

Review on the MSc. thesis of Bc. Siddharth Prashant Khopkar on the topic „Vocal individuality in Yellow-rumped tinkerbirds (*Pogoniulus bilineatus*)“

The thesis is situated on 37 pages, with 10 figures and one Table. I found the topic interesting; it deals with variability of simple “monotonous” song of two subspecies of one African barbet that maintain its territory for the whole year. I am quite familiar with the song of the species from Cameroon that is one of the two study areas. The thesis is quite well written, I found relatively small number of typographic mistakes (especially in the chapter “Tested species”, e.g. “song bill”, “wight” and so on). The design of the study is suitable to gain enough data to answer the main questions. I also found the statistical methods suitable to fulfil the aims. I have several questions and recommendations to the author:

- 1) Study site – I would appreciate a map of distribution of recorded individuals within the two study areas. More specifically, the author mentioned that the distribution of recorded species was even, but the authors need a proof for this statement. Since the birds were not individually marked, how can the author exclude the possibility of recording another individual at the same site during the repeated recordings. Please, show the maps after Your presentation.
- 2) The author states that data were gathered in Big Babanki area in Cameroon and Umlalazi in South Africa. My question is whether the author gathered the data in the field alone or with some assistance. I did not find any mention on who gathered the data in the text. At least, the description of Big Babanki area is for me insufficient and You can put more details.
- 3) As mentioned above, the individuals were not individually marked. From graphs, I can see that for example the bird PB08 has much higher variability in all measured parameters. In this case, I would be more patient if this is just only one bird individual.
- 4) Fig. 10 – I suggest to don’t display fitted line for this non-significant result. In my opinion, this is misleading and force the reader to thing about it without any evidence.
- 5) I agree with the author that there is obvious to find differences in vocalizations among subspecies based e.g. on body size and occupying different habitats. However, the differences among subspecies may be also given by some alternative variables that were not mentioned. Especially, the song of population with increased density is supposed to have greater variability than the song of population with low density. Since, the densities were not mentioned, these explanations can be fully addressed.

- 6) The author explains low individual variability in the song of the species by its simple vocalization and no need to recognize neighbours. This is in contrast that almost all *Pogoniulus* species use their duets to maintain the pair-bonds and probably also to joint territory defence. Previously, I studied similar species *Pogoniulus coryphaeus* in Big Babanki and it showed duetting or answering each other during the most of studied period. Did You also note this behaviour for *P. bilineatus*, which is not so abundant as *P. coryphaeus*?

I found the thesis well designed and data were correctly analysed. Therefore, I suppose that the thesis is sufficient to meet condition for MSc. at Faculty of Science (University of South Bohemia). Based on the quality of defence, I suggest the degree “výborně” or “velmi dobře”.

doc. Mgr. Jan Riegert, Ph.D.

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