



Record of Albinism in a Tillack’s Kukri (*Oligodon tillacki*) from Kamshet, Maval Taluka, Pune, Maharashtra, India

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Albinism is an inherited condition documented in all major vertebrate groups that is expressed as a conspicuous phenotype arising from the absence of melanin, resulting in animals with pinkish-yellow skin and red eyes (Fertl and Rosel 2009; Stephenson et al. 2022). Albinism in snakes in nature is rare, especially in adults, presumably due to an increased risk of predation (Thakur and Trivedi 2018).

Thirty-six species of snakes have been recorded in Maval taluka, Pune District, Maharashtra, India, including Tillack’s Kukri (*Oligodon tillacki*) (Jigar et al. 2023). At about 0900 h on 14 May 2023, Mr. Ganesh Phalke received a distress call from Kamshet, Maval, Pune District, India (18.763298 N, 73.556728 E; elev. 622 m asl) regarding a snake. When he reached the site, he encountered an albino snake (total length ~23 cm) in a human settlement. The snake was identified as a Tillack’s Kukri using taxonomic keys in Whitaker (2006) and Bandara et al. (2022). After taking photographs (Fig. 1), the snake was relocated into suitable habitat nearby.

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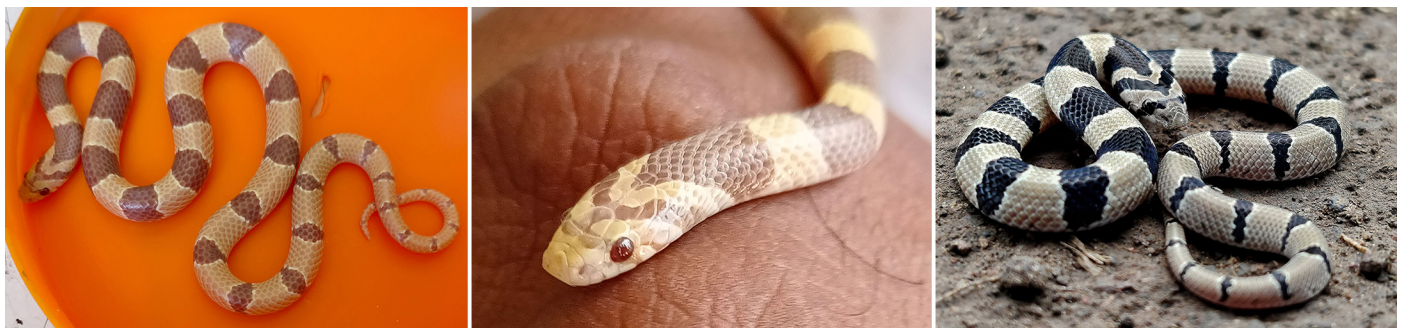


Figure 1. An albino Tillack’s Kukri (*Oligodon tillacki*) (left), showing the red eye (center), and a conspecific with typical coloration (right). Photographs by Anil Andre.