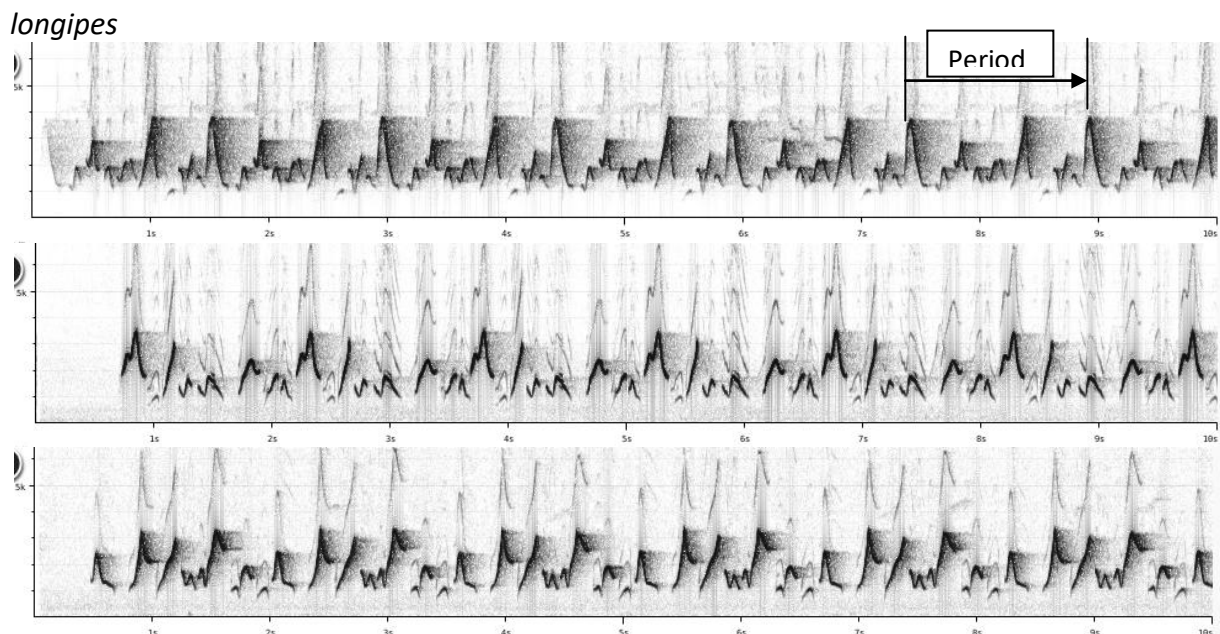
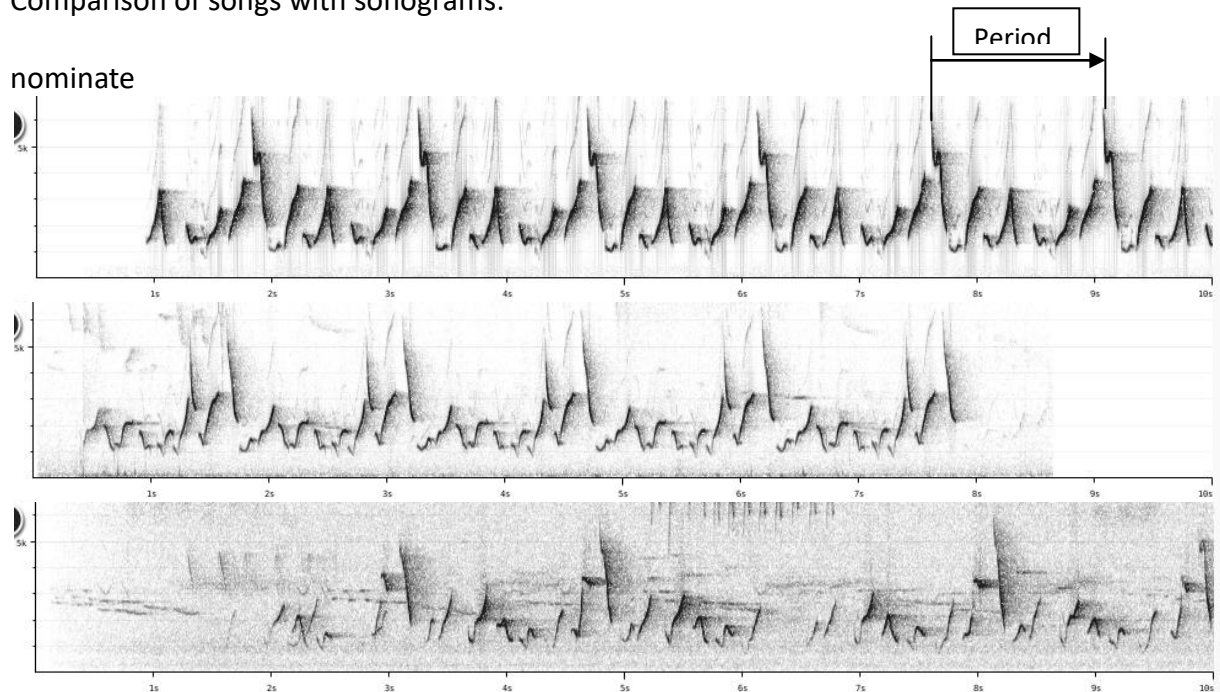


## Notes on the vocalizations of Plain-tailed Wren (*Thryothorus euophrys*)

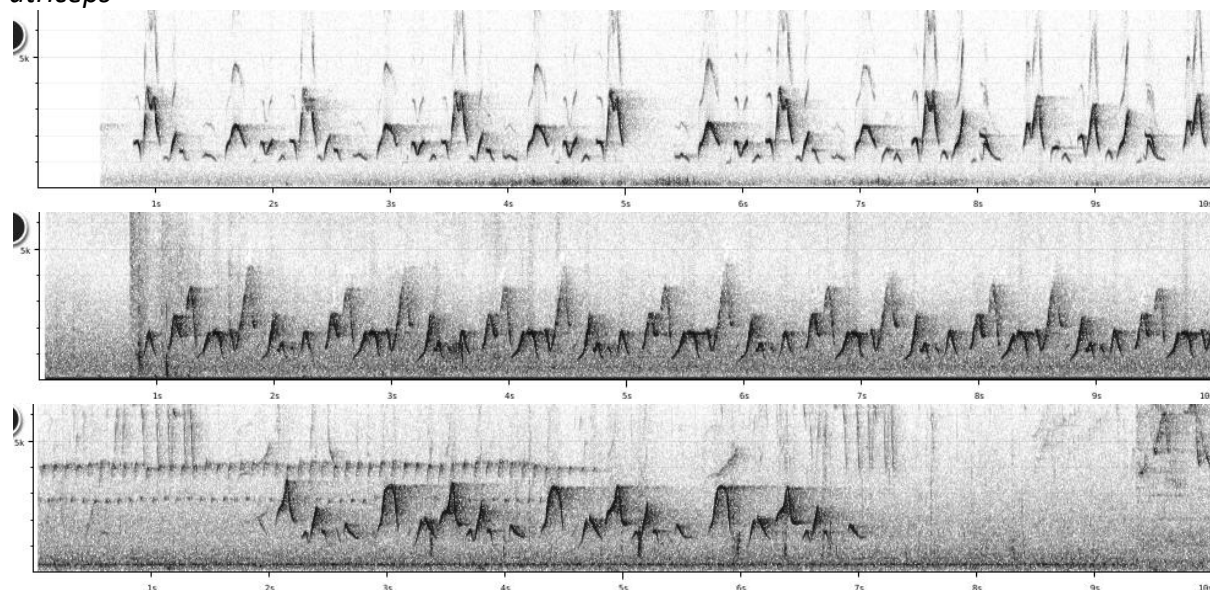
Peter Boesman

In the following we briefly analyze and compare voice of the different races of Plain-tailed Wren (*Thryothorus euophrys*). 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).

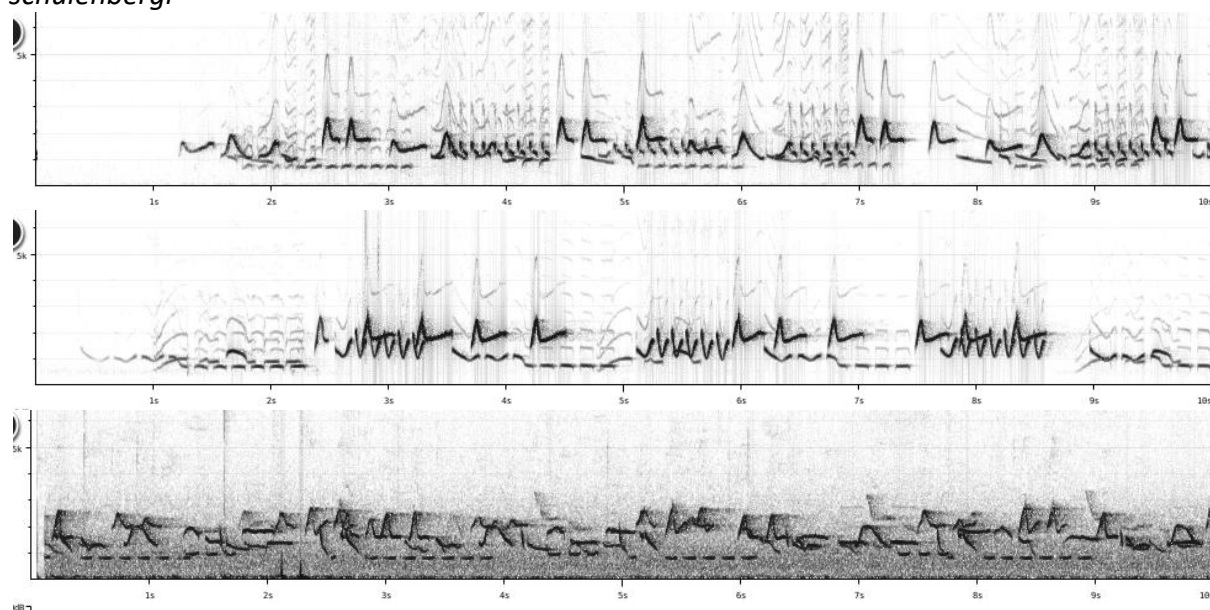
Comparison of songs with sonograms:



*atriceps*



*schulenbergi*



From the above sonograms it is clear that vocally one can identify three groups:

*longipes* and *atriceps* have near identical duet songs, with very similar note shapes. Duets are perfectly synchronous, with period length of full phrase of notes about 1.5-1.7s.

*nominate* has a similar synchronous duet with similar duration of a full phrase (period), but includes a sharply downslurred note covering a wide frequency range (coming down from c. 6kHz, well above the max. frequency in duet of *longipes/atriceps*), possibly uttered by the female bird (score 3).

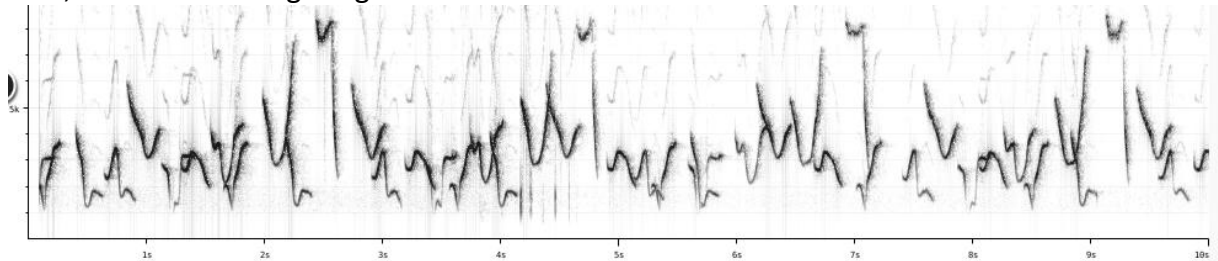
Most distinctive however is song of *schulenbergi*. It is an asynchronous duet of two or more birds ('group duet?'), with some notes at very low flat pitch (it is quite amazing to listen to !).



*schulenbergi* vs. *longipes/atriceps*: quantification of vocal difference based on max. freq. (*schulenbergi* below 3kHz, score 2), note shapes (e.g. flat-pitched notes, 1-2) and asynchronous duet (reflected by pace or max. number of simultaneous notes at a single point in time, score 3). When applying Tobias criteria, this would lead to a total vocal score of 5.

*schulenbergi* vs. nominate: quantification of vocal difference based on max. freq. (*schulenbergi* below 3kHz, score 3), note shapes (e.g. flat-pitched notes, 1-2) and asynchronous duet (reflected by pace or max. number of simultaneous notes at a single point in time, score 3). When applying Tobias criteria, this would lead to a total vocal score of 6.

As a final note, the undescribed taxon known as 'Mantaro Wren' from the Huancayo area in C Peru, has the following song:



It has the highest pitched song compared to above groups. Given that some notes exceed 8kHz and the closest race *schulenbergi* with its low-pitched song is exactly the opposite, this is clearly not a clinal change in voice. Duet is asynchronous but both members seem to utter periodically repeated phrases (unlike *schulenbergi*), with a phrase period of slightly more than 2s. Based on max. freq. and phrase period a.o., a score of about 5 vs. the above groups seems likely.

This note was finalized on 15th April 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

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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