

Record of albino Trinket Snake from Nashik, Maharashtra, India

On 21 March 2021 we spotted an adult albino Trinket Snake *Coelognathus helena* (Serpentes: Colubridae) at Ozar (20.0947° N & 73.9281° E) Niphad, Nashik near the dense vegetation. The snake was captured by Mr. Sandeep Karate and identified by Mr. Sushant Ranshur. The captured snake was active and healthy. The total body length was 45.72 cm and light pink in colour with patches on the body and with red eyes.

The genus *Coelognathus* (Fitzinger, 1843) includes seven species (*helena*, *subradiatus*, *radiates*, *flavolineatus*, *celebensis*, *enganensis*, and *erythrurus*) of which *C. flavolineatus* (Schlegel), *C. helena* (Daudin), and *C. radiatus* (Boie) are found in India (Schulz 2013). The Trinket Snake is a non-venomous, active and diurnal colubrid snake. The adult trinket is dark brown in colour and shows transverse black spots. A vertical black streak can be found below



Normal and albino Trinket Snake. © Sushant Ranshoo.

the eye, whereas an oblique black streak can be found behind the eye. The lower part of the body is yellowish with or without black spots. Albinism is rarely observed

in animals. It is a genetic disorder caused by loss of pigmentation in skin and eyes, hence lacking particular coloration (Sayyed 2012). In complete albinism, both skin



Adult albino Trinket Snake. © Sushant Ranshoor.

and eye lack melanophores while in partial albinism it is only the skin or eye melanophore that is affected (Spadola & Insacco 2010). Mahabal & Thakur (2014) had reviewed the records of colour aberration among the Indian herpetofauna and recorded six instances

of albino *C. helena* from different parts of India but not from Nashik. Hence, the present observation of albino trinket snake could be the first record from Nashik, Maharashtra.

After recording and photographing all details, the

snake was released in the wild with the help of forest department.

References

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Vinaykamal D. Dethe¹ & Sushant B. Ranshoor²

¹ Department of Zoology, MVP'S Arts, Science and Commerce College, Ozar (Mig), Nashik, Maharashtra 422206, India.

² Prince Heritage, Row House No. 1, Sweetly Nagar, Ozar (Mig), Nashik, Maharashtra 422206, India.
Email: 'mevdethe@gmail.com (corresponding author)

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