Notes on the vocalizations of Banded Prinia (*Prinia bairdii*)

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In the following we briefly analyze and compare voice of the different races of Banded Prinia (*Prinia bairdii*). 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).

Song of all races is a single (sometimes composite) note repeated at rather fast pace.
Comparison of song of the different races:

bairdii

obscura

Ruwenzori 2000m, eastern DR Congo

Lolwa 900m, eastern DR Congo

melanops

Kenya

From the above, there seems to be quite an important difference between the repeated multi-element note (*bairdii*) and the simple dagger-shaped note (*obscura/melanops*).

Four additional recordings from Uganda require attention:

SW Uganda (impenetrable forest)

Bwamba forest

These vocalizations are slightly less complex than above examples from Cameroon /Gabon (*bairdii*) but clearly related. It is however not clear to which taxon these recordings belong (both *bairdii* and *obscura* occur in W Uganda, the latter occurring at higher elevations). 'Impenetrable forest' (elevation >1190m) and 'Bwamba forest' (elevation 670-760m) are not exclusively at high elevation, and may thus be *bairdii* (but sonogram example 2 of *obscura* apparently also is of rather low elevation).

A video (<http://ibc.lynxeds.com/video/banded-prinia-prinia-bairdii/bird-sunlight-later-preening>) from impenetrable forest is indicated to be ssp *obscura*, but the bird clearly has some barring on throat, so based on plumage (and voice) it might rather be *bairdii*, while a picture from the same area (<http://www.hbw.com/ibc/photo/banded-prinia-prinia-bairdii/black-faced-prinia>) taken at 2251m elevation clearly is *obscura* based on the solid black throat.

IF the above voice examples from Uganda are indeed of *bairdii*, then vocal difference between *obscura/melanops* and *bairdii* seems to be rather significant. Vocal difference between *bairdii* and *obscura/melanops* can be expressed based on the repeated composed note vs. a repeated single note (score 2-3) and difference in note length (many short vs one long; score 2), which would lead to a total vocal score of 4-5.

There is clearly need for a more thorough vocal study, which should in particular focus on the situation in Uganda.

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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.

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