

Notes on the vocalizations of White-throated Greenbul (*Phyllastrephus albigularis*)

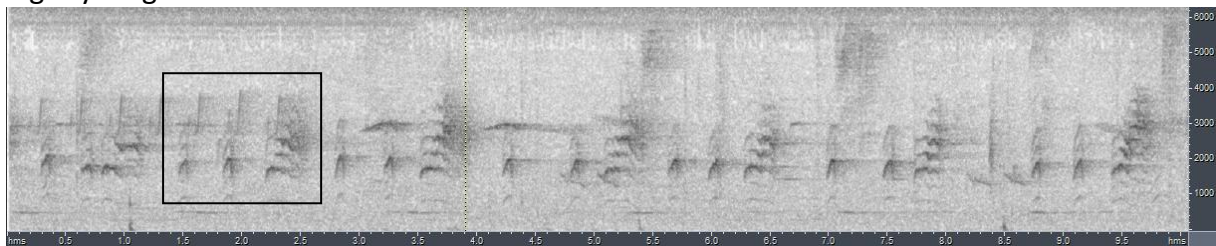
Peter Boesman

In the following we briefly analyze and compare voice of the two races of White-throated Greenbul (*Phyllastrephus albigularis*). 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 Macaulay Library (ML). Furthermore, Michael Mills generously passed on own information and recordings of the race *viridiceps* from Angola, indicating its distinctiveness.

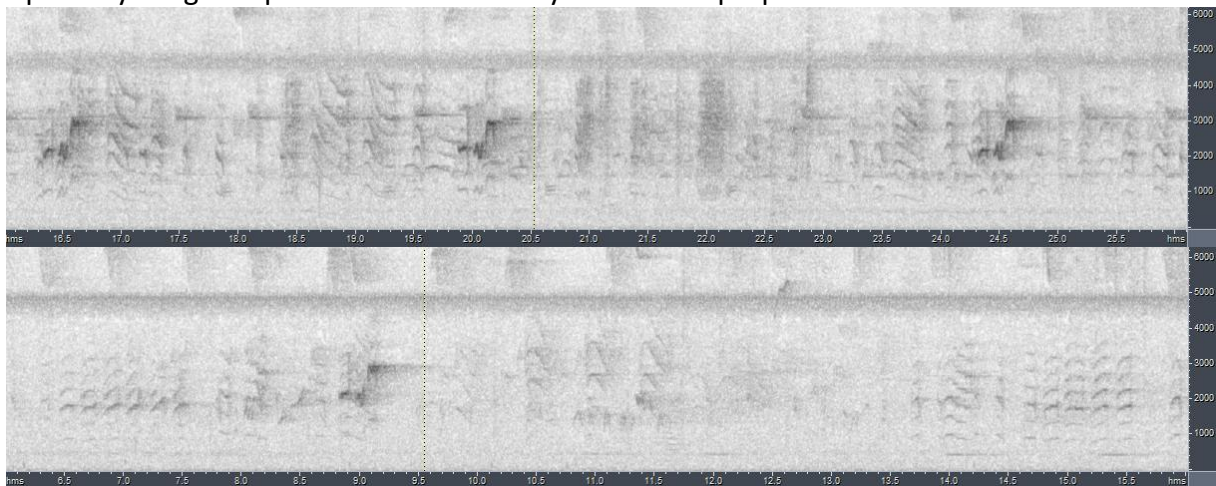
A comparison of both races:

viridiceps(n=3)

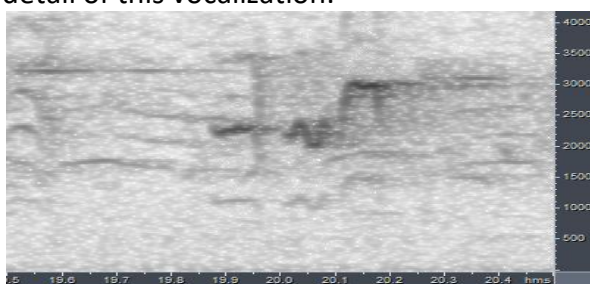
* a rhythmic "whup..whup..nyeeh" repeated without pause, the 3rd note distinctly nasal and slightly longer



* possibly song: a repeated melodious trisyllabic note "pu-puh-weeh!"

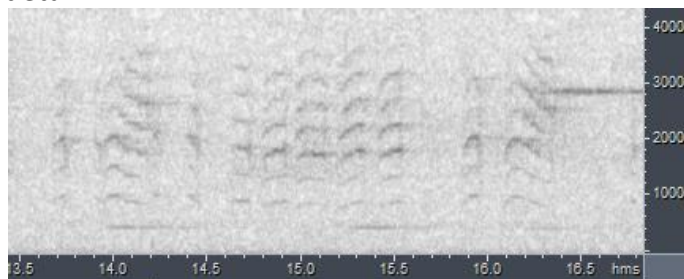


detail of this vocalization:



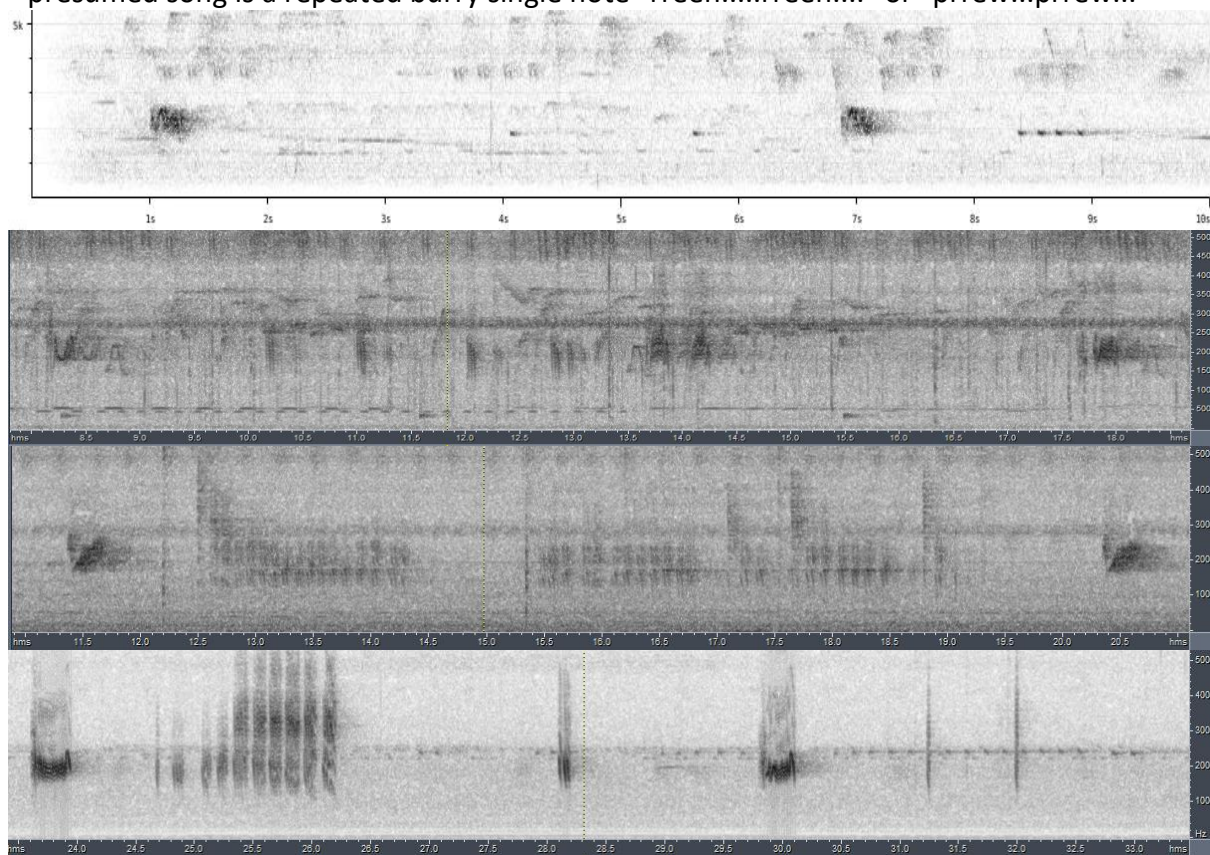
* several short nasal scolding notes, given single or in series

detail:

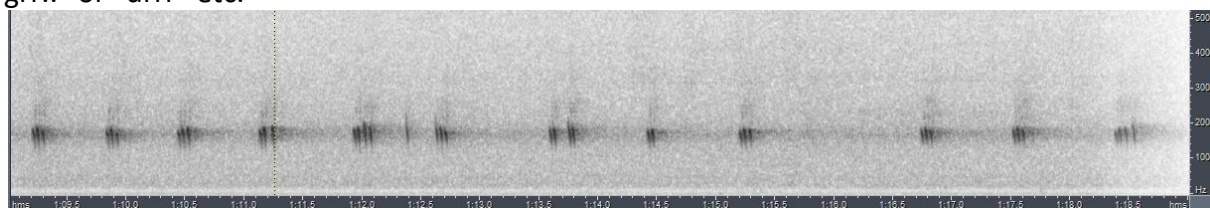


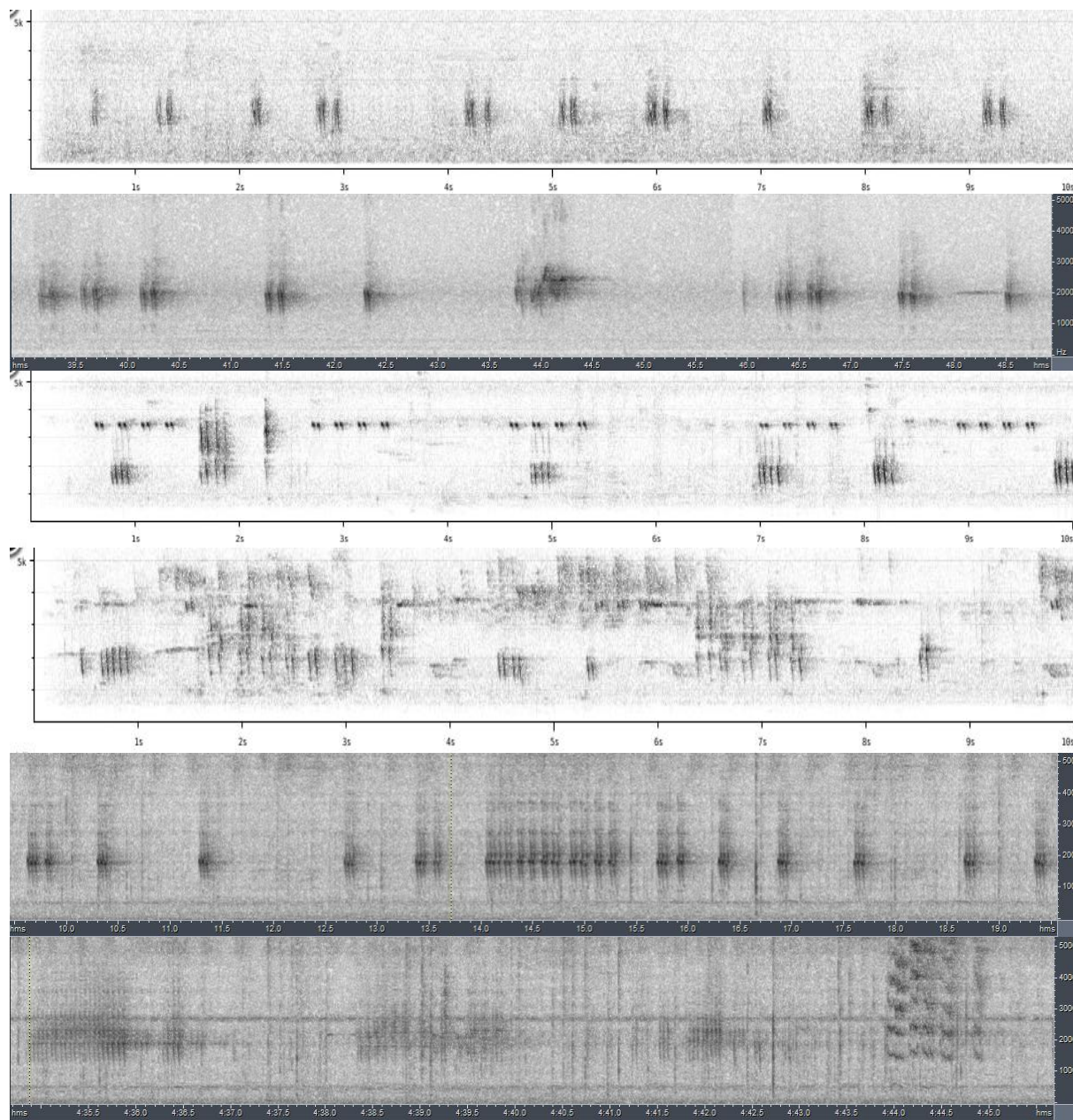
albicularis

* presumed song is a repeated burry single note "rreeh.....rreeh...." or "prrew...prrew..."

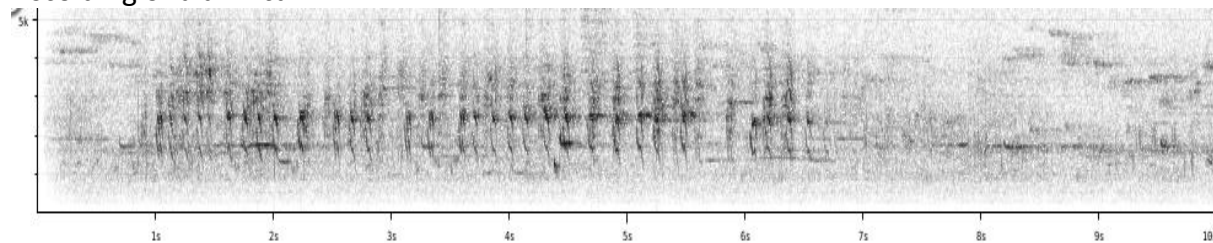


* most common calls are short guttural notes (actually short rattles of 2 or more notes) "grr-grr.." or "drrr" etc.

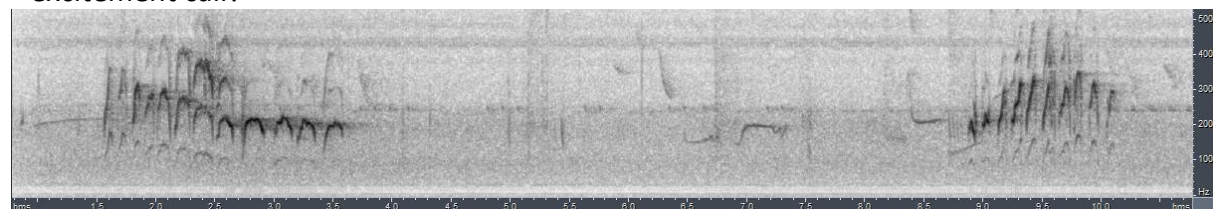




* scolding or alarm call



* excitement call?



The above quite convincingly illustrates that both taxa have a fundamentally different vocabulary.

viridiceps differs in having principally nasal overslurred contact calls (vs guttural rattled calls for *albigularis*) (e.g. based on bandwidth of fundamental frequency, score 2-3) . Presumed song is a repeated trisyllabic melodious note "pu-puh-weeh!" (vs a variable very burry single note for *albigularis*) (e.g. based on number of notes, score 2-3).

Application of Tobias criteria would lead to a total vocal score of about 5.

While the vocal differences are quite convincing, the conclusions would obviously benefit from additional recordings of race *viridiceps*, in order to get a better understanding of the full vocabulary of this taxon.

This note was finalized on 12th July 2016, using sound recordings available on-line at that moment. We would like to thank the sound recordists who placed their recordings for this species on XC and ML: Josh Engel, David Moyer and Martin St-Michel, and in particular Michael Mills for recordings of *viridiceps*.

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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