

Notes on the vocalizations of Blue Fantail (*Rhipidura superciliaris*)

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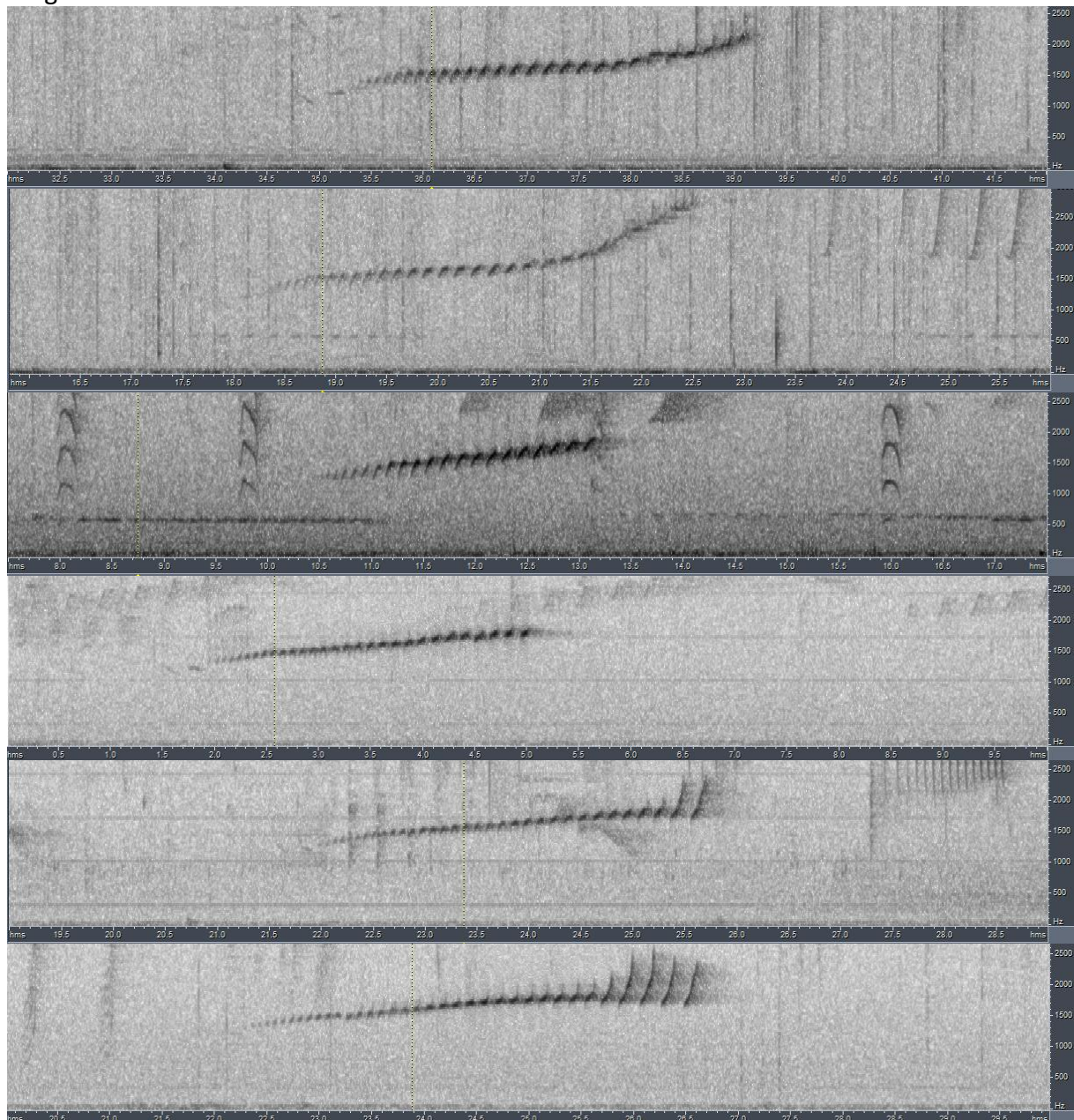
In the following we briefly analyze and compare voice of the three races of Blue Fantail (*Rhipidura superciliaris*). We also try to quantify the extent of any vocal differences using the criteria proposed by Tobias *et al.* (2010), as a support for taxonomic review.

We have made use of sound recordings available on-line from Xeno Canto (XC) and Macaulay Library (ML), and we received additional recordings of *samarensis* from Rob Hutchinson.

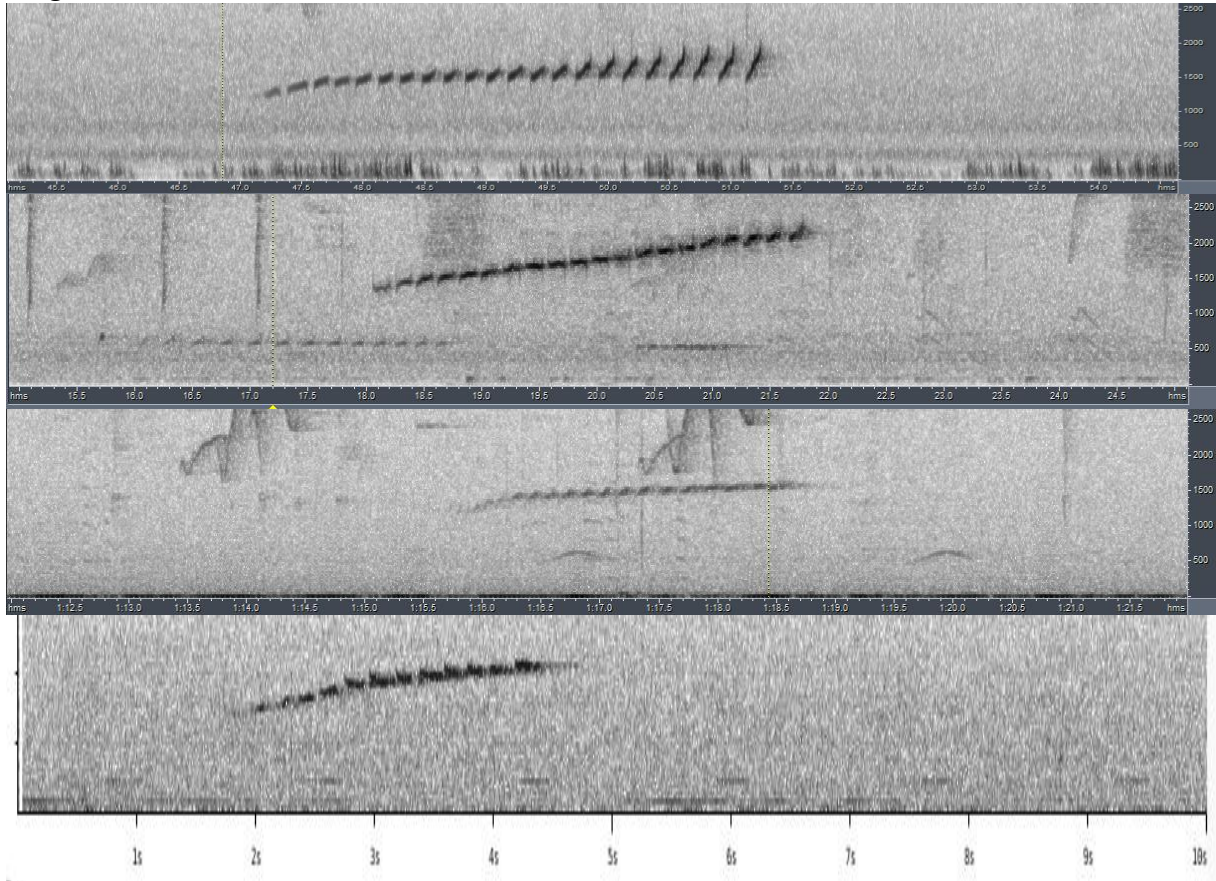
A comparison of voice per race, illustrated with sonograms:

samarensis

song



apo/superciliaris
song

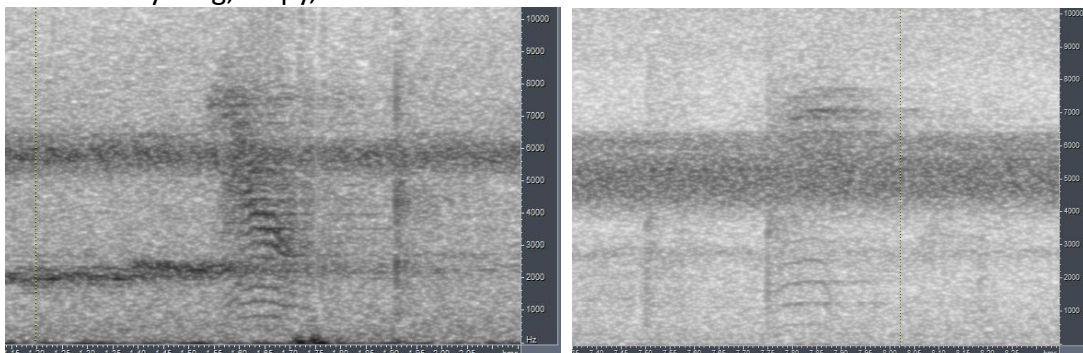


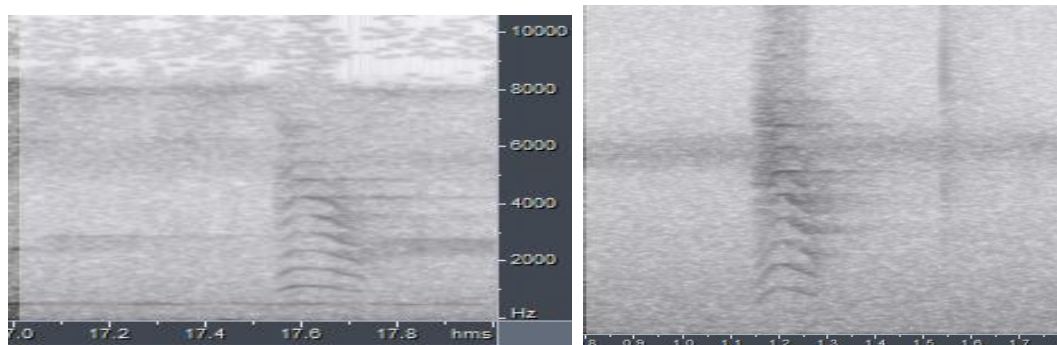
Song of both groups is a series of steadily rising notes, but there are clear differences: *samarensis* typically initiates at a much higher pace (c 10-13 notes/s vs typically 5 notes/s, occasionally up to 9 notes/s for *apo/superciliaris*), *apo/superciliaris* thus has a much more even pace over the entire song phrase. As a result, the total number of notes per song phrase in *samarensis* is also noticeably higher: 21-35 notes vs 12-22 notes in *apo/superciliaris*.

Comparison of calls reveal also a significant difference:

samarensis (n=5)

Call is a fairly long, raspy, nasal 'rreh' or 'neh'

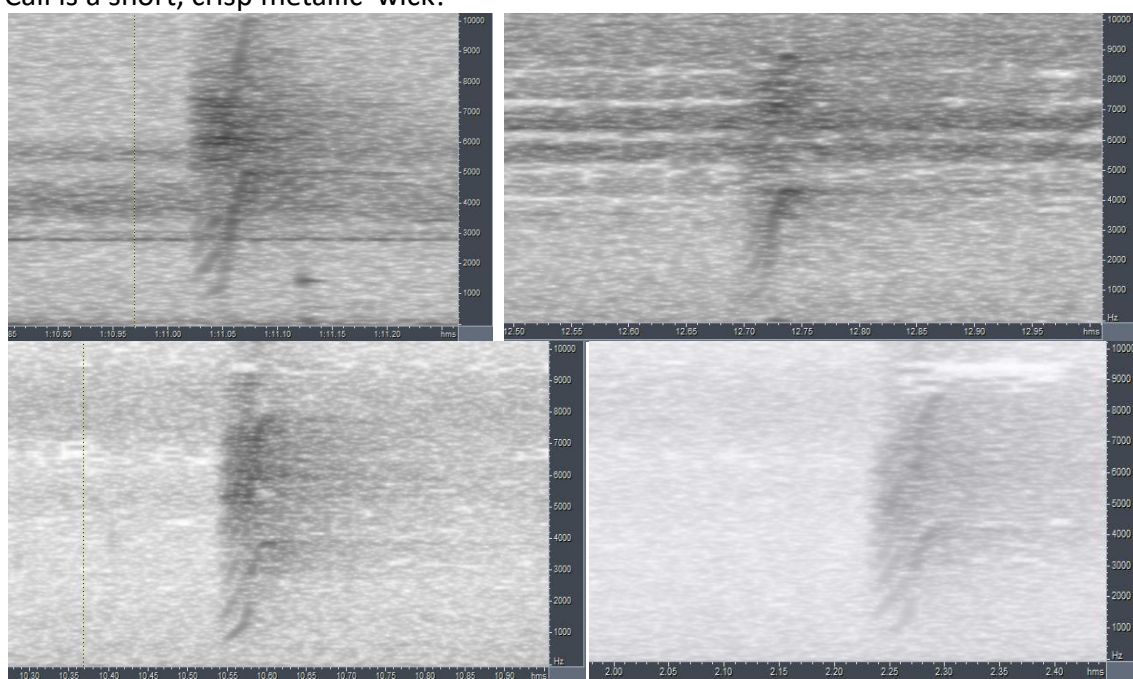




Note length 0.1-0.16s, mainly flat pitch, end frequency <1000Hz

apo/superciliaris (n=10+)

Call is a short, crisp metallic 'wick!'



Note length 0.04-0.06s, rising pitch, end frequency >1500Hz

Voice of *samarensis* is thus quite different, which can be quantified as follows:

Song starts much faster-paced (score 3) and has more notes (score 2-3). Call is longer (score 3), nasal and overslurred (vs crisp and upslurred), ending at much lower frequency (score 3). Application of Tobias criteria would lead to a total vocal score of about 5-6.

This note was finalized on 16th March 2016, using sound recordings available on-line at that moment. We would like to thank in particular the sound recordists who placed their recordings for this species on XC and ML: Desmond Allen, Tomas Carlberg, Peter Hosner, Robert Kennedy, Ben King, Frank Lambert, Mark Todd; and Rob Hutchinson for providing additional recordings.

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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