

RANA SYLVATICA (Wood Frog). LEUCISM. *Rana sylvatica* exhibits sexual dichromatism, with males consistently more darkly pigmented, from tan to brown, whereas females generally are more reddish-brown (Banta 1914. Biol. Bull. 26:171–183). Reports of abnormal patterns of coloration, such as albinism and leucism, are important for determining the prevalence of these morphs throughout a species range. Leucism refers to reduced skin pigmentation, but the coloration of the eyes is normal

(Dyrkacz 1981. SSAR Herptol. Circ. 11:1–31). A case of leucism has been reported for a tadpole of *R. sylvatica* which did not survive until metamorphosis (Smith 2014. Bull. Maryland Herpetol. Soc. 50:74–75). An instance of a leucistic individual of *R. sylvatica* from a population in British Columbia, Canada has also been reported, however, the diagnostic characters of *R. sylvatica* are not evident in the accompanying photograph (the specimen was not vouchered) possibly calling into question the correct species identity (Thompson and Rea 2013. Herpetol. Rev. 44:128–129). In the aforementioned report, the individual in the photograph apparently lacks dorsolateral folds and interdigital webbing of the hindfeet, among other diagnostic characteristics typical of this species. Also, the authors report that the leucistic individual's SVL was 2.8 mm (a presumed lapsus). Metamorphs of *R. sylvatica* range between 13–22 mm SVL, whereas adults range between 37–83 mm SVL (male and female ranges combined; Martof 1970. Cat. Amer. Amphib. Rept. 86:1–4). These inconsistencies open the possibility of a species misidentification (although alternative identifications are not immediately apparent) and equivocal assertion of the presence of leucistic *R. sylvatica* in British Columbia.

Here, I report a case of adult leucism in a population unambiguously identifiable as *R. sylvatica* from the northeastern United States. On the night of 13 April 2015, a leucistic adult male *R. sylvatica* was observed in a flood-plain wetland adjacent to the Fenton River, located within the UConn Forest, Mansfield, Connecticut, USA (41.824°N, 72.236°W; WGS 84). The individual was photographed without manipulation (Fig 1A). The individual exhibited a general lack of pigment throughout its body, although partially retaining the species' diagnostic "eye mask" and tympanic region pigmentation; reduced pigmentation was evident on its dorsolateral folds as well. For comparative purposes, a photograph of an amplexant pair taken on the night of 10 April 2014 from the same population at the same location is shown (Fig 1B), with the male (top) considerably darker brown than the female (bottom).

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PHOTOS BY JOHANA GOYES VALLEJOS

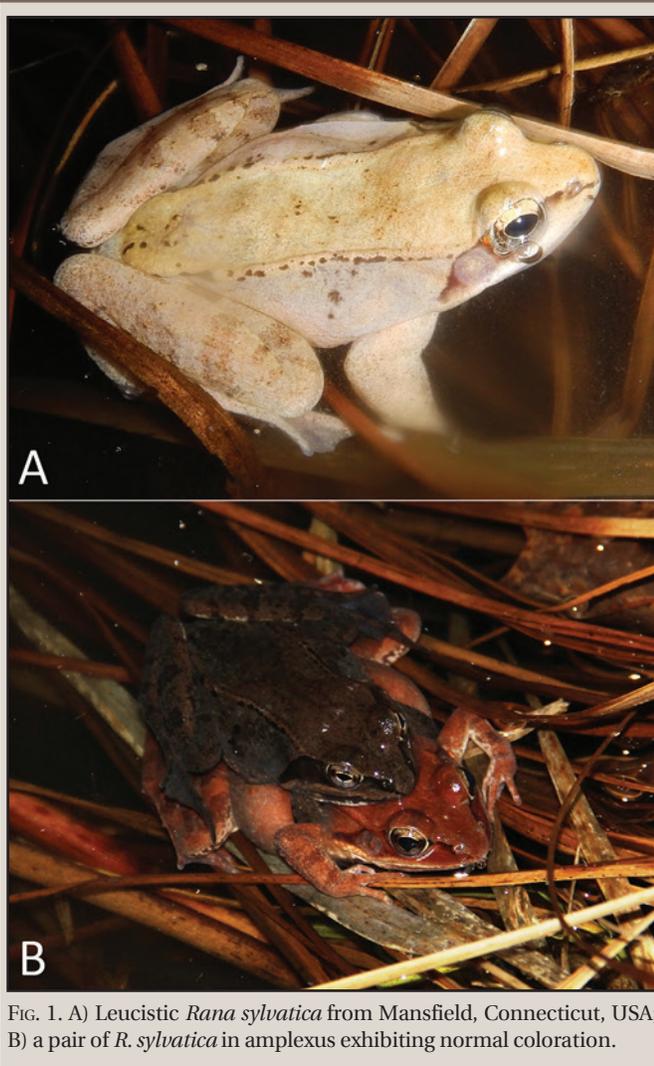


FIG. 1. A) Leucistic *Rana sylvatica* from Mansfield, Connecticut, USA; B) a pair of *R. sylvatica* in amplexus exhibiting normal coloration.