

Notes on the vocalizations of Large Cuckoo-shrike (*Coracina macei*) and Javan Cuckoo-shrike (*Coracina javensis*)

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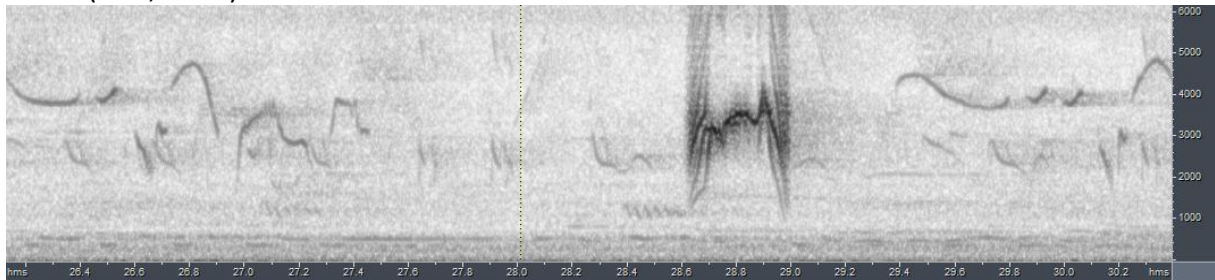
In the following we briefly analyze and compare voice of the different races of Large Cuckoo-shrike (*Coracina macei*) and Javan Cuckoo-shrike (*Coracina javensis*). We also try to quantify the extent of any vocal differences using the criteria proposed by Tobias *et al.* (2010), as a support for taxonomic review. We have made use of sound recordings available on-line from Xeno Canto (XC) and Avian Vocalizations Center (AVoCet).

We have found only a few recordings of *macei* and a single (poor quality) one of race *layardi*. We compare here the commonly heard call of the different races:

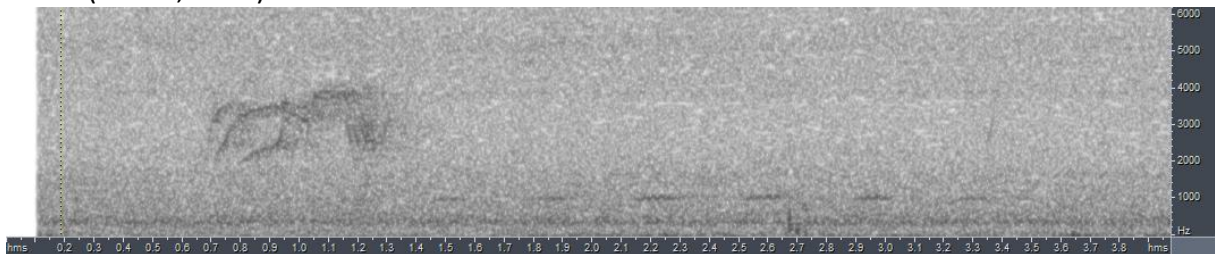
macei (S India)



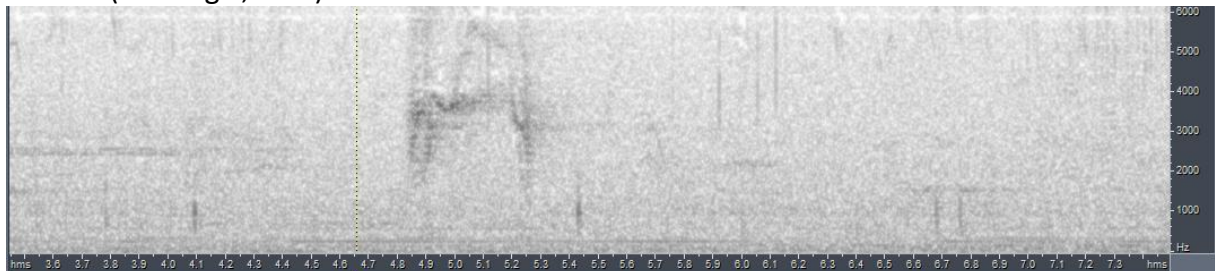
macei (Goa, India)



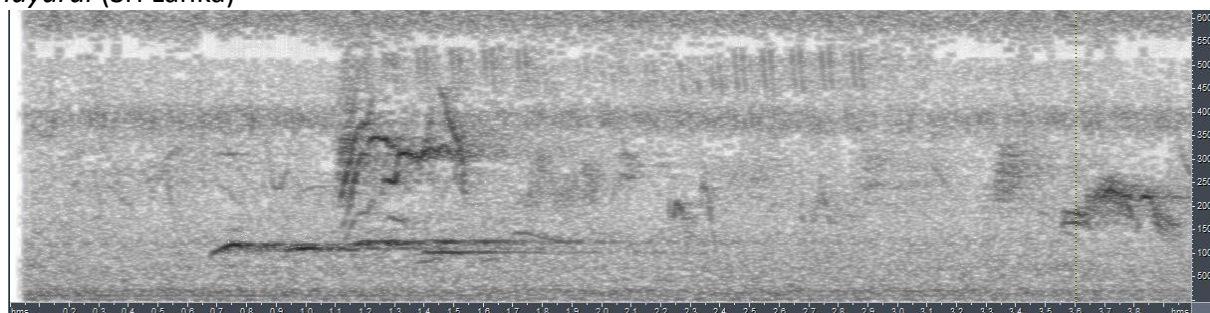
macei (Thana, India)



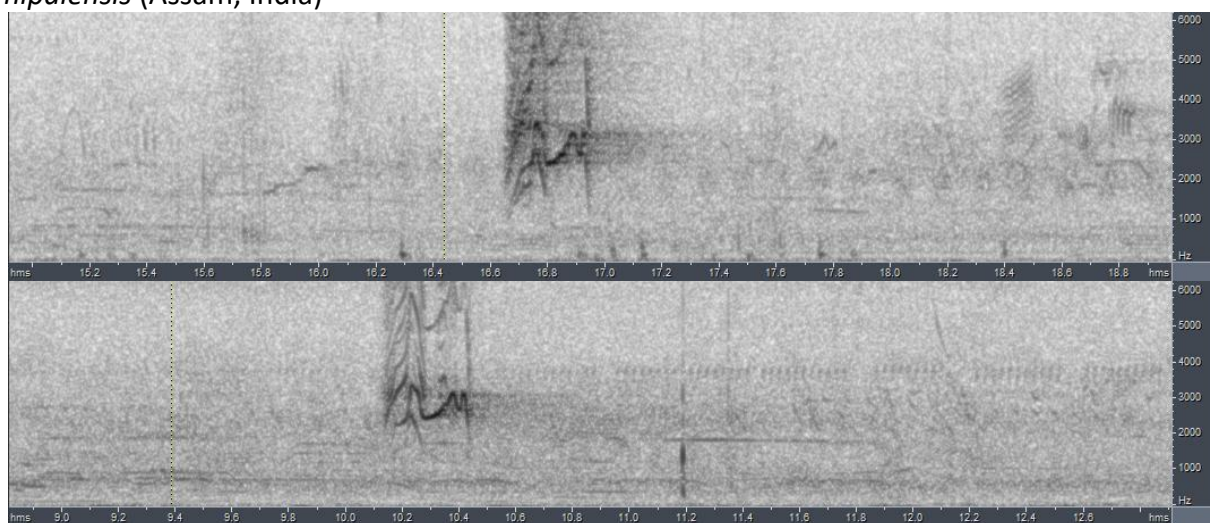
macei ? (W Bengal, India)



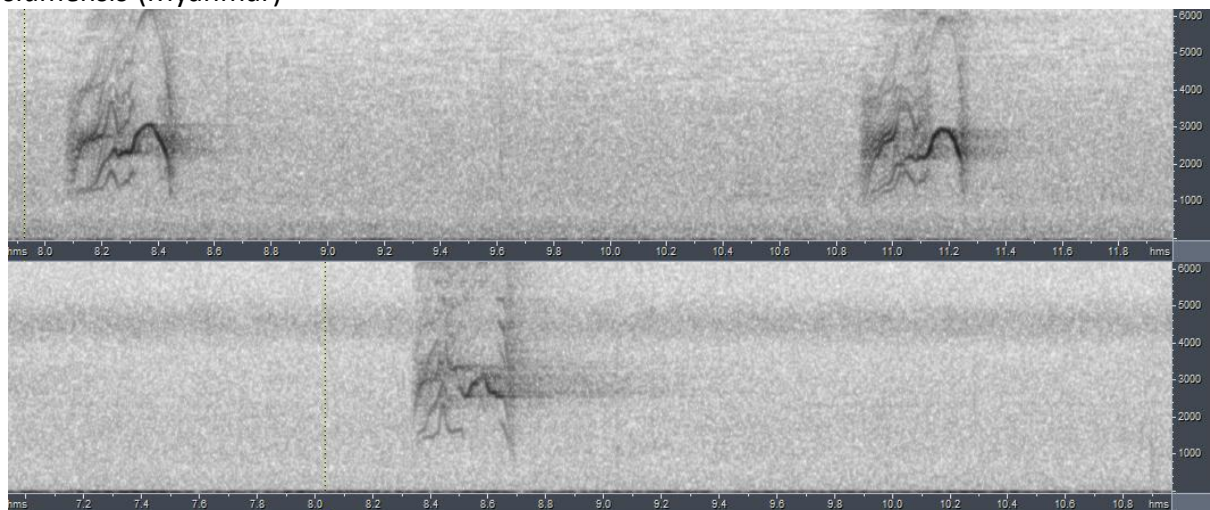
layardi (Sri Lanka)



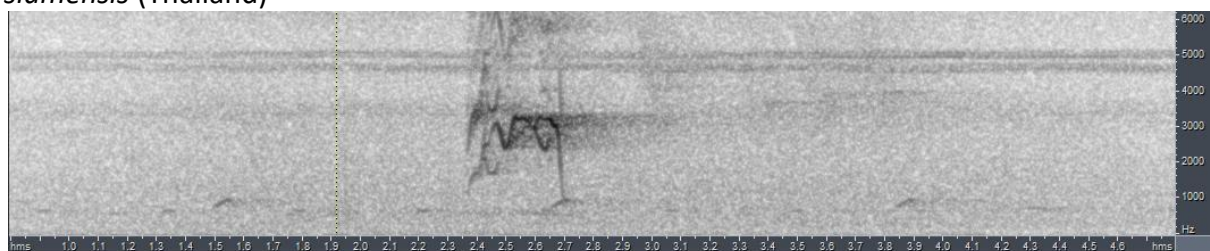
nipalensis (Assam, India)



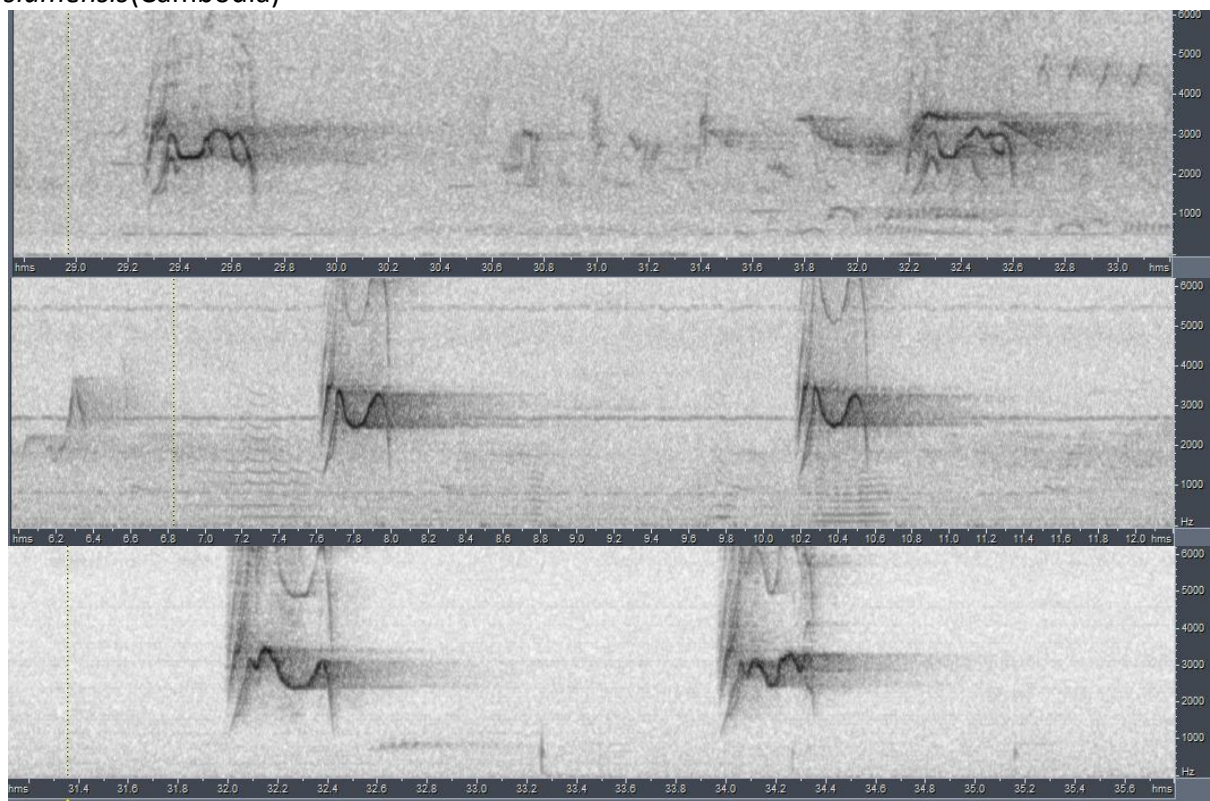
siamensis (Myanmar)



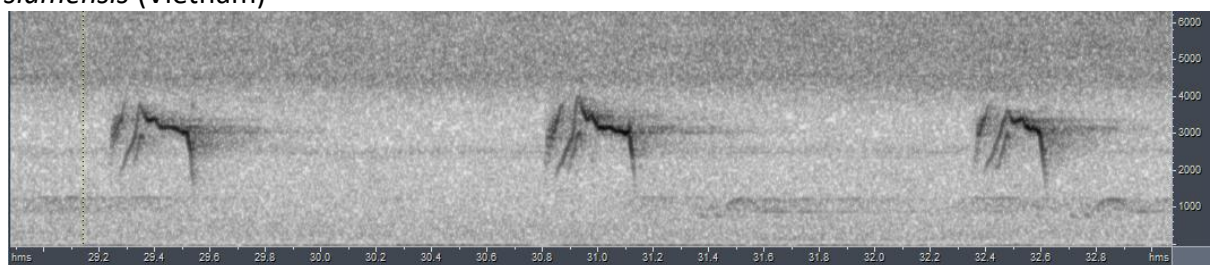
siamensis (Thailand)



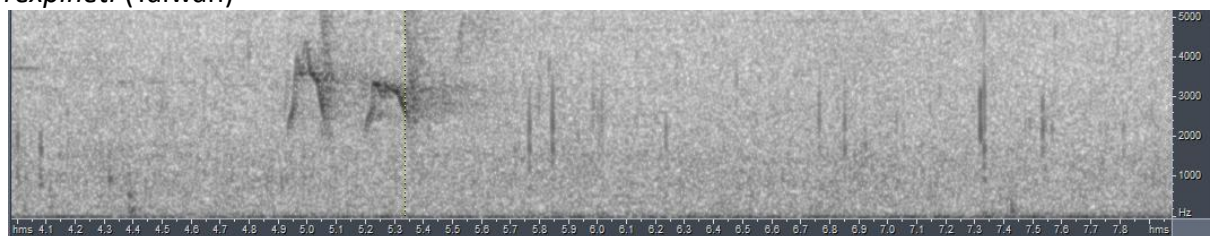
siamensis(Cambodia)



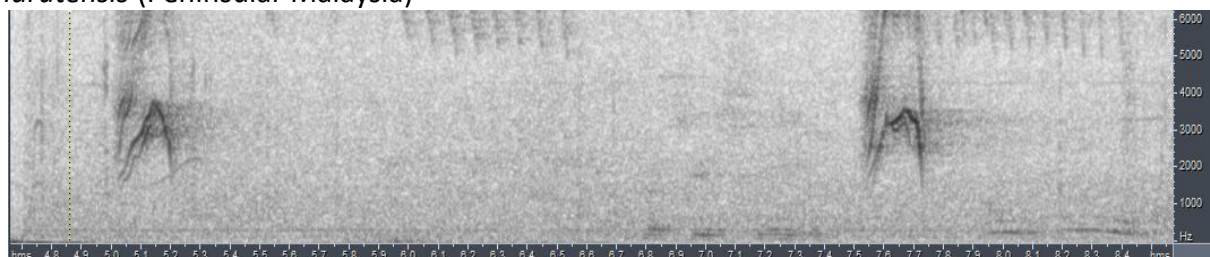
siamensis (Vietnam)

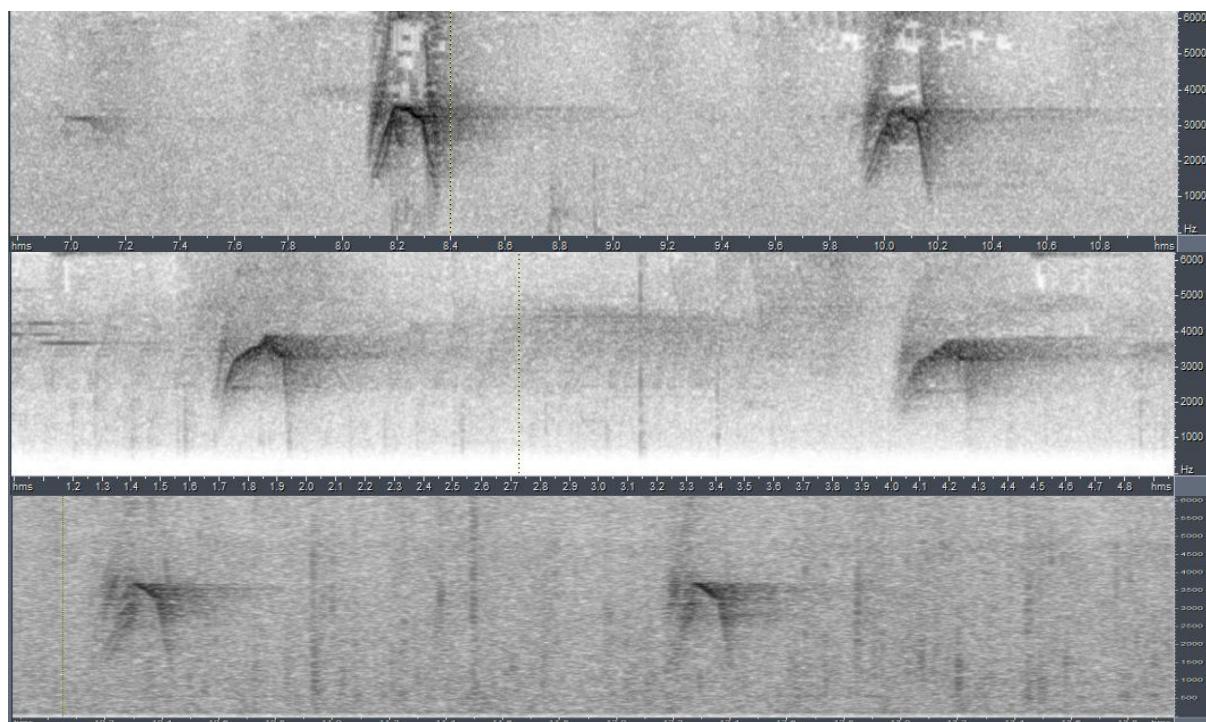


rexpineti (Taiwan)



larutensis (Peninsular Malaysia)





Rasmussen and Anderton (2012) state that *macei/layardi* has a longer call and lacks ending downturn. We can't confirm this, as illustrated in the above samples.

We measured:

macei:

length 0.34 - 0.52s
max. freq. 4000- 5700Hz

other races (excl. *rexpineti/larutensis*)

length 0.30 - 0.44s
max. freq. 3000 - 3500Hz (with aberrant call from Vietnam reaching 3800Hz)

If we assume that *layardi* has similar voice as *macei* (as suggested by the single recording we have), then this group is clearly different from *nipalensis/siamensis* in reaching higher frequencies (score 2-3) and having a predominantly rising note shape (vs. fairly flat or up and down plateau in *nipalensis/siamensis*)(score 1)

When applying Tobias criteria, this would lead to a total vocal score for *macei/layardi* vs. *nipalensis/siamensis* of 3-4.

rexpineti: it would seem that this vocalization is closer to Bar-bellied Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina striata*. (The description in Brazil (2009) confirms its double-noted call, ID is thus reliable). It is unclear whether *rexpineti* from mainland China also has a double call or not.

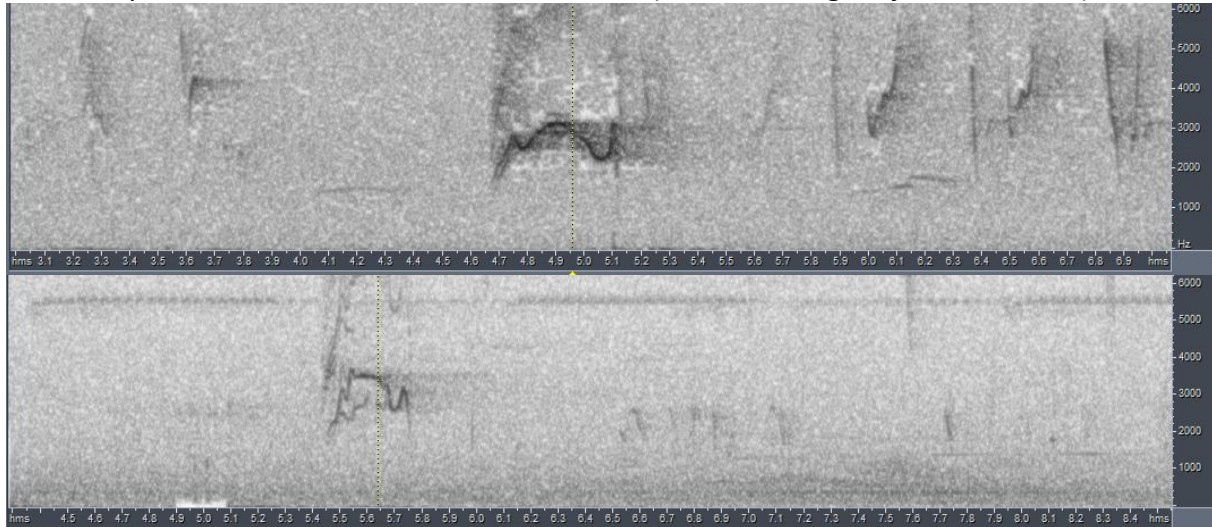
larutensis: call is clearly different from all other races: shorter and simpler, rather symmetrically overslurred.

length: 0.19 - 0.26s
max. freq.: 3500 - 3850Hz

score vs. *macei/layardi*: length (2-3) and freq. (2) -> total score 4-5

score vs. *nipalensis/siamensis*: length (2-3), freq. (1) and shape (1) -> total score 3-4

If we compare *larutensis* with Javan Cuckooshrike (two recordings of *javensis* found):



length 0.31 - 0.45s
max. freq. 3200-3700Hz

it would seem that vocally *javensis* is closer to *nipalensis/siamensis* than to *larutensis* (!).
larutensis is clearly different from both *javensis* and *nipalensis/siamensis*.

Conclusion:

- * *macei/layardi* vs. *nipalensis/siamensis* are vocally moderately distinct: score 3-4.
- * *larutensis* is different from all races, including *C. javensis*: score about 4 (this supports the suggestion by some that this taxon is a distinct species Malaysian Cuckoo-shrike)
- * *rexpineti* from Taiwan has a voice more like *C. striata*, but voice from mainland China unknown.

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References

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- Rasmussen, P.C. & Anderton, J.C. (2012). Birds of South Asia: the Ripley Guide. Vols. 1–2. 2nd edition. National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Michigan State University & Lynx Edicions, Washington, D.C., Michigan & Barcelona.
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Recommended citation

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