

## GENERAL NOTES

**A House Sparrow roost in Lima, Peru.**—Since its introduction in the parks of Lima in 1951, the House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) has become quite common and now greatly outnumbers the native Rufous-collared Sparrow (*Zonotrichia capensis*). The great numbers of the introduced bird are most obvious at roosts, and I made a census of one in Central Lima occupying four trees in a small plaza across from the Santo Domingo cathedral, at the busy intersection of Jiron Lima and Jiron Camana.

During the austral winter a continual cloud layer covers the city and sparrow roosting begins in the reduced light of late afternoon. On 15 August 1972 I recorded the total number of House Sparrows arriving at the roost for each 5-minute interval from 16:15 to 17:55. The rate of arrival varied from 84/5-minutes (16:15) to a maximum of 469/5-minutes (16:45). The data (Figure 1) show a rapid linear increase in arrival rates until the maximum, and then a somewhat slower and more irregular decrease through the end of counting. Throughout the sparrows kept up a constant loud chattering. This small roost contained about 200 birds when counting started; the 5,419 arrivals counted plus late-comers after censusing give a rough total of about 6,000 birds.

It is interesting that this introduced species has retained its temperate habit of roosting (Summers-Smith 1963, *The House Sparrow*, London, Collins) in a tropical city within 12 degrees of the equator. The data from this single roost also reflect a small part of the overall success of the sparrows in a very arid environment, as Lima has an average annual rainfall of less than 6 inches.—CHARLES F. LECK, *Department of Zoology, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey 08903*. Accepted 30 Oct. 72.

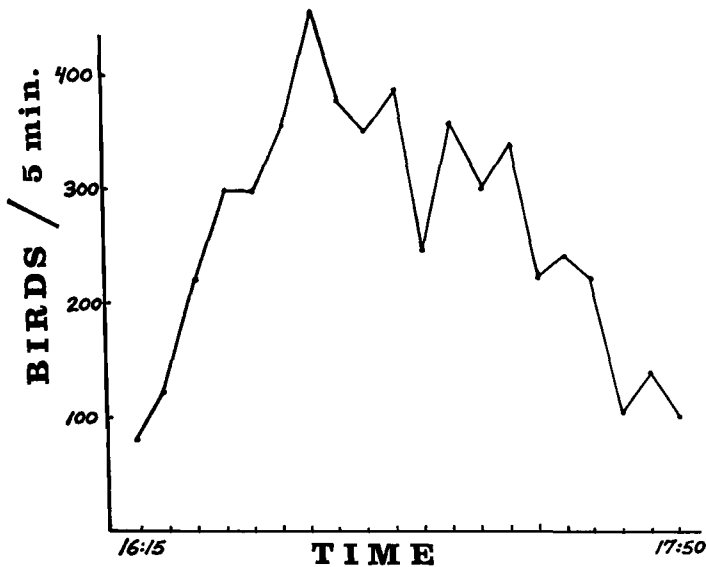


Figure 1. Arrival rates of sparrows at the roost, shown as the number of birds per 5-minute period (15 August 1972).