At the moment when, presumably, orgasm occurred the male emitted a series of hissing squeaks. Soon after this the female began to walk in a circle, the male still united, being dragged along until he finally slid off her back. She then retreated into a corner and withdrew into her shell.

A young tortoise with a carapace size of 40mm. × 40mm. was seen in the aviary in late April, presumably the result of an earlier mating. This, perhaps, suggests that the eggs are laid singly rather than in batches.

The young tortoise was found decapitated some nine days later. This could have been done by an adult *K. erosa* for contrary to one writer (Cansdale, 1955) the diet of this species is not confined to vegetable material, and fresh meat and carrion are readily eaten.

After this paper was presented the writer has discovered another forest species of Kinixys occurring within Nigeria, Kinixys homeana. K. homeana is superficially similar to K. erosa but the carapace possesses a precentral shield. In K. erosa the anterior extremities of the plastron project beyond the carapace (when the animal is viewed dorsally or laterally). This is not so in K. homeana. The two species appear to occupy similar habitats.

References

Cansdale, G. (1955). *Reptiles of West Africa.* Penguin Books.

Ditmars, R. L. (1951). *Reptiles of the World.* MacMillan.

Rose, W. (1950). *The Reptiles and Amphibians of Southern Africa.* Maskew Miller.

EGG-LAYING IN *LACERTA AGILIS*

According to Smith (*The British Amphibians and Reptiles*, 3rd. Edition, 1964), there is no record of the British Sand Lizard (*Lacerta agilis*) twice laying eggs in the same season. However, a female of this species, maintained in an outdoor reptiliary, has recently done so. The first batch of 10 eggs (though one of them was destroyed while being dug up) was laid in sand between 6 p.m. and 9 a.m. on June 14/15th, 1965. The date of the second laying is unknown. None of the eggs of the first batch had hatched by the 12th of September, and they were dug up on September 17th, in order to incubate them artificially. It was then that the second clutch was discovered in exactly the same place.

All nine eggs of the first clutch hatched between 17th and 23rd of September. The nine eggs of the second batch were all much smaller than were those of the first just before hatching. They had not hatched by October 10th, but had finally done so by October 29th. Judging by their external appearance eggs of the second batch had probably hatched at about October 23rd.

Since there is only one pair of Sand Lizards present in the reptiliary, and for most of the time eggs were kept in the damp at 76° F, the eggs, from one female only, thus show differences in size and hatching times which must strongly suggest that they were laid at different times.

G. J. Walters

104 Borden Lane, Sittingbourne, Kent.

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THE WORLD OF REPTILES

By

Angus Bellairs and Richard Carrington

(*Chatto and Windus, London, pp.* 153)

In this delightful little book Chapter I introduces the subject by discussing general reptilian morphology. The following chapters 2-5 deal respectively with Tortoises and Turtles, Lizards and Tuatara, Snakes and then Crocodiles and their allies. Lastly scientific nomenclature is briefly discussed, the Class Reptilia is phylogenetically systematised and a bibliography of 41 references is listed, each with a brief note on its contents.

The subject matter is mainly concerned with the living specimens, and fossil ancestors are only occasionally mentioned. This treatment could have led to tedious descriptions of successive genera, but the authors have managed to provide a blend of interesting facts for both the naturalist, and the more serious zoologist. The result should satisfy all those readers who like to read about reptiles, and should whet the appetite of those who, for various reasons, wish to proceed further with the subject.

Among the pages we learn that: Reptiles cannot hear very well; they have tiny brains; a giant Indian Ocean tortoise lived for 152 years; among lizards is the Flying Dragon (Draco), which can glide through the air—one is tempted to say 'with the greatest of ease'—using wing-like extensions of flank skin; Geckos walk upside-down on the ceiling by means of scaly pads on their feet; probably 30 to 40,000 people in the world die of snake bites every year: snake-charmers probably exert their influence by movement, not sound; and the docile Indian python is the one used in strip-tease acts!

There are a number of nice photographs of various genera. The book is well produced and good value at 25/-. It would make a nice Xmas present for anyone who likes natural history.

H. Fox.

FROM OTHER JOURNALS:

Back issues of the East German journal 'Aquarien, Terrarien' contain the following papers of herpetological interest.

Olexa, A. & Kral, Ueber Fang, Transport und Haltung des Bandmolches, *Triturus vittatus*. (On the catching, transport and husbandry of *T.V.*) 1963; **10**; 43-48.

Petzold, H. G. Der Sechszehenfrosch, *Rana hexadactyla*. 1963. **10**; 58-60.

Koch, H. Haltung und Zucht von Tokehs, Gekko gecko. (Husbandry and Breeding of *G.g.*) 1964; **11**; 111-113.

Obst, F. J. Erfahrungen mit Riesenkröten. (Experiences with Giant Toads) 1964; **11**; 134/5.

Petzold, H. G. On Cobras 1964; **11**; 147-151.

Olexa, A. Blaue Anolis. (Blue Anolis) 1964; **11**; 183-185.

Kabisch, K. & Engelhard, H. Beobachtungen an Reptilien in der Umgebung von Varna-Goldsand. (Reptiles on the Black Sea coast). 1964; **11**; 194-197.

Petzold, H. G. Alfred Edmund Brehm—heute gesehen. (Biographical notes on A. E. Brehm). 1964; **11**; 202-206.

Petzold, H. G. Ueber Freileben und Terrarienhaltung der Taurischen Eidechse. (*Lacerta taurica* Pall. free and in captivity) 1965; **12**; 112-117.