ABSTRACTS FOR *CONDOR* 103(4) NOVEMBER 2001

SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

SONG VARIATION AMONG *CISTOTHORUS* WRENS, WITH A FOCUS ON THE MÉRIDA WREN

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Abstract. Evidence from two *Cistothorus* wrens (*C. palustris*, *C. platensis*) has suggested that repertoire size increases with population density and that song imitators are more likely to be site faithful than are song improvisers. We tested these two ideas on a third species, *C. meridae*, an endemic to the Venezuelan Andes. Of the three *Cistothorus* wrens, song repertoire sizes of male Mérida Wrens are the smallest, ranging from 18 to 27 song types per male; Mérida Wrens are also most likely to repeat each type several times before switching to a new type. Density of Mérida Wrens was also lowest, from 0.4 to 2.0 territories per 10 ha. These wrens are highly site faithful, with marked microgeographic song variation. Female Mérida Wrens also sing. Overall, data from the Mérida Wren support the ideas that, among *Cistothorus* wrens, song repertoire sizes increase with population density and site faithfulness promotes song imitation.

Key words: Cistothorus*, dialect, repertoire, song, Venezuela, vocalization, wren.*

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