

ART. VIII. *Contributions to the Natural History of Southern Africa.* By ANDREW SMITH, M. D. Surgeon to the Forces.

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Genus *NAJA*, Dand.

*N. nigra.* Colour above, livid black, beneath, greenish black; each abdominal plate margined behind by a tint of a lighter hue. Scales on the upper part of the neck near to the head, somewhat circular, those on the body ovate. Abdominal plates 224. Subcaudal scales 75 pairs. Length 5 feet 9 inches, of which the tail measures 13 inches. Circumference of the thickest part of the body  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches. Inhabits the districts towards the Orange River; and is called the "Spitting Snake," from its being in the habit, according to the natives, of casting its poison at individuals who may be passing near it.

*N. gutturalis.* Colour above, a light yellowish brown, sometimes finely mottled with delicate short white and almost invisible streaks; beneath, nearly the same tint, with a dark brown collar, nearly 2 inches in breadth, about an inch behind the head; and towards its anterior extremity extending upwards on the sides of the neck, so as to be visible when the snake is lying flat on the ground. Abdominal plates 204. Subcaudal scales 59 pairs. Length 1 foot 10 inches. Inhabits the country near the mouth of the Orange river.

Genus *VIPERA*.

*V. ocellata.* Colour above, a yellowish or reddish brown, with a row of large brown spots along each side, and each spot marked with a blue tint near its centre. Along the middle of the back is a series of transverse black bars, each edged, on one side at least, by a white or yellowish white line; beneath, of a yellowish white or pearly hue. Over each eye a conical elevation, out of which projects a cylindrical spine, slightly curved backwards, and about a line and a half, or nearly two lines in length. Abdominal plates 149. Subcaudal scales 27 pairs. Length 14 inches. Young specimens exhibit no appearance of spines over the eyes. Inhabits sandy districts north of the Cape Colony, and is very dangerous from its being liable to be trodden upon, owing to its colour being so nearly that of the sand.

Genus *LACERTA*.

1. *Palpebral plates\* not edged by granular scales.*

*L. elegans.* Scales somewhat circular, small and flat, placed in transverse rows; abdominal plates disposed in 6 rows; collar formed of 8 scales; femoral pores 14 or 15. Colour of back and sides light reddish brown, tail and legs light red; under parts reddish white. Length, from 12 to 15 in. Inhabits Little Namaqualand and the country towards the Orange river.

*L. tessellata.* Anterior part of back, and the sides, for nearly their whole length, black, the former variegated by 4 fine, white, longitudinal lines, the latter by vertical white stripes. Posterior part of back and tail greenish brown; beneath yellowish white; fore legs variegated by white spots.—Abdominal plates disposed in 6 longitudinal rows; collar composed of 10 plates; femoral pores 12 or 14. Length about 14 inches. Inhabits the eastern parts of the Cape Colony.

*L. livida.* Back brown, sides black, the latter closely spotted or striped with white, the former with 6 white lines, either continuous, or formed of short stripes or spots; fore legs spotted with white. Tail greenish brown,

\* Plates immediately above the eyes.