*, but transferred the species *virens* to an enlarged genus *Hemignathus*, based on my unpublished revision of the subfamily (Pratt 1979). The AOU Check-list (AOU 1983) followed Berger's usage.

Olson and James (1988) correctly pointed out that the epithet *stejnegeri* is unavailable for the Kauai Amakihi, whether as a species or subspecies, in the genus *Hemignathus*, because the combination *Hemignathus stejnegeri* had already been published by Wilson (1889) for the Kauai Akialoa (no junior synonyms are available) to replace the preoccupied *stejnegeri*, so long as this form is retained in the genus *Hemignathus*.

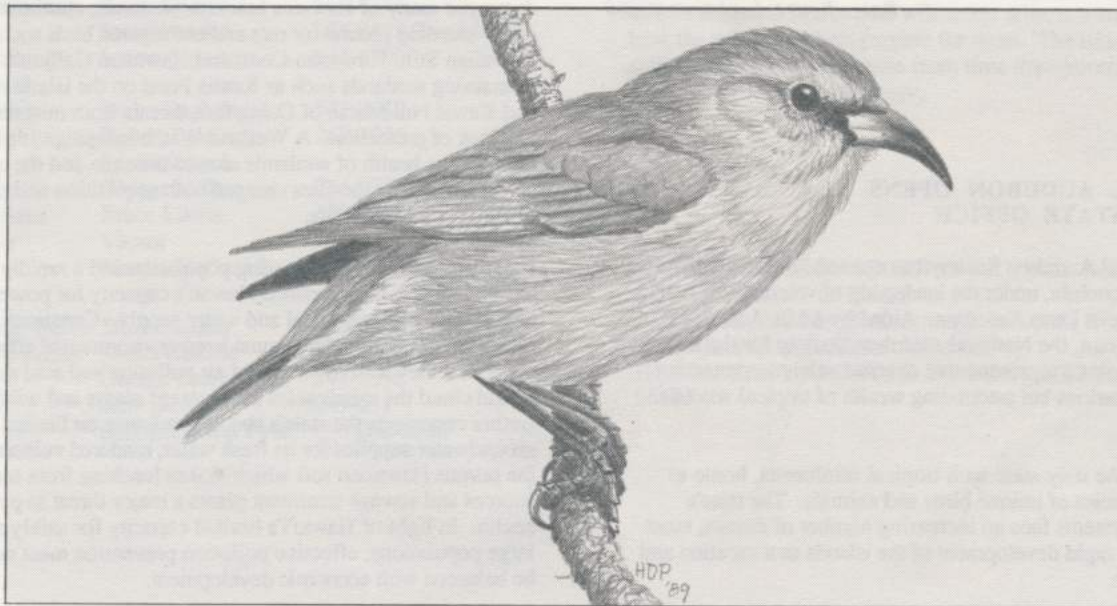
Olson and James (1988) considered a new name for the Kauai Amakihi to be unnecessary, as they disagree with my placement of that species in the enlarged genus *Hemignathus*; in any of the other genera proposed for this species the name *stejnegeri* would be available. They cited evidence from limb myology and cranial osteology in their argument that my concept of *Hemignathus* combined birds from distinct lineages. The portions of my work

pertinent to generic limits among the akialoas and amakihis are currently being revised for more formal publication. At that time, especially if Olson and James have by then enlarged on the brief remarks on generic characters in their 1988 paper, a proper comparative evaluation can be made of the arguments for and against retaining the Kauai Amakihi in *Hemignathus*.

In the meantime, most publications are likely to follow the AOU Check-list (AOU 1983) for nomenclature of Hawaiian birds. Because the Check-list regards the amakihi on Kauai as a subspecies of the Common Amakihi (*H. virens*), most writers will not be concerned with the nomenclatural problem unless they discuss subspecies. The Check-list itself refers to the Kauai form as the "*stejnegeri* group," and notice is given that some authors consider that group a separate species from the "*virens* group" found on the other Hawaiian Islands. Pratt et al. (1987) recognized the Kauai Amakihi as a species and used the improper combination *H. stejnegeri* for it. Rather than perpetuate such errors, and because I am largely responsible for the problem, I am obliged to propose a new specific epithet for the Kauai Amakihi in the genus *Hemignathus*. I suggest the name

Hemignathus kauaiensis

Nom. nov. for *Himatione stejnegeri* Wilson, 1890, preoccupied in *Himatione* by *H. stejnegeri* Wilson, 1899 (= *H. procerus* Cabanis, 1890).



The Kauai Amakihi - *Hemignathus kauaiensis*

Drawing by H. Douglas Pratt

In works that regard this form as a subspecies of *H. virens*, it will be known as *H. virens kauaiensis* and can be referred to as the "*kauaiensis* group." However, if the amakihi is excluded from *Hemignathus*, the proper epithet for the Kauai form will again be *stejnegeri* and *kauaiensis* will be a junior synonym.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank Kenneth C. Parkes for his assistance with the organization of this paper in traditional systematic form.

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NATIONAL AUDUBON OPENS HAWAII STATE OFFICE

The National Audubon Society has opened its Hawaii office in downtown Honolulu, under the leadership of veteran environmentalist Dana Kokubun. Aided by a MacArthur Foundation grant, the National Audubon Society for the first time is able to appoint a representative devoted solely to protecting Hawaii's precarious but astounding wealth of tropical wildlife habitat.

Hawaii is the only state with tropical rainforests, home to numerous species of unique birds and animals. The state's pristine ecosystems face an increasing number of threats, most notably from rapid development of the islands as a vacation and tourist center.

The pressure exerted on the Hawaiian environment is manifested not only in construction projects, which raze forests and drain wetlands, but in the more insidious dangers posed by power generation and waste disposal already straining Hawaii's fragile natural environment. Air and water pollution could have disastrous long-term effects, and many in Hawaii warn that development must proceed carefully, lest tourism destroy the unique and exotic climate which insures its success.

As National Audubon's Hawaii State Office Director, Dana Kokubun will begin a combined effort to focus the 1,600 members of the Hawaii Audubon Society on a concrete agenda of high priority local issues, as well as increasing awareness among the general public of the state's important conservation issues.

Ocean Pollution Hawaii's multi-billion dollar tourist industry relies to a large extent on the preservation of pristine island beaches and clear waters for ocean sports, snorkeling, cruises and whale-watching. A plan by the federal government calls for leasing 6.6 million acres of ocean floor surrounding the Hawaiian archipelago for sea bottom strip mining of cobalt. The operation of the mining equipment would cause up to 8000 tons of sediment sludge containing lead and mercury to be dumped into the ocean every day, possibly causing permanently murky water and introduction of deadly chemicals into the ocean food chain. At stake are Hawaii's precious coral reefs, sea turtles, ocean mammals including the endangered monk seal, and the fishing industry. The mining would also require a large processing plant which would discharge hazardous waste both into the air as exhaust, and in solid form onto the land.

Forest Management The mountain forests of Hawaii play host to a number of wildlife species found nowhere else in the United States, and whose survival depends on proper management of state and federal forests. Land-use violations in forest reserve lands have included bulldozing, cabin construction and illegal hunting in areas crucial to wildlife because of their isolation from human population. Failure of state and federal authorities to enforce laws protecting the forest sets a dangerous precedent for public land management in Hawaii, and puts the fragile ecosystem in grave danger.

Wetlands Preservation Booming coastal development has destroyed many of Hawaii's brackish wetlands, eliminating much of the breeding ground for rare and endangered birds such as the Hawaiian Stilt, Hawaiian Coot, and Hawaiian Gallinule. Remaining wetlands such as Kealia Pond on the island of Maui, and Kawai Nui Marsh of Oahu, face threats from mismanagement and lack of protection. A Wetland Watch campaign is planned to monitor the health of wetlands around the state and the activities of government authorities charged with acquisition and protection of these crucial habitats.

Clean air and water Increasing population and a rapidly growing tourist industry have strained Hawaii's capacity for power generation, waste disposal and water supply. Construction and operation of energy plants must keep environmental concerns in mind, lest they lead to increased air pollution and acid rain which would cloud the state's skies and damage plants and wildlife. Of further concern is the state's absolute reliance on limited groundwater supplies for its fresh water, rendered vulnerable by the porous Hawaiian soil which makes leaching from toxic sources and sewage treatment plants a major threat to public health. In light of Hawaii's limited capacity for safely sustaining large populations, effective pollution prevention must necessarily be balanced with economic development.

ERRATUM

This figure was inadvertently omitted from the November 1988 (Vol. 48, No. 11) issue of *'Elepaio*. It should be inserted after page 93 in the article, "Problems of Nomenclature and Identification of Introduced Birds in Hawaii: A Case Study of Two Estrildid Species," by Karen Falkenmayer.

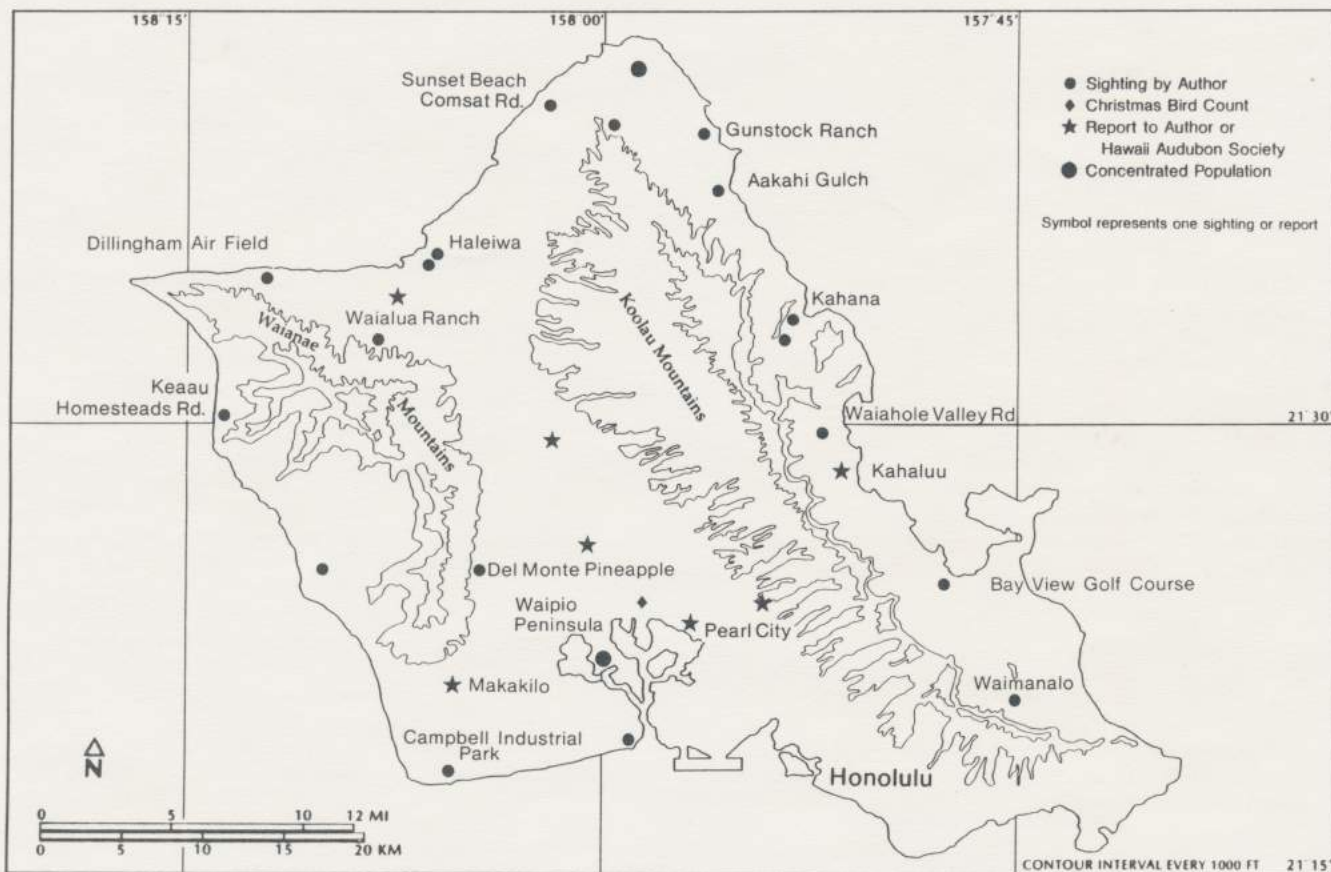


Figure 1. Distribution of the Common Waxbill (*Estrilda astrild*) on Oahu.

"Audubon's multi-faceted approach--science, education, and advocacy--to conservation problems uniquely qualifies us to increase public awareness of environmental problems in Hawaii" stated Ms. Kokubun. "As a first priority, the Hawaii State Office will initiate an on-going dialogue with all sectors of the decision-making community in order to quickly develop rational solutions."

A native of Hawaii with a diverse and successful environmental record, Ms. Kokubun has done both organizational work with the Sierra Club and other conservation organizations in the San Francisco Bay area, and related scientific studies. A graduate of Punahou School, she received her AB in Biology from the University of California at Berkeley. After working for a year as an Environmental Studies Instructor at the Yosemite Institute, Ms. Kokubun joined the Sierra Club staff in 1984. Shortly before accepting the Hawaii State directorship with the National Audubon Society, she served as legislative coordinator for a successful grassroots campaign to pass federal legislation to expand the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

WILD NENE HARASSED BY SCENIC AIRCRAFT

Documented reports by qualified observers of native animals being disturbed by low-flying aircraft are surprisingly rare. We suspect that observers simply are not making written records of disturbances. Hawaii Volcanoes National Park will be compiling such observations because we believe that the cumulative impact of disturbances from aircraft are probably detrimental to native species.

On 5 December, 1988 M. Hoffman was making routine observations of a flock of 18 wild Nene in Kipuka Kahalii, near Mauna Ulu, in Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. At 0945 a Hughes 500 scenic tour helicopter, frequently seen in the Park, arrived from the west. It was flying at about 250 feet above the ground, heading toward Puu Oo, a popular tour destination. This caused the birds to fly a short distance away. Before the birds appeared to have settled down, another low-flying helicopter and two airplanes flew over. This combination of aircraft activity caused part of the flock to leave the area.

Prior to the disturbances, the Nene were feeding and socializing; these behaviors are typical for this area and season. Socialization is a prelude to mate selection by younger birds, and eventually leads to pair bonding and nesting. Members of this flock have previously nested in the Kipuka Kahalii area. Nene habitat today is vastly changed from prehistoric times. The species is endangered and successful breeding by wild birds is critical to the species' survival. Protecting wild populations from disturbances, including harassment by sight-seeing aircraft, is important.

Scenic aircraft are considered a general nuisance in the national park and adjacent areas. Indeed, Hawaii Volcanoes and Haleakala National Park have articulated positions recommending that scenic aircraft stay out of the parks. This recommendation is aimed at protecting wilderness for the benefit of backcountry travelers. Parks do not yet have regulatory powers to enforce restrictions for aircraft. However, if aircraft disturbances is shown to be harmful to native endangered species, it may be possible to involve restrictions on aircraft flight paths over parks and reserves in the future.

We continually strive to protect the last truly wild places in Hawaii-- places where one can retreat from the noise and clutter of our increasingly urbanized living space, and where we can rejoice in the sounds and sights of our natural environment. Those magnificent "human flying machines" are not welcome in those places.

*Dan Taylor and M. Hoffman
Hawaii Volcanoes National Park*

A BIRD IN THE BUSH IS WORTH MORE THAN YOU THINK The 1989 Audubon Birdathon

Few people think of birdwatching as a competitive activity, much less as a way of making money. But on 29 April, the Hawaii Audubon Society will take part in the world's largest competitive birdwatching event, the 1989 Audubon Birdathon, organized by the National Audubon Society. Hawaii Audubon members will use their birdwatching skills to raise money for local environmental research, education and action programs. Local Auduboners will join birders across the country, scanning the skies and bushes in a one-day marathon attempt to identify as many bird species as possible.

Individuals and Audubon chapters are competing for prizes based on the most species seen and the greatest amount of money raised. Prizes such as binoculars, scopes and cameras have been donated by companies including Minolta, Nikon, Zeiss, Leica, Bushnell, Leupold & Stevens and Tasco.

Birdathons will be held throughout the United States during the period 1 April to 15 May. Birdathon participants obtain pledges from sponsors who agree to contribute a certain amount of money for each species seen in a 24-hour period. Pledges range from a quarter to even \$10 or more per species. Hawaii participants will be encouraging sponsors to contribute at least a dollar per endangered species seen, given their rarity and relative importance.

Proceeds from the Birdathon will help finance local Audubon conservation projects in Hawaii. Functions of the office include increasing the public's awareness of environmental issues in Hawaii and the choices they present to all residents. This year the office will focus on wetland preservation, acquiring stable funding for research on Hawaii's endangered bird species, and increasing enforcement measures for preventing damage to native habitats by alien plant and animal species. In addition, the money will be used for several cooperative environmental education programs. One project being discussed is a permanent display for the Honolulu's Zoo's newly remodeled Discovery Center (formerly the Children's Zoo barn); another is the development and distribution of a slideshow on the critically endangered Hawaiian Crow.

Teams of birders will assemble on the islands of Maui, Kauai, Lanai, Molokai, Hawaii and Oahu early on the morning of 29 April for this great event. Participate as a birder or a sponsor by calling the island coordinators listed below -- a complete list will

appear in the next *'Elepaio*. Join us as a birder--all are welcome, novices and experts alike-- and have fun, meet new friends, and help Hawaii's irreplaceable natural treasures all at the same time! Sponsor a participant by returning the coupon below and get the same satisfaction from the comfort of your home on 29 April! A bird in the bush IS worth a lot!

Lana'i:	Lynn Carey	262-0254 (O'ahu phone #)
Molokai:	Thane Pratt	524-8464 (Oahu phone #)
Maui:	Fern DuVall	572-1584, eves
Oahu:	Dana Kokubun	522-5566, weekdays
Kauai :	Winona Sears	822-3045

Also, Patrick J. O'Farrell, Dr. and Mrs. Haig K. Naylor, Maude Nielson, Eric Oshita, Candace Pelissero, Harrison and Lorraine Perreira, Beverly Porter, Jane Pultz, Neil Reimer, Carol and Frank Rice, Charles Richardson, Stephanie Ross, Ralph Saito, Ingrid Shallenberger, Dunlap Shannon, Joseph Siphron, George Skedelski, Ann Snyder, Mrs. Bernard Stuhlmacher, Kiley Sullivan, D. Swallow, Ray Tabata, Wilma Tice, Timm Timoney, Michael Tom, Steven Tom, Phyllis Turnbull, Genie Wery, Mark White, Sara Wilkinson, Margaret Witte, James and Donna Wong, Lt.Col. Edbert Woods, and Pam Zenefski.

In addition, Allen Allison, Lawrence Katahira, and Bob and Leilani Pyle donated to the Mae Mull Fund.

Thanks also go to artist Jean M. Kubota who donated a watercolor painting of a Nukupuu.

TEAR HERE AND MAIL YOUR PLEDGE TODAY!

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I am happy to pledge \$ _____ per species in support of your birdathon.

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MAHALO!

The dollars continue to roll in from the Hawaii Audubon Society's first fund raising drive. At press time, \$5,246 has been received from you, our members. Proceeds are dedicated to the protection and enhancement of Hawaii's native ecosystems, promoting research and publications in Hawaiian natural history, supporting graduate students in their environmental studies, and educating school children about their natural world.

Thanks go to the following members whose contributions had been received at press time: Ginny Alatasi, Robert Bemm, Shirley Bennett, Cynthia Blackwell, Alan and Patricia Britten, Phil and Andrea Bruner, G. Fred Bush III, Joseph Bussen, William Bustard, Bruce Carlson, G. Elaine Chow, Robert Clague, Virginia Crozier, Dr. Fern Duvall II and Dr. Renate Gassmann Duvall, Richard Elwell, Stewart and Peggy Fefer, Leonard Freed, Fred Gartley, Barbara Gibbons, Jonathan Good, John Hall, Patricia Hanna, Bryan Harry, Sibyl Heide, Barbara Heil, Leslie Higuchi, Janet Holaday, Ed and Sandra Hoover, James Hunter, Dr. Joel Jarolimek, Molly Jones, Art Kanna, Helen Kiefer, Kevin Klein, William Lampe, David Latorre, Rodney Lau, Beverly Dang Lee, Sue Lin Lewis, J. Macomb, Jr., Lola Mench, and Sherry Mossbarger.

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submitted by Susan Schenk

NOTICE TO AUTHORS

The *'Elepaio*, Journal of the Hawaii Audubon Society invites authors to submit scientific articles on the natural history of Hawaii and the Pacific. Scientific articles are subject to peer review. The *'Elepaio* also serves as a newsletter to inform members of conservation issues, Society events and other information of interest to members. Newsletter items (as opposed to scientific articles) may be sent to Suzan Harada, 3081 Holua Place Honolulu, Hawaii 96819. Newsletter items **MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE 10TH OF THE MONTH** to be considered for publication in the next month's issue.

Scientific articles should be typewritten and double spaced, and three copies of the text should be submitted to Sheila Conant, Scientific Editor, Department of General Science, 2450 Campus Rd., Honolulu, HI 96822. Any photographs should be submitted as photographic prints, in color or black and white (they will appear in black and white). The prints should be 3.5 by 5 inches or larger, and should be adequately cropped if cropping is required. Original copies of figures (e.g. maps, graphs) should be clear and clean, with lettering large enough to remain legible upon reduction to fit the newsletter format. Authors are advised to design their illustrations with the *'Elepaio's* columnar format and size in mind (please look at a copy of the journal). Citations should follow the form of those in recent articles.

HAS BOARD MEMBER HONORED

HAS Board member Todd Lum was recently selected as the Wildlife Officer of the Year for 1988 by the Shikar-Safari Club.

The Shikar-Safari Club is an international organization dedicated to the preservation of natural resources around the world. The club annually honors an officer in each of the wildlife departments of the 50 states who has made the greatest contribution toward wildlife conservation.

Mr. Lum was selected as the recipient of the award in recognition of his efforts on behalf of hunters and hunting programs in the state. Among other things, he developed the first wildlife revolving fund for expanded wildlife conservation projects; produced videos on hunting methods; and teaching of wildlife conservation and hunter ethics to training classes.

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NAS OPPORTUNITIES

NAS announces the following exciting positions for professionals and college students:

Qualified individuals with teaching experience in a wide range of natural science subjects and ecological disciplines can become a part of the prestigious staff one of Audubon's camps and workshops. The program runs for eight weeks in Connecticut, Maine or Wyoming. Positions include salary, room and board. Interested individuals should send their resumes to Philip Schaeffer, Executive Director, National Environmental Education Center, National Audubon Society, 613 Riversville Road, Greenwich Conn.06831. Those selected for consideration will receive a detailed job description and application form.

Also available for college students are internships in National Audubon's Capitol Hill office. Internships are from three to six months. Arrangements for college credits can be made. Interested individuals should submit a resume, a writing sample, and a letter stating your special interests and availability to Tracy Balch, National Audubon Society, 801 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E., Suite 301, Washington D.C. 20003. Deadline for materials is April 1.

**MARCH FIELD TRIP: KOKO HEAD
NIGHT REEF WALK**

The next HAS field trip will be a night reef walk along a lava bench at Koko Head on Saturday, 18 March. During this nocturnal low tide participants will have a chance to view reef fishes, invertebrates, molluscs, and other fascinating marine life. Participants must wear swimsuit (or clothes that can get wet), limu tabis or diving booties, and bring a flashlight. Meet at Hawaii Kai Baskins and Robbins at 7:00 PM. For details call Bruce Eilerts at 599-4795.

MARCH PROGRAM: TSUNAMI

On Monday, 20 March, Professor Joseph Morgan of the Department of Geography, University of Hawaii, Manoa will give a presentation on tsunamis. At 7:30 pm at Atherton Halau at B.P. Bishop Museum, he will cover what is a tsunami and how the public can best prepare for them. The islands have been subject to this natural mence from time immemorial, learn how to prepare for the next big one.

**HAWAII AUDUBON SOCIETY/NATIONAL AUDUBON
SOCIETY JOINT OFFICES**

ADDRESS: 212 Merchant Street, Room 320, Honolulu, Hawaii
HAS PHONE NUMBER: 528-1432
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96822

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Mar.8 (Wed.) Fund Raising Committee meeting at HAS office at 7:00 PM.
- Mar.13 (Mon.) Board of Directors meeting at HAS office at 7:00 PM.
- Mar.18 (Sat.) Field trip to Koko Head for a night reef walk. Meet at 7:00 PM at Hawaii Kai Baskins and Robbins. For details see page 17 of this issue.
- Mar.18 (Sat.) 'Elepaio paste-up at HAS office at 1:00 PM For details call Suzan Harada at 845-6704 (evenings).
- Mar.20 (Mon.) Genreal meeting at Atherton Halau, B.P.Bishop Museum at 7:30 PM. Program: Tsunami by Dr. Joseph Morgan. For details see page 17 in this issue.

HAS office is located at 212 Merchant Street (Arcade Building), Room 320. The building doors are locked at 6:00 PM on weekdays and 4:30 PM on Saturdays. A person will be posted at the Merchant Street door to let you in for meetings. If you are late, please call 528-1432. Parking is available on the street free after 6:00 PM on weekdays and all day on Sundays (even in the red zones). Check the signs at other times.

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