



# An Amelanistic Western Wormsnake (*Carphophis vermis*) from Missouri, USA

John S. Parmerlee, Jr. and Robert Powell

Department of Biology, Avila University, Kansas City, Missouri 64145, USA (caarmapman@sbcglobal.net [corresponding author], robert.powell@avila.edu)

Accounts of unusually colored wormsnares in the genus *Carphophis* (Allard 1945; Harris 1968; Simmons and Stine 1961; Clark 1970; Palmer and Braswell 1980; Dyrkacz 1981; Cook and Funderburk 1986; Gregory and Khosravi 2012; Somma 2012) describe color anomalies such as albinism and xanthism in Eastern Wormsnakes (*C. amoenus*). Herein, we describe, to the best of our knowledge, the first report of amelanism in a Western Wormsnake (*C. vermis*).

At 0945 h on 5 June 2021, JSP encountered an amelanistic Western Wormsnake at a private residence in Jackson County, Missouri, USA (38.974444°N, 94.284722°W, WGS84; elev. 277 m asl). The general area is characterized as Oak/Hickory forest. The snake was coiled on a gravel substrate under a repurposed rubber truck-bed mat serving as a threshold to a machine shed. The area was heavily shaded at the hour of discovery. The snake was 23.0 cm in total length (SVL = 18.6 cm; tail length = 4.4 cm). The body is distinctly bicolored, as is typical for the species. The venter is pink, not unlike a normally pigmented individual, whereas the dorsum

is nearly white with just a faint pinkish hue (Fig. 1). The eyes are pink, which is characteristic of animals that lack melanin. The snake was released after photographs were taken.

### Literature Cited

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Fig. 1. An amelanistic Western Wormsnake (*Carphophis vermis*) from Jackson County, Missouri, USA. Photograph by John S. Parmerlee, Jr.