

## Notes on the vocalizations of Northern Crombec (*Sylvietta brachyura*)

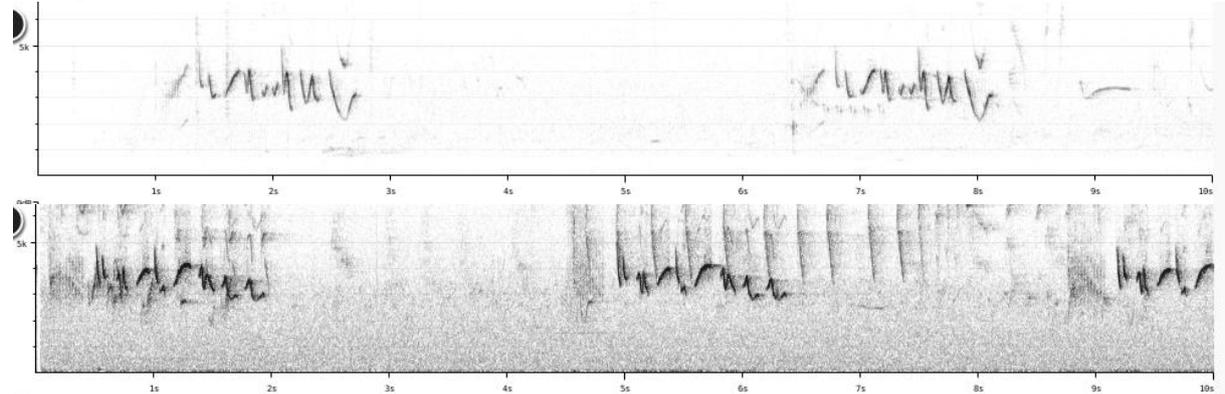
Peter Boesman

In the following we briefly analyze and compare voice of the three races of Northern Crombec (*Sylvietta brachyura*). 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).

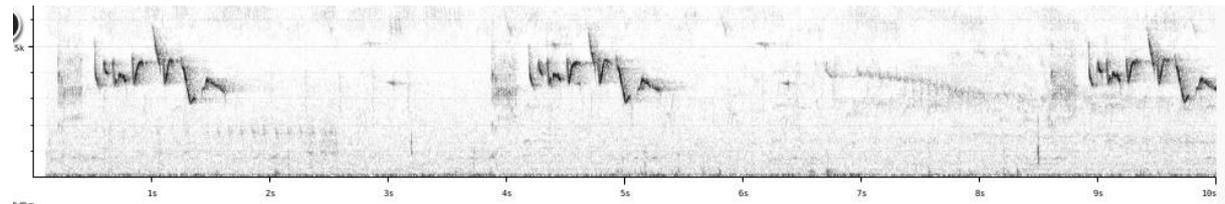
Some examples of song from West to East:

*brachyura*

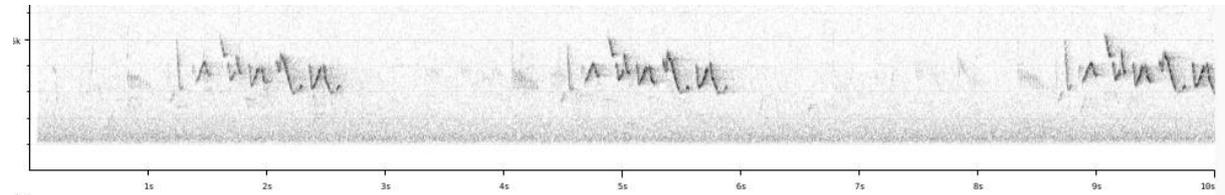
Senegal



Ghana

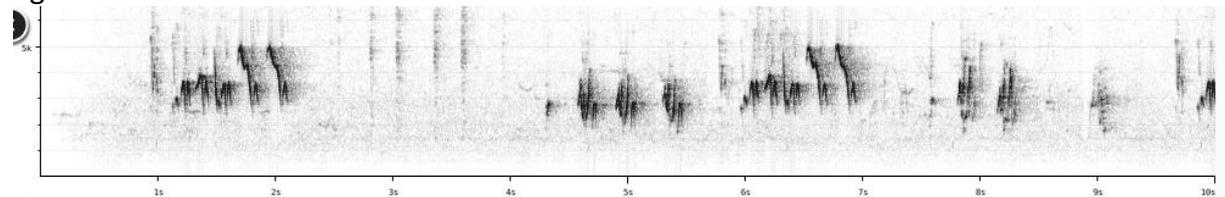


Burkina Faso



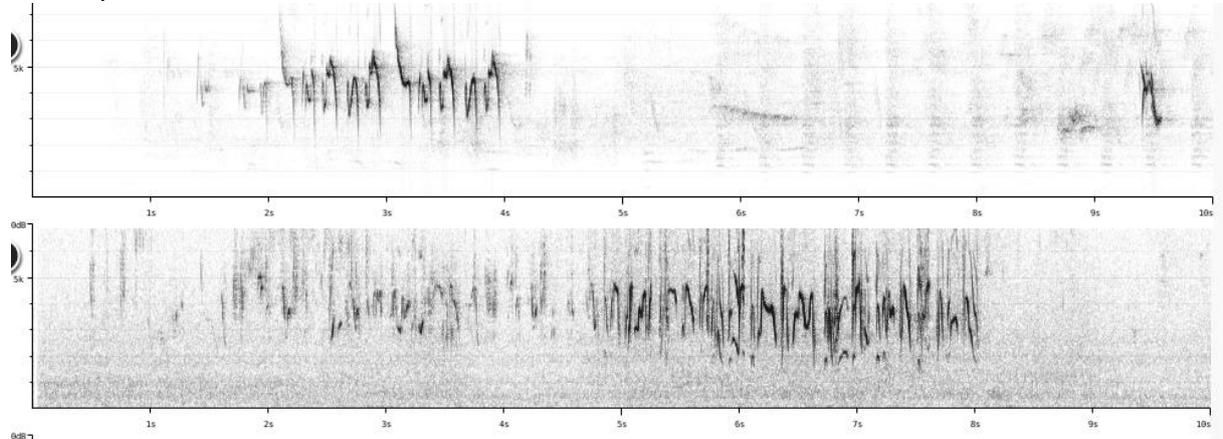
*carnapi*

Uganda



*leucopsis*

C Ethiopia



There is a clear difference in song between *brachyura* in West Africa and *leucopsis*. A single recording from Uganda (*carnapi*) is somewhat intermediate but closer to *brachyura*. Unfortunately there are no other recordings of song from this central region. Song of *brachyura* is sweet and mellow, versus rather piercing for *leucopsis*. This is quite clear also on the sonograms: notes in *brachyura* have a narrow frequency range (c.1-2kHz), most notes stay below 5kHz with exceptional peaks up to 6kHz. On the contrary, most notes in *leucopsis* have a wide frequency range (c. 2-5kHz), many go above 5kHz and some peaks up to 7-8kHz. (Despite being less typical, the Uganda recording fits in the quantified criteria for *brachyura*).

We could thus score difference in song of *brachyura/carnapi* vs. *leucopsis* based on the latter's higher max. frequency (2) and larger frequency range (2). Assuming these are independent variables, this would lead to a total vocal score of 4 when applying Tobias criteria.

This note was finalized on 8th February 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: Peter Boesman, Phil Gregory, Steve Hampton, Gabriel Jamie, Antero Lindholm, David Moyer, Bram Piot, Andrew Spencer and Martin St-Michel.

### 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

Boesman, P. (2016). Notes on the vocalizations of Northern Crombec (*Sylvietta brachyura*). *HBW Alive Ornithological Note* 220. In: *Handbook of the Birds of the World Alive*. Lynx Edicions, Barcelona. (retrieved from <http://www.hbw.com/node/932178> on 7 September 2016).