

## Notes on the vocalizations of Sierran Elaenia (*Elaenia pallatangae*)

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In the following we briefly analyze and compare voice of the different races of Sierran Elaenia (*Elaenia pallatangae*). 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).

Members of the genus *Elaenia* have a dawn song and several day-time 'calls'. Dawn song is usually the most complex vocalization, often quite rhythmic, and very constant over the entire range of the species (a true suboscine!). Unlike some other Tyrant-flycatchers (e.g. *Zimmerius* genus), every species has a very characteristic dawn-song, which thus is an excellent indicator for taxonomic decisions. It is only in recent years that gradually with increasing knowledge more dawn songs of Tyrant flycatchers have been gathered. Obviously, the issue is that birds sing in near-darkness, and identification of the 'singing silhouette' is problematic, while singing may be limited to a short period in the year.

### Andean Birds (*E. p. pallatangae*, *intensa*, *exsul*)

Dawn song can be transcribed as "chrewee...chrewee...chrewee-krrr...chrewee..." . This can be heard in Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia. (max. freq. 4100-4300Hz, min. freq. 800Hz).

Calls include a short whit! (0.29s length, 4500- 4620max. freq.), a more burry "wheer!" (0.20s, 3900-4300Hz max.), a mellower downslurred "wheer-up" (0.37s, 4700Hz max.)

### Tepuis (SE Venezuela and Guyana) (*olivina*)

A song-like vocalization recorded during the day (day song?)(ML145333) has irregular sharp notes "chi-tree-trew...tree-trew...chip..." (max. freq. 5300Hz, min. freq. 2400Hz).

Mostly recorded call is a short sharp "pseeuw!" or a more burry "prreeuw!" (length 0.16-0.27s, max. freq. 5000-7700Hz). Also a mellower descending "pieuw" (0.28s, 5200Hz max.)

Unfortunately there is no certainty about the dawn-song of *olivina*, for which we can't really compare this primary vocalization.

In general one can say that most if not all vocalizations clearly reach a higher frequency in *olivina* (score 3). There is no second sound parameter which is clearly different. When applying Tobias criteria, this would lead to a total vocal score of 3, with the important remark that comparison of dawn songs was not possible.

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### References

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