

Notes on the vocalizations of White-naped Honeyeater (*Melithreptus lunatus*)

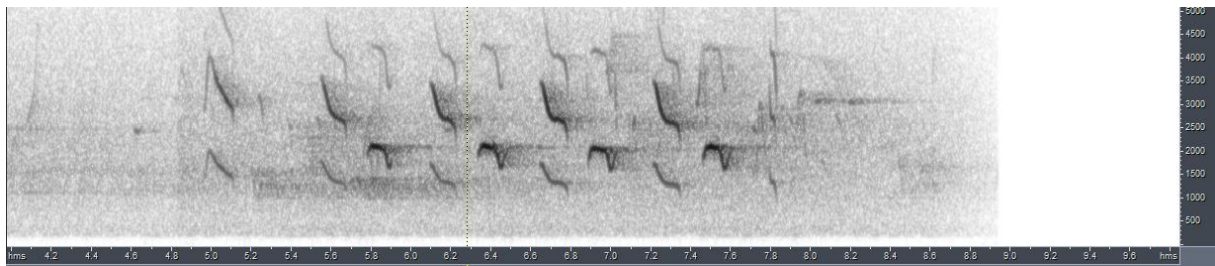
Peter Boesman

In the following we briefly analyze and compare voice of the two races of White-naped Honeyeater (*Melithreptus lunatus*). 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), Macaulay Library (ML) and The Internet Bird Collection (IBC).

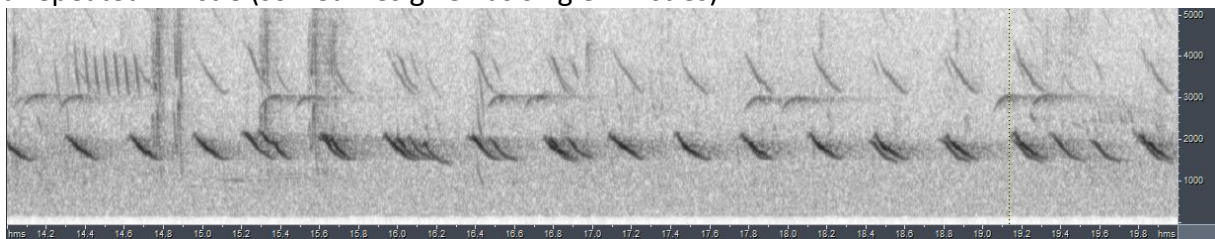
From the few available recordings, it is clear that this species has a fairly extensive vocabulary. We illustrate here the different vocalizations with sonograms:

lunatus

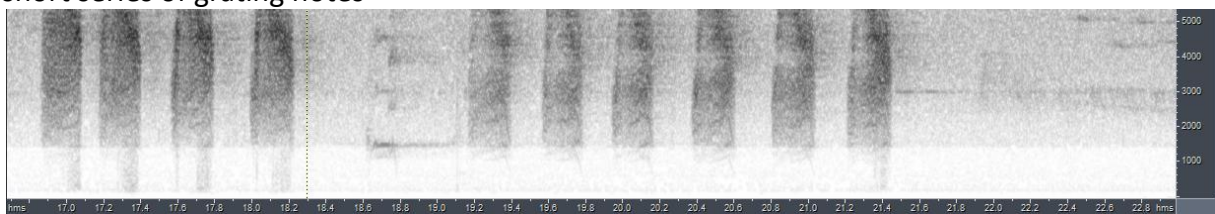
a series of melodious whistles:



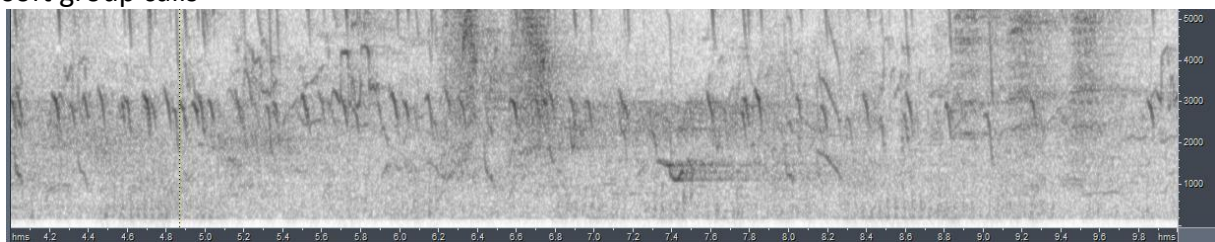
a repeated whistle (sometimes given as single whistles)



short series of grating notes

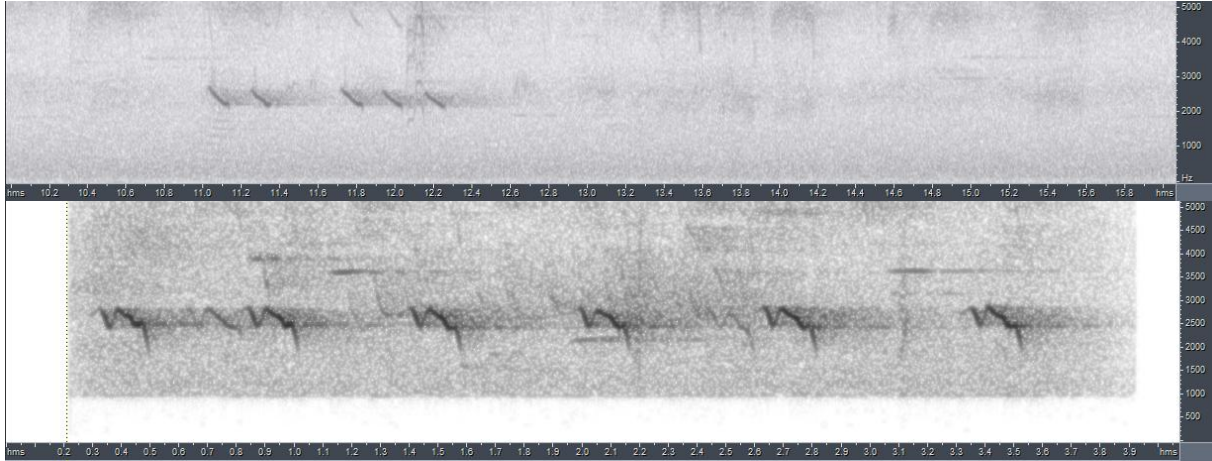


soft group calls

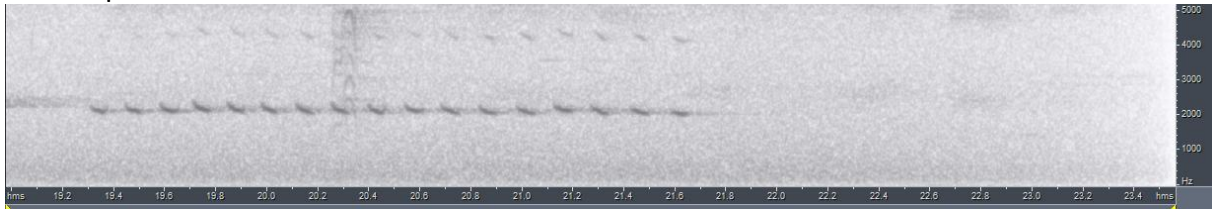


chloropsis

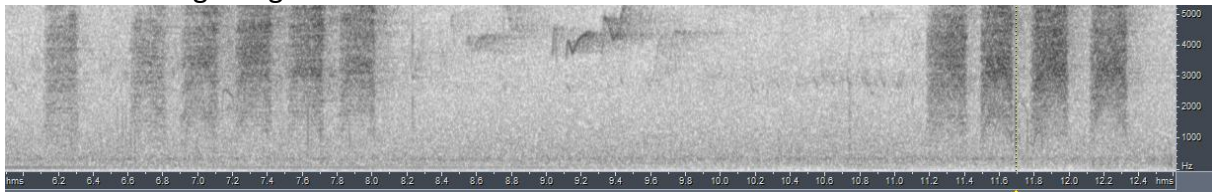
a repeated whistle (shape sometimes different from *lunatus*)



a fast repeated whistle



short series of grating calls



There is a clear similarity in vocalizations.

With so few recordings of *chloropsis* it is difficult to prove any consistent differences between homologous vocalizations of the two races.

chloropsis seems to have a vocalization (fast repeated whistle) not documented for *lunatus*, their vocabulary may thus be slightly different (score 1?).

Also, all whistles are higher-pitched than in *lunatus* (minimum frequency of whistles reaching 1800-2000Hz vs 1200-1600Hz). If this is representative for both taxa, then a score of 2 can be given here.

Using the Tobias criteria as a guidance and with some reservation for the small sample size, a total vocal score of about 2 could be given.

This note was finalized on 7th January 2016, using sound recordings available on-line at that moment. We would like to thank in particular the sound recordists: Marc Anderson, Krzysztof Deoniziak, John Graff, Emma Greig, Linda Macaulay, David Stewart, Nick Talbot, Fred Van Gessel and Ding Li Yong.

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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