Notes on the vocalizations of Eyebrowed Wren-babbler (*Napothera epilepidota*)

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In the following we briefly analyze and compare voice of the different races of Eyebrowed Wren-babbler (*Napothera epilepidota*). 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 Avian Vocalizations Center (AVoCet).

Song is a single whistle (at constant pitch or slightly descending), repeated at intervals. There seems to be a slight regional difference:

Birds from Java and Sumatra (*epilepidota* and *diluta*) utter a whistle at about constant pitch or at most with initial part descending and all whistles are clearly shorter than 1 second (n=15).
Birds from N Thailand (*davisoni*) seem to have the longest whistles (length > 1s), always gradually descending:

Birds from NE India (*roberti*), China and Vietnam (*amyae*) have similar, but on average shorter whistles:
Birds of Peninsular Malaysia (*granti*) surprisingly seem to have a slightly upslurred whistle (n=1).

The Sunda group thus seems to be the most distinctive (and could be given a score based e.g. on 'pitch change in second half of whistle'). (No recordings from Borneo are available, except for an aberrant recording ML129450)

If the song in Peninsular Malaysia and S Thailand (*granti*) is indeed upslurred (to be confirmed by more samples), this would also lead to a vocal score of about 3 (e.g. based on 'end freq - start freq')

This note was finalized on 12th April 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 this species on XC, ML and AVoCet.

References


Recommended citation