

Gibson, whose beachcombing activities have added a new species to the Australian list.

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### Sparrows Taking Dead Grasshoppers from Car Radiators.

—Michael M. Wilson has drawn attention to the habit of House Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) feeding on dead insects caught on the radiators of cars. (*Emu*, vol. 54, p. 69). I have also noted this habit at Deniliquin, where the birds wait on cars pulling to the kerb in the main street and promptly start picking the charred grasshoppers off the grille.

Sparrows are probably the greatest opportunists of the bird world and one would expect the news of this easy source of food to spread rapidly. However, I have not seen Sparrows feeding in this manner at any other nearby town or homestead. At my own residence, only half a mile from the town's main street, the local Sparrows never avail themselves of the ready cooked meal. The clue to the reason for this apparent isolation of a feeding habit to small areas, is possibly given in recent work in England by D. Summers-Smith (*British Birds*, vol. XLVII, p. 265), in which, by colour ringing and constant observation, it has been found that House Sparrows are separated into small colonies of about ten to fifteen pairs with but little contact between colonies. The isolation of the feeding habit could also be cited as further proof of Summers-Smith's findings.

My local Sparrows readily avail themselves of the shade underneath my vehicle and maybe there lies the explanation of how this specialized feeding behaviour originates. An enterprising bird must eventually locate the supply of food above his head.—JOHN N. HOBBS, Deniliquin, N.S.W., 23/3/55.