

## REVISITING THE PAST

Janice and I are moving house at the moment, and as happens when packing up, I came across a number of things I haven't seen for years. Among them was a rather faded and dog-eared article I wrote for our magazine more than forty years ago, but didn't get around to submitting for publication. It's dated 19/8/'65, so I think it might well be time it saw the light of day. So here goes...

### THE STRIATED FINCH

by Richard Chilton



WILD STRIATED FINCH PHOTOGRAPHED  
IN INDIA

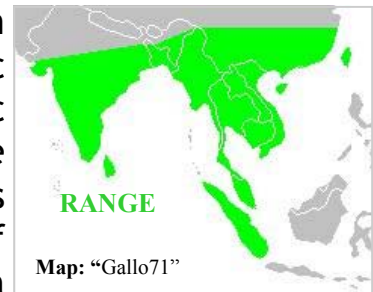
Photo: "Krayker"

In recent months (remember this is in 1965) a few pure-bred Striated Finches, *Lonchura striata*, have become available in Adelaide, and having obtained a few pair of this species of manikin, I should like to pass on the information I have gained in regard to their breeding and habits in the aviary.

The Striated Finch is also known as Striated Munia, White-rumped Munia and White-rumped Mannikin. This species is thought to be one of the main genetic contributors to the development of the Bengalese Finch,

*Lonchura domestica*. This can readily be seen if the two species are compared, especially so in the case of a chocolate Bengalese.

This is a stocky little bird of just 102mm (4") in length. The beak, which has the characteristic stoutness of the manikin family, is a dark metallic grey. The face and chest are a rich brown-black; the nape and back are a medium fawn-grey; the wings are of a similar colour to the back; the flights are of a darker brown hue; the belly is greyish-white with a distinct darker lacing to the feather edges. The legs and feet are dark grey and exhibit a noticeable sheen.



At first glance this bird could easily be mistaken for the chocolate form of the Bengalese, but on closer examination it will be seen that the colouration is of a uniform pattern and does not vary from bird to bird, as is the case with the Bengalese. The colours are also of a greater depth than those of the Bengalese.

Sexing is relatively easy with this species, as the male is the larger bird and is a deeper, almost black, brown-black on the breast. The hen displays a more brownish hue to the breast, and has a narrower head and beak than the cock. As with most *Lonchura* species it is only the male that performs the typical "crowing" courtship dance.