



Albinism in the Checkered Keelback, *Fowlea piscator* (Schneider 1799), from Assam, India

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Hypopigmentation in snakes is a rare genetic anomaly characterized by the absence or reduction in the amount of melanin; albinism affects the pigmentation of eyes (resulting in red eyes), whereas eye color is normal in leucism (Bechtel 1978). Reports of hypopigmentation in Checkered Keelbacks, *Fowlea piscator* (Schneider 1799), highlighting variations in pigmentation and physical characteristics, in India and Nepal include records from Gujarat, Maharashtra, Mizoram, and West Bengal (India) and from Dhanusha District (Nepal) (Mahabal and Thakur 2014; Deshmukh et al. 2020; Mahapatra et al. 2020; Devkota et al. 2021; Patel et al. 2022; Bawaskar et al 2024).

At about 1900 h on 1 June 2024, we observed an albino juvenile male *F. piscator* (total length 290 mm) (Fig. 1) near the Assam State Zoo in Guwahati, Assam (26.163895, 91.780121; elev. 73 m asl). Appearance and scalation details align with published descriptions of *F. piscator* (e.g., Smith 1943; Purkayastha et al. 2018). This is, to the best of our knowledge, the first documented record of albinism in *Fowlea piscator* from the state of Assam, India.

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Figure 1. An albino Checkered Keelback (*Fowlea piscator*) from Guwahati, Assam, India. Photograph by Jayaditya Purkayastha.