

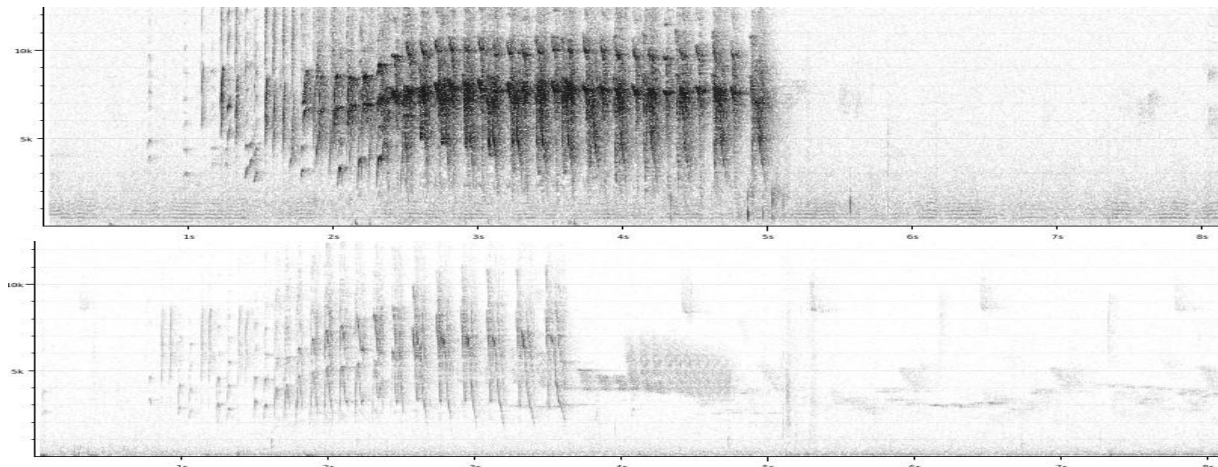
## Notes on the vocalizations of Western Hemispingus (*Hemispingus ochraceus*)

Peter Boesman

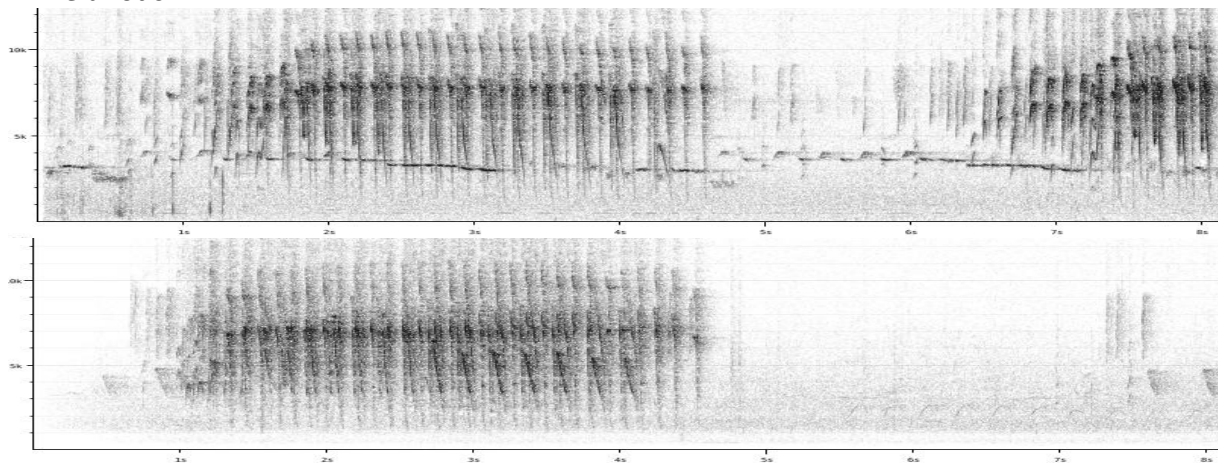
In the following we briefly analyze and compare voice of Western Hemispingus (*Hemispingus ochraceus*), Black-eared Hemispingus (*H. melanotis*) and Piura Hemispingus (*H. piurae*). We also try to quantify the extent of any vocal differences using the criteria proposed by Tobias *et al.* (2010), as a support for taxonomic review. We have made use of sound recordings available on-line from Xeno Canto (XC).

Song of all three species is a chattering duet. A comparison, illustrated with sonograms:

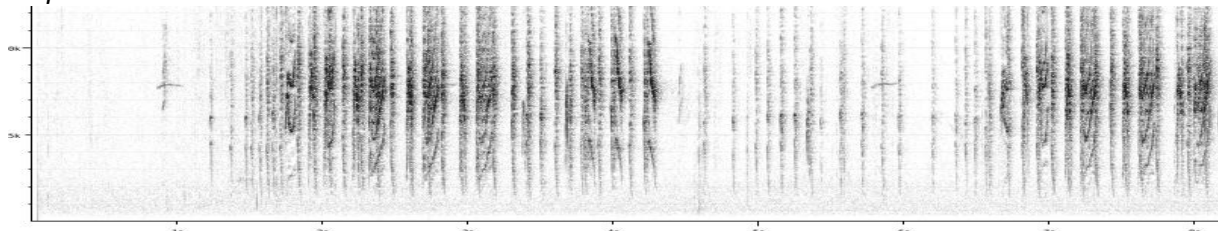
### *H. ochraceus*

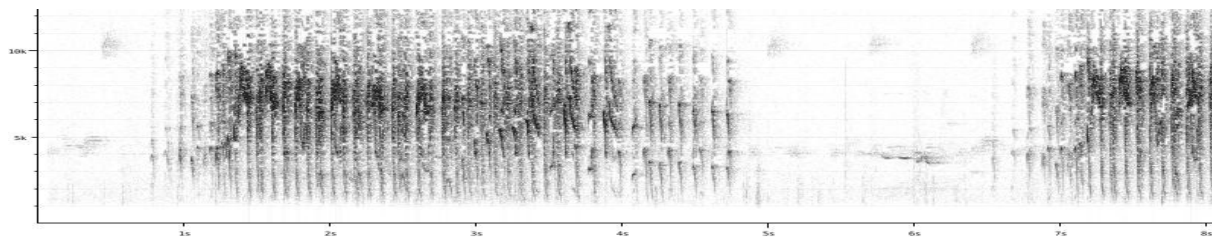


### *H. melanotis*



### *H. piurae*

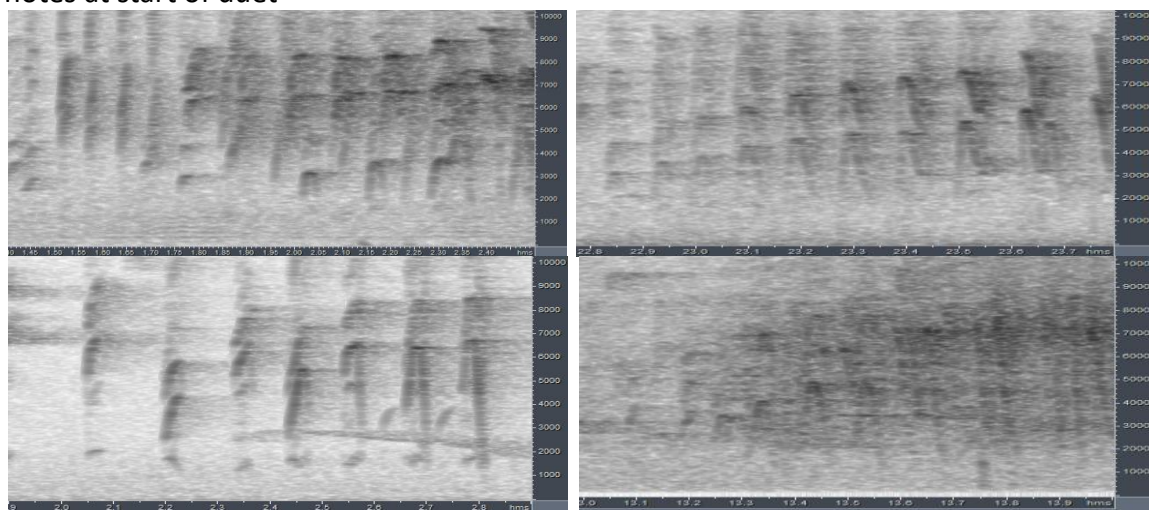




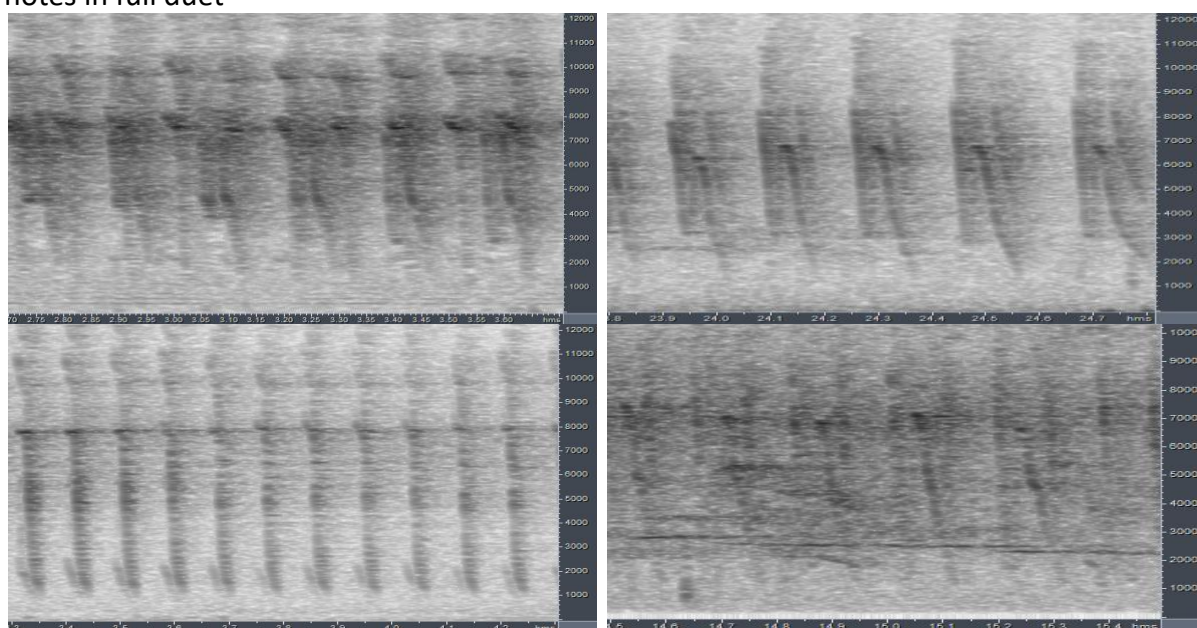
From the above, it is clear that duet song of all three species is structurally similar. There seems to be however a closer resemblance between duets of *H. ochraceus* and *H. melanotis*.

A closer look into details on sonogram:

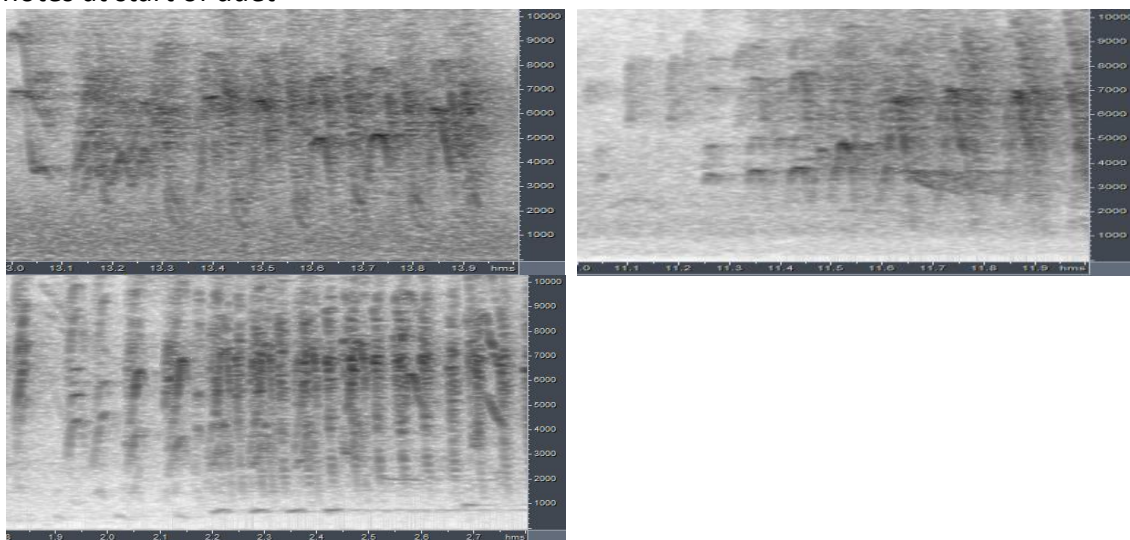
*ochraceus*  
notes at start of duet



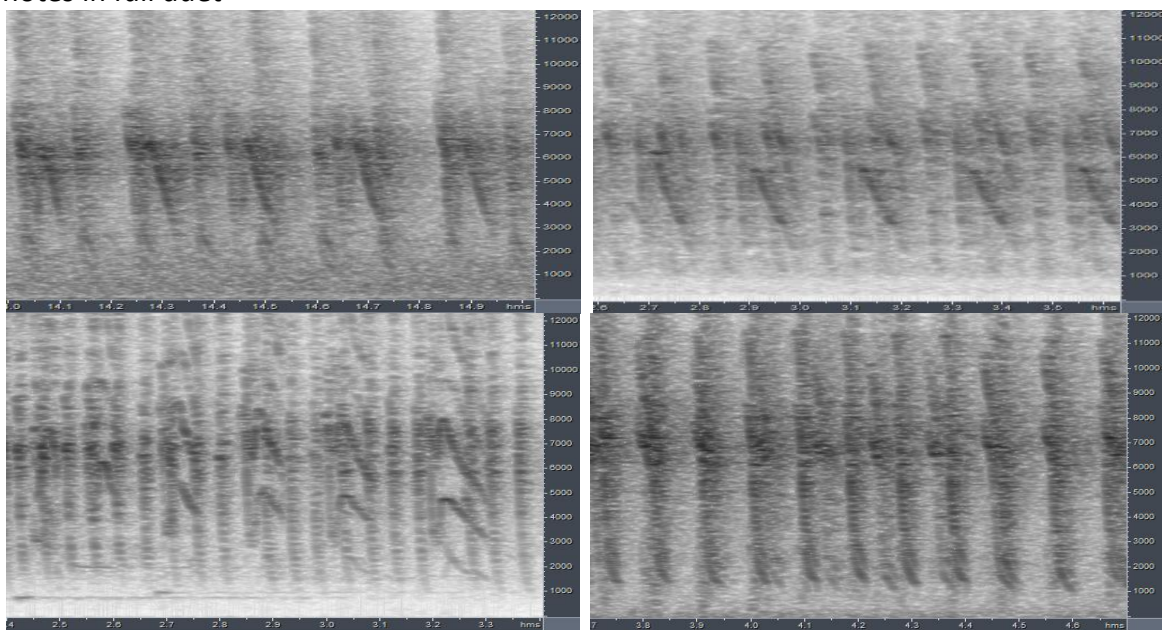
notes in full duet



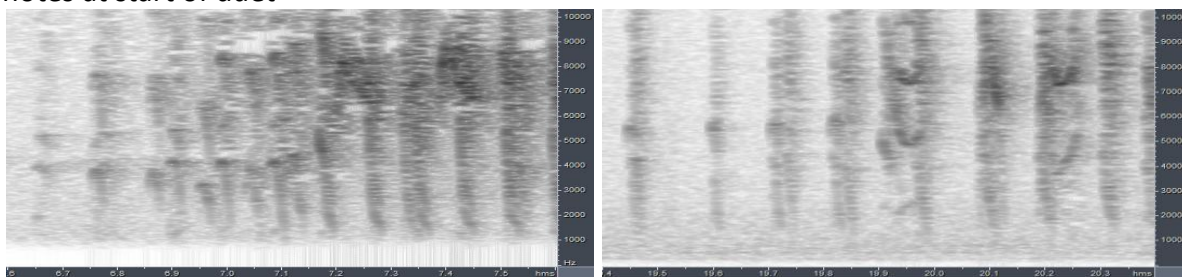
*H. melanotis*  
notes at start of duet

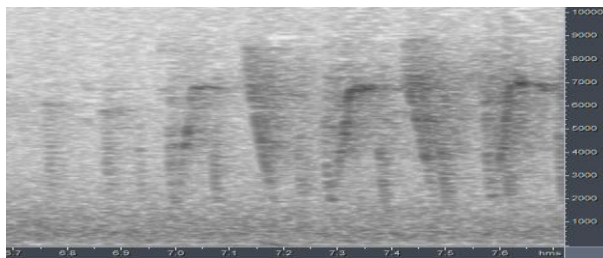


notes in full duet

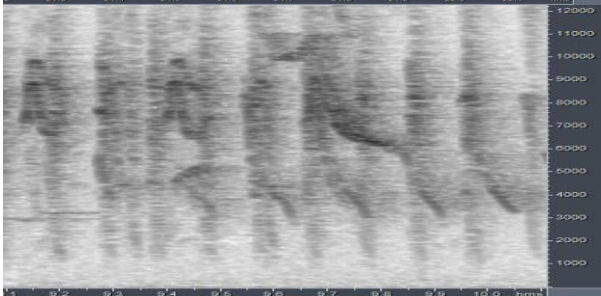
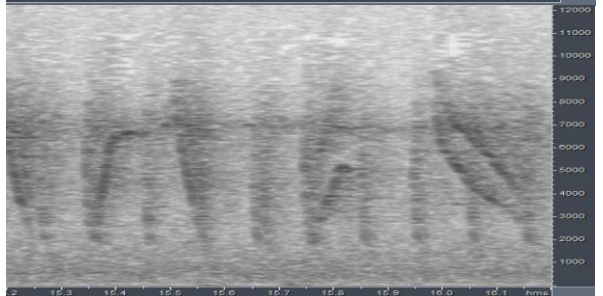
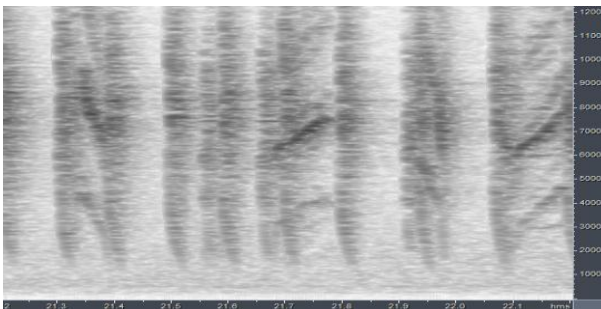
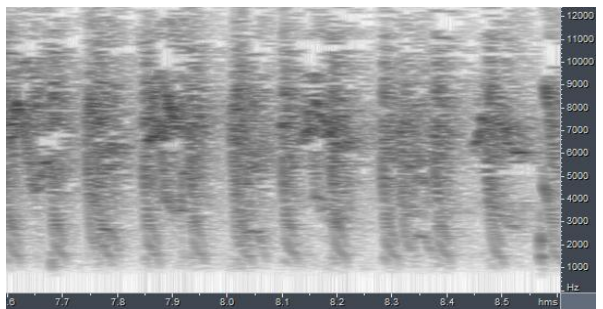


*piurae*  
notes at start of duet





notes in full duet

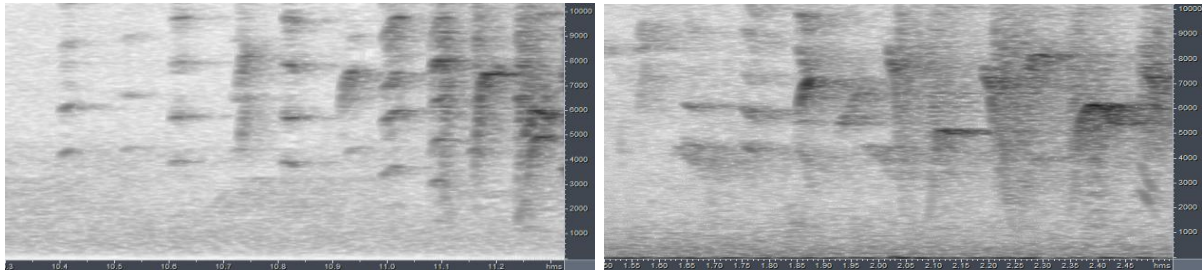


From the above examples, the similarity of *ochraceus* and *melanotis* is quite obvious: duet of *ochraceus* starts with some overslurred notes which gradually rise in pitch before bursting into a full duet, in which apparently both birds repeat incessantly the same note in perfect synchrony, one note very steeply downslurred, the other somewhat more gentler sloped. In *melanotis*, we can see exactly the same pattern, but there is slightly more variation in note shapes (which doesn't come as a surprise given the much wider range along most of the Andes).

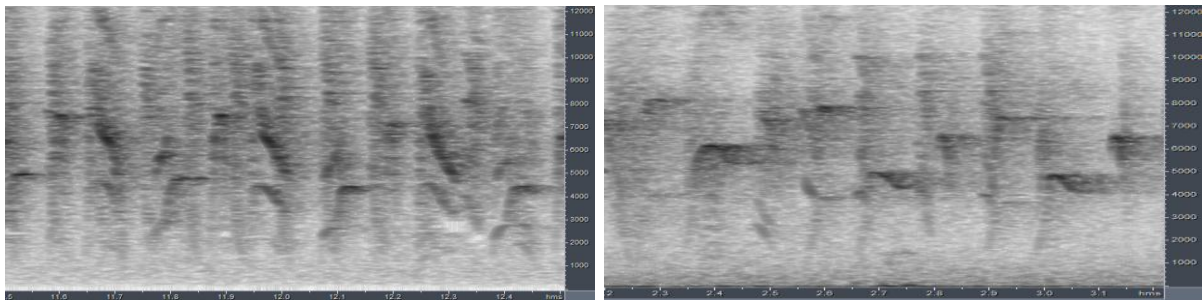
Duet of *piuirae* on the other hand, is somewhat different: the start of the duet is rather a series of short notes at about the same pitch (not rising) and note shape of introductory notes slightly different (not nicely overslurred). In full duet, notes show a much less regular pattern, with apparently one of the birds switching frequently from one note to another note (either upslurred or downslurred).

Race *castaneicollis* of *H. melanotis* also differs from other races of this species (Boesman 2016). For the sake of completeness, we therefore also depict here similar detailed sonograms of parts of its duet song:

notes at start of duet



notes in full duet



In these examples of *castaneicollis* note shape of introductory notes is very distinct (a vertical line of dots on a sonogram) and in full duet, there is a much less repetitive pattern, rather an alternating pattern of more curly-shaped whistles.

All in all, we can conclude that voice of *H. ochraceus* is about identical to *H. melanotis*.

Voice of *piurae* at the other hand is quite distinctive and can be safely told apart. Based on introductory notes at about flat pitch (1-2) and changing notes in duet (1-2) a total score of about 3 can be given. This vocal difference is about of the same magnitude as race *castaneicollis* within *H. melanotis*.

This note was finalized on 19th October 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 these species on XC.

### References

Boesman, P. (2016). Notes on the vocalizations of Black-eared Hemispingus (*Hemispingus melanotis*). *HBW Alive Ornithological Note* 398. In: *Handbook of the Birds of the World Alive*. Lynx Edicions, Barcelona. (retrieved from <http://www.hbw.com/node/1253792> on 2 December 2016).

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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