

Indian Minahs from its operation. This matter had originally been brought up at a Council meeting by J. B. Were.

The last reference I could find on the subject of Sparrows was one dated 1875, when a request for some to liberate on Champion Island in Torres Strait was refused.

With regard to the suggestion from Colonel C. S. (later Sir Charles) Ryan, that the Tree Sparrow had died out, it is to be noted that Lucas and Le Souef say "The list of survivors then is much shorter and comprises both House and Tree Sparrows".

In the first Proceedings of the Zoological and Acclimatisation Society, as well as recording the liberations mentioned here there is reference to a number of sparrows being sent to Sydney and to 20 Chinese Sparrows being released at St. Kilda.

From these notes it will be noted that the two species of sparrows were set free on opposite sides of the city, the House Sparrow at Royal Park and the Tree Sparrow at the Botanic Gardens and St. Kilda, both species adapting themselves quickly to their new environment as might be expected with these birds.

Protective Flocking of Regent Honeyeater.—Many species of birds gather in compact flocks as protection from the attacks of hawks. This has rarely been observed with our native birds, although the introduced Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) often adopts this mode of protection. The following experience with the Regent Honeyeater (*Zanthomiza phrygia*) should prove of interest.

On February 8, 1958, A. R. McGill and I investigated a patch of open forest near Cooranbong, a small township west of Lake Macquarie and about sixty miles north of Sydney. Many of the angophoras and eucalypts were in flower, and honeyeaters and large flocks of lorikeets had been moving around throughout the afternoon. It was not until late in the afternoon that we first encountered the Regent Honeyeater. A party of five flew swiftly through the trees pursued by a Collared Sparrow-Hawk (*Accipiter cirrocephalus*). A few minutes later a dense compact flock of forty flew into a leafy eucalypt near us. These remained a few minutes then flew off and were followed by another flock of fifteen birds which alighted in the same tree.

All of the flocks were very compact, the birds keeping close together and flying swiftly. They were only noticed to alight once—in a tree with a dense canopy of foliage. On taking flight the flocks left as a whole, all birds taking off together and keeping their compact flight. All of the flocks were travelling from the direction in which the Sparrow-Hawk had disappeared. In our opinion this was an excellent example of protective flocking, due, obviously, to the presence of this swift-flying predator.—M. T. KAVENEY, Bonnell's Bay, N.S.W., 20/4/58.