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## The First Record of Albino Grey Langur (*Semnopithecus priam*) from Katagamuwa, Yala National Park and Endemic Toque Macaque (*Macaca sinica*) from Minneriya National Park in Sri Lanka

**Shashi Madhushanka<sup>1,\*</sup>, Kithsiri Ranawana<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Postgraduate Institute of Science, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Kandy, Sri Lanka

<sup>2</sup> Department of Zoology, Faculty of Science, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Kandy, Sri Lanka

\*E-mail address: [shashimadhushanka2@gmail.com](mailto:shashimadhushanka2@gmail.com)

### ABSTRACT

Albinism is a result of cells that are unable to make melanin or pigments which are necessary to color the skin. It occurs very rarely in the wild animal. Although several species of monkeys with albino individuals have been recorded in other parts of the world, it has never been recorded in Grey Langur and endemic Toque Macaque. Hence this would be the first ever albino Grey Langur and endemic Toque Macaque individuals recorded in Sri Lanka.

**Keywords:** Albinism, Grey Langur, Rare, Toque Macaque

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Albinism refers to a group of inherited disorders of the pigment system where a reduced or an absence of melanin formation is observed (King, 1987). Albinism can be exhibited for several reasons apart from inheritance including genetic mutations, diet, living conditions, age, disease, or injury (McCardle, 2012). Albinism and color variation have been recorded in other parts of the world in different monkey species such as François' langur group (*Trachypithecus francoisi*) (Huang et al., 2018), Nilgiri Langur (*Semnopithecus johnii*) (Mahato et al., 2024),

Hatinh Langurs (*Trachypithecus hatinhensis*) (Nadler, 2010), Capped Langur (*Trachypithecus pileatus*) (Choudhury, 2023), Javan Lutungs (*Trachypithecus auratus sondaicus*) (Tsuji et al., 2013). The white color morph of endemic Purple-faced Leaf Monkey (*Trachypithecus vetulus*) has also been recorded from several places in Sri Lanka such as Kagalle, Galle, and Matara Districts in the wet zone region (Roscoe et al., 2013; Nahallage et al., 2015), however, it has never been recorded in Grey Langur (*Semnopithecus priam*) and endemic Toque Macaque (*Macaca sinica*) in its present distribution range. No documentary records or sources are available on such individuals hence this could be the first-ever record of albinism in Grey Langur and Toque Macaque.

## **2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

We observed an albino sub-adult of Grey Langur close to Katagamuwa Tank in Yala National Park on the 28<sup>th</sup> of December 2015 around 9.35 a.m. (Figure 1). The individual belonged to a troop that had normal coloration and the troop consisted of 12-15 individuals. Manjula Perera took photographs from a Nikon DSLR camera (COOLPIX P600) under a normal setting.



**Figure 1.** Albino Gray Langur sub-adult at Katagamuwa, Yala (Photographed by Manjula Perera).



This albino individual had a completely white color fur and normal black colored eyes. It lacked the black-colored face that normal individuals possessed and it had a pinkish face.

The fingers and hand also had this pinkish color. This is a complete albinism formation that rarely occurs in the wild and it was never been recorded in Grey Langurs. According to our observations, it had normal behavior, and other troop members treated it similar way to other sub-adults. We observed its behavior for a few minutes until it moved into forest with the rest of the troop. It had completely normal foraging behavior similar to other sub-adults and its movement was also similar to others.

We did not record the same individual later in the area. This type of albino individual has a low survival rate in the wild. This individual could have died due to its high detectability to predators in the natural forest.

We also observed an albino sub-adult of Toque Macaque close to the Minneriya National Park in the North Central Province of Sri Lanka on the 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 in the morning (Figure 2). This individual also belonged to a troop that had a normal coat color and the troop consisted of around 12 individuals. Kithsiri Ranawana took photographs from a Nikon DSLR camera (COOLPIX P520) under normal settings. This individual had white color fur and completely red-colored eyes. It lacked a brownish-yellow color face and had a pinkish color face while the hands also were pinkish color.



**Figure 2.** Albino Toque Macaque sub-adult from Minneriya National Park (Photographed by Kithsiri Ranawana).

This is a complete albinism where it occurs rarely in the wild and it was never reported in endemic Toque Macaque in Sri Lanka. It had a normal behavior similar to the other individuals in the troop and was treated the same way as other sub-adults in the troop. The present status of this individual is also unknown.

### **3. CONCLUSIONS**

Although several species of monkeys with different color variations have been recorded in the world, it has never been recorded in Grey Langur and endemic Toque Macaque with a notable exception to the endemic white morph of Purple-faced Leaf Langur from Sri Lanka. This would be the first-ever photographic record of albino grey langur and Toque Macaque from Sri Lanka.

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