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ALBINISM IN *THOMOMYS TALPOIDES* FROM COLORADO

G. Keith LaVoie¹, Howard P. Tietjen¹, and Michael W. Fall¹

Anomalies of pelage coloration among the various species of pocket gophers are not uncommon; however, most reported specimens are melanistic or exhibit only partial albinism. Bailey (1915) reported four specimens of the genus *Thomomys* that were apparently complete albinos. Six albino specimens of *T. bottae* from California collections were described by Storer and Gregory (1934). Bradley (1963) collected a completely albino *T. umbrinus* near Las Vegas, Nevada. Burnett (1925) described a *T. talpoides* trapped in Larimer County, Colorado; it "approached albinism," being a deep cream color. Mr. R. H. Brannaman of Larimer County, Colorado (1970), reported two white *T. talpoides* with black eyes in a sample of 954 trapped from his ranch in the past four years. To our knowledge, there is only one other report of a completely albino *T. talpoides*. Tryon (1947) found one in a sample of over 1000 gophers trapped in Montana.

On 6 November 1970, while live-trapping *T. talpoides*, we captured a completely albino male in Douglas County near Sedalia, Colorado. We estimated that more than 1000 gophers have been trapped for laboratory studies in this meadow and adjacent ranchlands since 1962. This specimen was a young-of-the-year weighing 75 g. The measurements were as follows: total length—165 mm, tail—40 mm, hind foot—26 mm, ear from notch—6 mm. The animal was completely white above and below, and hairs were uniformly white from base to tip. The eyes lacked pigment, being entirely pink. The specimen is preserved in the collection of the Denver Wildlife Research Center.

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