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AN UNUSUALLY COLORED EASTERN MILKSNAKE (*LAMPROPELTIS TRIANGULUM TRIANGULUM*) FROM VIRGINIA, WITH NOTES ON HER OFFSPRING -- Aberrant phenotypes have been reported occasionally for the eastern subspecies of the widespread milksnake (*Lampropeltis triangulum*) in North America (Williams. 1988; Bechtel, 1995). True albinos from Illinois, Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Texas have been noted in several publications (Lindahl, 1898; Hoopes, 1943; Hensley, 1959; Dyrkacz, 1981; Blair et al., 1994). One xanthic (lacking all dark pigment) individual from Ohio was listed by Dyrkacz (1981). A leucistic (lacking normal integumentary pigment except eyes) juvenile with faint dorsal markings from Indiana was illustrated in Wagner (1982). Hensley (1959) listed an albino from Montgomery County, Virginia, that was collected near Blacksburg on 30 September 1955 (US National Museum 137315). This snake is a juvenile female (317 mm total length) with normal scutellation for this subspecies in Virginia (Mitchell, 1994). Faint dorsal blotches are evident in preservative, most of which extend to scale row 4; blotches of normally patterned scales extend to scale rows 1-3. This specimen may be more accurately called an albinistic pinto form (leucistic except for scattered areas of normal pigmentation) of the eastern milksnake rather than an albino as listed by Hensley (1959). Descriptions of other aberrant phenotypes of this species from this region are of interest, as are observations on their young. In this note, we describe a second wild-caught adult albinistic pinto eastern milksnake and the phenotypes of her offspring from the central Appalachians of Virginia.

A gravid female *L. t. triangulum* (801 mm total length) was found on 24 July 2003 in Highland Wildlife Management Area, 5.8 km SE Monterey, Highland County, Virginia, at an elevation of about 1220 m (38° 21' 25.7" N, 79° 34' 47.1" W) on top of Jack Mountain. She was found crossing a service road at about 1800 h in a sugar maple, hemlock, and grassy field habitat matrix at an air temperature of about 25° C. The female was leucistic with the dorsum of the head exhibiting an irregular, dark brown pattern, irregular brown dorsal body blotches, and several scattered brown and red scales. The outlines of what would have been normal body blotches were light gray. Body pigment, including the otherwise normal blotches, was white. The venter was white except for a very faint black color where the dark portion of the normal checkerboard pattern would be located. Upper and lower labials were outlined in light brown. Eye color was normal, with a blue-black iris and black pupil.

This female laid seven eggs in captivity on 27 July 2003 that were incubated at an average temperature of 24° C. Pipping of the first egg occurred on 24 September and the last egg pipped on 28 September. Incubation period was 59-63 days. All of the hatchlings (mean total length = 208.6 $\pm$ 11.4 mm, 185-220 mm; mean weight = 4.75 $\pm$ 0.31 g, 4.1-5.1 g) exhibited the normal color and pattern characteristic of the wild phenotype of this subspecies (Mitchell, 1994). Each had the normal dorsal head pattern, 31-40 (mean = 34.4 $\pm$ 3.2) dorsal blotches, and the checkerboard pattern on the venter. The smallest neonate in this sample is smaller than that reported for a sample of 11 hatchlings (198 mm) in Mitchell (1994), whereas the body weights of all but the smallest one are heavier than he reported for this sample (maximum = 4.3 g). The number of dorsal blotches is within the range Mitchell (1994) reported for *L. t. triangulum* in Virginia.

The fact that the albinistic pinto mother bore all normally patterned offspring suggests that they may have been sired by a typically patterned male. It would be of interest to know if any of the young would produce albinistic hatchlings when mated with normal males, or if a leucistic or albinistic pinto male would produce highly phenotypically-variable offspring, with this female. However, the female and her neonates were released at the site of capture on 7 October 2003.

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Fig. 1. Albinistic pinto *Lampropeltis triangulum* with her eggs from Highland County, Virginia. Photo by Anne Hocker.