

Notes on the vocalizations of Japanese Bush-warbler (*Cettia diphone*)

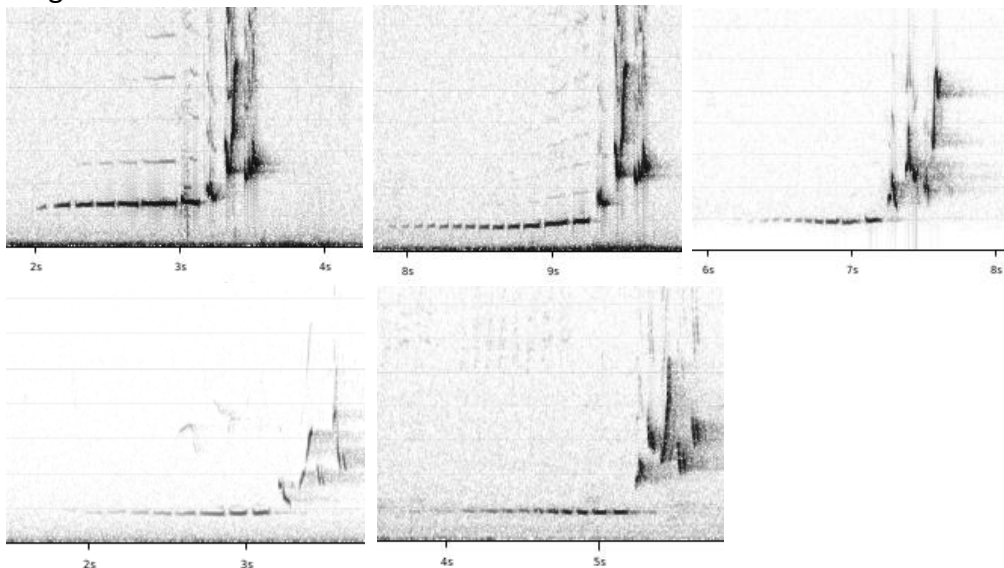
Peter Boesman

In the following we briefly analyze and compare voice of the different races of Japanese Bush-warbler (*Cettia diphone*). 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).

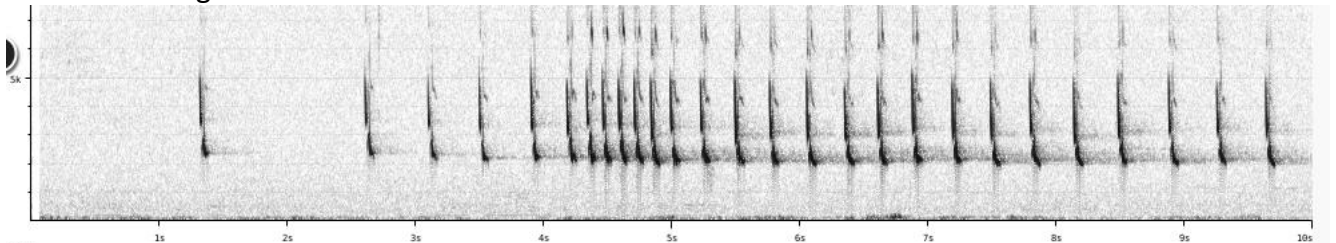
An overview of the different vocalizations per subspecies:

borealis

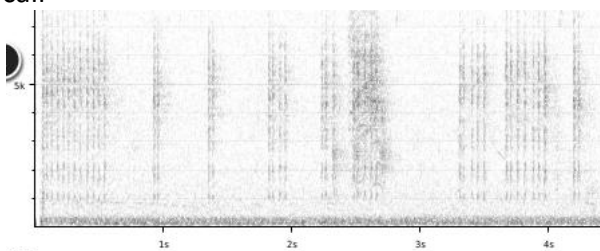
song



alternative song

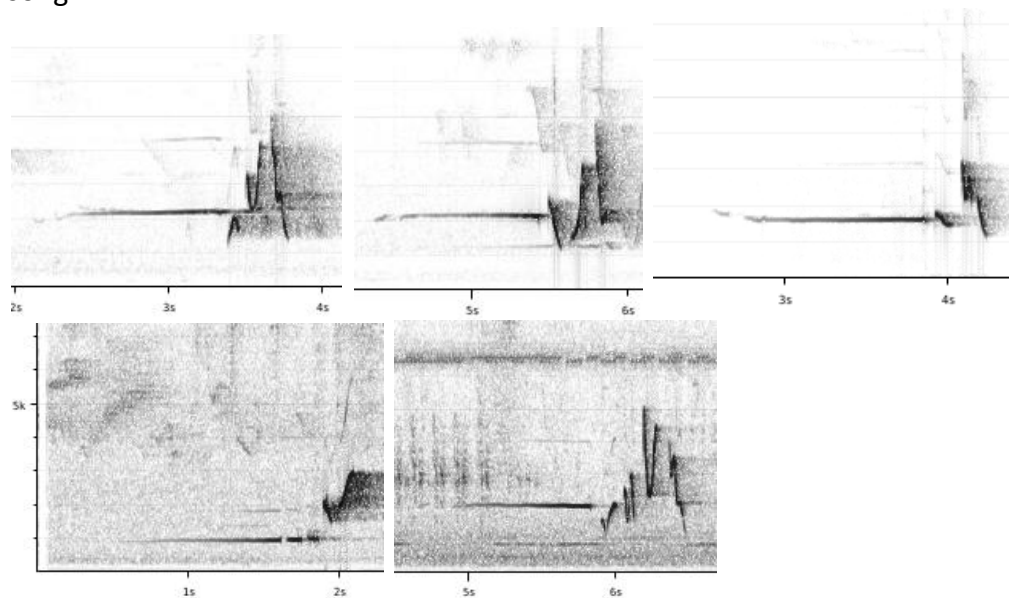


call

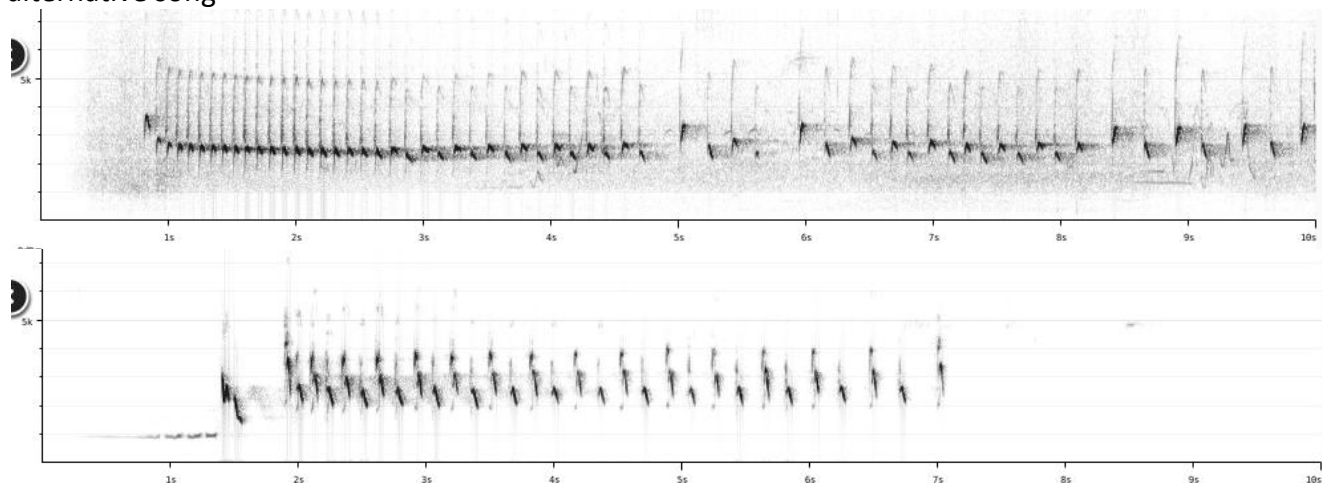


cantans

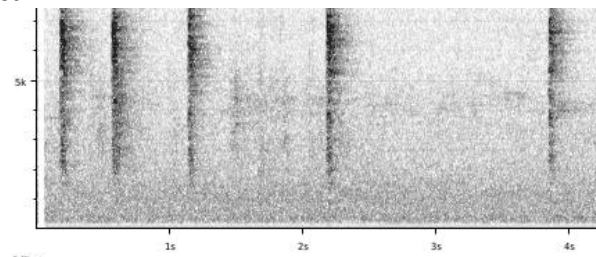
song



alternative song

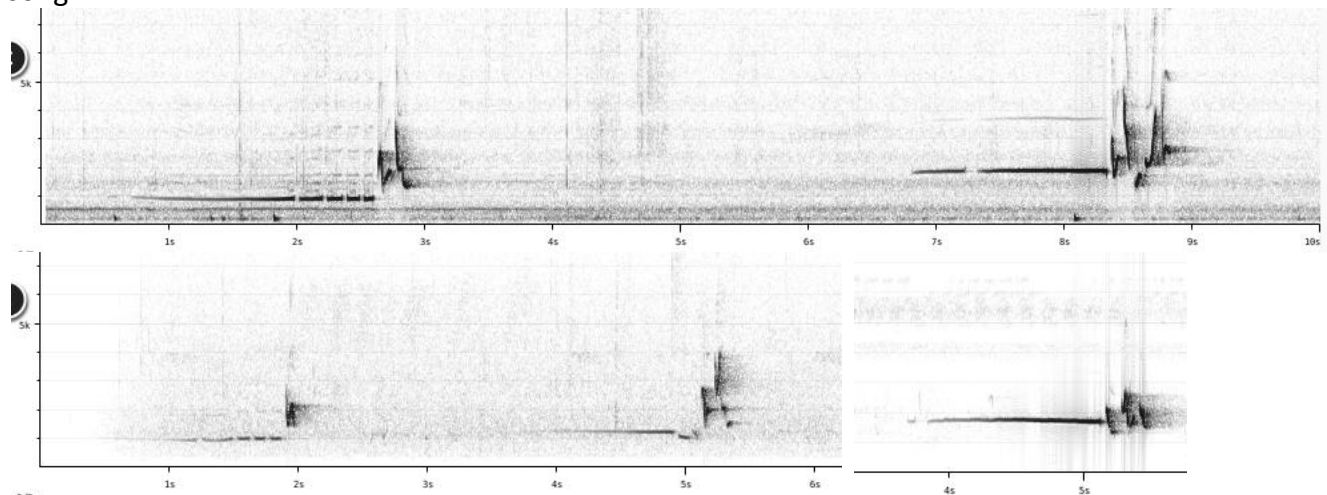


call

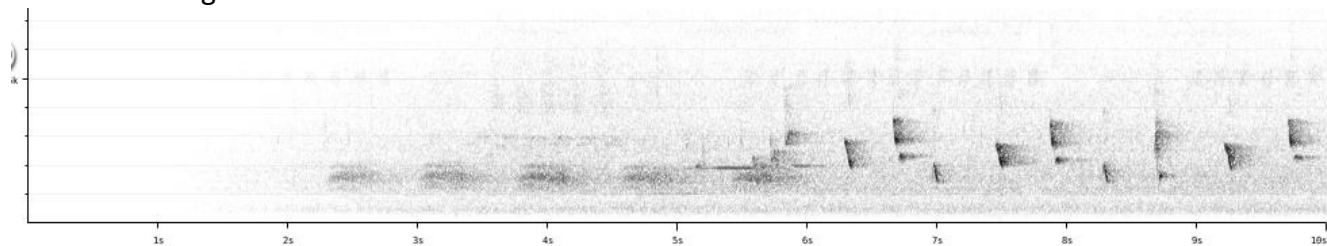


Comment: there is a small breeding population of *cantans* in S South K, which seems to be parapatric with *borealis/canturians*, split as Manchurian Bush Warbler (Kennerley *et al.* 2010). IOC at the other hand seems to call Manchurian Bush Warbler only the race *borealis*.

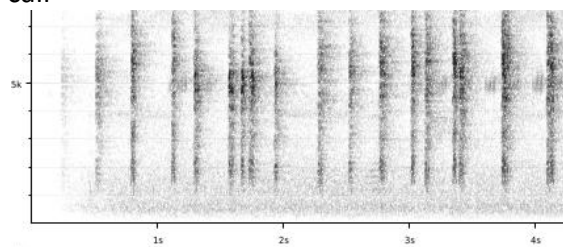
restricta
song



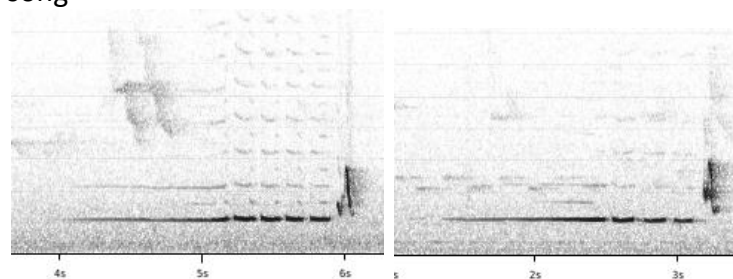
alternative song



call

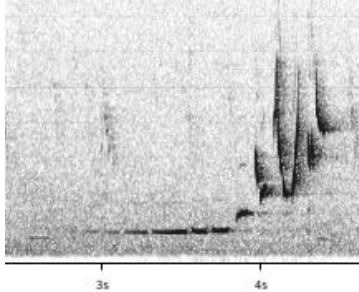


diphone
song

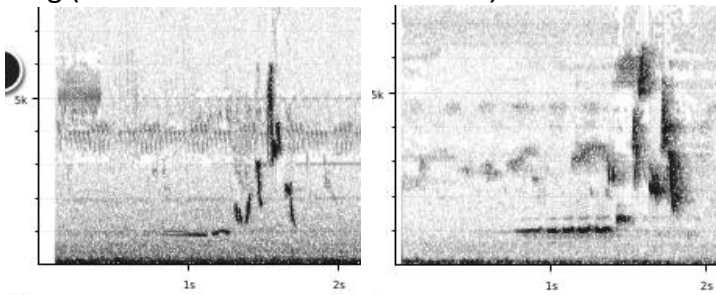


canturians

song (recording from the Shanghai area mid May, could be *borealis* on migration as well??)



song (these should be true *canturians*)



The situation is less simple than one may deduce from the description by Kennerley *et al.* (2010)

cantans and *restricta* are similar for a number of reasons:

- * song starts either with a continuous whistle at about 2kHz or a lower-pitched whistle which usually starts continuously and changes to a limited number of repeated notes.
- * the second part of the song is very variable, but max. freq. of the highest note is 3-5kHz
- * they both have an alternative song which consists of 2-3 notes up and down repeated for long period
- * they both have a short, dry "tzhik" call

borealis differs from *cantans/restricta* for the following reasons:

- * song starts always with a long series of short notes at about 1kHz (never continuous whistle)
- * the second part of the song is very variable, but max. freq. of the highest note is higher than 5kHz
- * there is seemingly an alternative song, but doubled note is given without any intermediate space, thus sounding rather like a single note repeated
- * call (not much recording available) is given at faster pace, rather like short rattles

diphone (only 2 recordings available) fits with *cantans/restricta* (max. freq. highest note, continuous whistle changing to separate notes)

canturians (only a few certain recordings) fits with *borealis* (max. freq. well above 5kHz, intro whistle at 1kHz and mainly sequence of short notes).

(we have found no recordings of *riukiensis*)

We can thus compare group *cantans/restructa/diphone/riukiuensis* vs. group *borealis/canturians*, the latter lacking a higher-pitched continuous whistle (score 1-2), reaching higher frequencies in 2nd part of song (score 2), having a more monotonous alternative song (score 1-2), and having a faster-paced almost rattling call note (score 2). When applying Tobias criteria, this would lead to a total vocal score of about 4.

This note was finalized on 3rd March 2016, using sound recordings available on-line at that moment. We would like to thank in particular the many sound recordists who placed their recordings for this species on XC.

References

Kennerley, P.R. & Pearson, D. (2010). *Reed and Bush Warblers*. Helm Identification Guides. Christopher Helm, London.

Tobias, J.A., Seddon, N., Spottiswoode, C.N., Pilgrim, J.D., Fishpool, L.D.C. & Collar, N.J. (2010). Quantitative criteria for species delimitation. *Ibis* 152(4): 724–746.

Recommended citation

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