

**THE REPTILES OF THE PACIFIC COAST  
AND GREAT BASIN; AN ACCOUNT OF  
THE SPECIES KNOWN TO INHABIT  
CALIFORNIA AND OREGON,  
WASHINGTON, IDAHO AND NEVADA**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649016464

The reptiles of the Pacific coast and Great Basin; an account of the species known to inhabit California and Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Nevada by John Van Denburgh

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**JOHN VAN DENBURGH**

**THE REPTILES OF THE PACIFIC COAST  
AND GREAT BASIN; AN ACCOUNT OF  
THE SPECIES KNOWN TO INHABIT  
CALIFORNIA AND OREGON,  
WASHINGTON, IDAHO AND NEVADA**



165

Occasional Papers

OF THE

CALIFORNIA

ACADEMY OF SCIENCES.

---

V.

---

SAN FRANCISCO,

1897.

THE REPTILES  
OF THE  
PACIFIC COAST AND GREAT BASIN

AN ACCOUNT OF THE SPECIES KNOWN TO INHABIT

CALIFORNIA,  
AND  
Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Nevada.

BY  
JOHN VAN DENBURGH, PH. D.  
*Curator of the Department of Herpetology.*

---

SAN FRANCISCO:  
CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES  
June, 1897.

## PREFACE.

---

The life histories of our reptiles remain almost entirely unknown. Herpetologists are so few, and reptiles so retiring, that, unless more general interest can be aroused, we may hope for very little light upon this important branch of the science. Many specialists in other departments of science, as well as hunters, farmers, students, and other intelligent men, however, are constantly in the field and might record observations of great interest were means of identification at hand. This paper has been prepared in the hope that it may stimulate those whose mode of life leads them into the woods and fields to study the ways of our reptiles—by no means the least interesting, if amongst the more humble, of the animals about us.

Although it has not been thought advisable to “popularize” the descriptions in the following pages, such characters as cannot be determined without dissection have been avoided. For this reason the synopses and characterizations of the higher groups are very artificial and are not intended to hold good if applied to extralimital species or genera. Likewise, superfamilies, subfamilies, and subgenera have not been introduced. While this is, thus, intended as a handbook for the more or less casual student, it is hoped that the professional herpetologist will find something of interest regarding the variation and distribution of our reptiles.

I wish especially to express my obligation to Dr. Leonhard Stejneger, who placed at my disposal the entire collection of reptiles belonging to the United

States National Museum; to Mr. Henry H. Hindshaw, Curator of the Museum of the University of Washington, who sent me a collection of species from western Washington; to Mr. John Fannin, Curator of the Provincial Museum, Victoria, B. C., who lent me the collection belonging to his institution; to Prof. W. E. Ritter, of the University of California, for a similar favor; to Dr. G. Baur; to Mr. Harold Heath; to Dr. W. W. Thoburn; to Mr. Douglas Van Denburgh; to Mr. Edward Hyatt; to Mr. J. M. Hyde; to Mr. J. O. Snyder; to Dr. G. Eisen; to many others; and most of all to Dr. Chas. H. Gilbert, who forwarded to me the unequalled collection of Californian reptiles belonging to Leland Stanford Junior University, and gathered for that institution by his untiring zeal.

THE AUTHOR.

*San Francisco, April, 1897.*



## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION .....	9
Reptiles Distinct from Batrachians.....	9
Synopsis of Classes.....	10
Orders of Living Reptiles.....	10
Reptiles of Pacific Coast and Great Basin.....	10
Kinds and Number.....	11
Distribution.....	11
Reptiles of California.....	12
Table of Species and Subspecies.....	12
The Desert Fauna.....	14
The San Diegan Fauna.....	15
The Californian Fauna.....	16
The Pacific Fauna.....	17
The Sierra Nevada Fauna.....	17
Relations of Fauna.....	18
Reptiles of Oregon.....	19
Reptiles of Washington.....	19
Reptiles of Idaho.....	19
Reptiles of Nevada.....	20
Variation.....	20
Collecting and Preserving.....	21
Explanations.....	22
Colors.....	22
Measurements.....	22
Illustrations.....	22
Glossary.....	22
REPTILIA.....	28
TESTUDINES.....	28
<i>Testudinida</i> .....	29
<i>Clemmys</i> .....	29
<i>marmorata</i> (Pacific Terrapin).....	30
<i>Chrysemys</i> .....	32
<i>bellii</i> (Western Painted Turtle).....	33
<i>Gopherus</i> .....	35
<i>agassizii</i> (Desert Tortoise).....	35
SQUAMATA.....	38
Sauri.....	39
<i>Eublepharida</i> .....	39
<i>Coleonyx</i> .....	39
<i>variegatus</i> (Banded Gecko).....	40

	PAGE
<i>Iguanida</i> .....	42
Dipsosaurus .....	43
dorsalis (Crested Lizard) .....	44
Uma] .....	46
notata (Sand Lizard) .....	47
inornata (Plain Sand Lizard) .....	47
Callisaurus .....	47
ventralis (Gridiron-tailed Lizard) .....	48
Holbrookia .....	51
maculata approximans (Western Earless Lizard) .....	51
Crotaphytus .....	53
baileyi (Bailey's Lizard) .....	53
wislizenii (Leopard Lizard) .....	56
silas (Short-nosed Leopard Lizard) .....	59
Saurogaulis .....	60
ater (Alderman Lizard, Chack-walla) .....	60
Uta .....	63
mearnsi (Mearns's Lizard) .....	64
stansburiana (Brown-shouldered Lizard) .....	66
graciosa (Long-tailed Uta) .....	69
symmetrica (Tree Uta) .....	70
Sceloporus .....	73
graciosus (Mountain Lizard) .....	74
occidentalis (Blue-bellied Lizard) .....	77
biserialis (Fence Lizard) .....	80
magister (Scaly Lizard) .....	84
orenti (Dusky Scaly Lizard) .....	86
Phrynosoma .....	89
douglasii (Pigmy Horned Toad) .....	90
blainvillii (Blainville's Horned Toad) .....	91
frontale (California Horned Toad) .....	93
platyrhinus (Desert Horned Toad) .....	98
m'callii (Flat-tailed Horned Toad) .....	100
<i>Anguila</i> .....	101
Gerrhonotus .....	102
schneicanda (Alligator Lizard) .....	103
burnetti (Burnett's Alligator Lizard) .....	107
principis (Northern Alligator Lizard) .....	112
palmeri (Mountain Alligator Lizard) .....	113
<i>Anniellide</i> .....	115
Anniella .....	116
pulehni (Silvery Footless Lizard) .....	116
nigra (Black Footless Lizard) .....	118
<i>Helodermatide</i> .....	120

	PAGE.
<i>Heloderma</i> .....	120
<i>suspectum</i> (Gila Monster).....	120
<i>Xantusia</i> .....	122
<i>Xantusia</i> .....	123
<i>vigilis</i> (Desert Night Lizard) .....	123
<i>henshawi</i> (Henshaw's Night Lizard) .....	128
<i>riversiana</i> (Island Night Lizard) .....	130
<i>Teiide</i> .....	132
<i>Cnemidophorus</i> .....	133
<i>tigris</i> (Desert Whip-tail).....	134
<i>undulatus</i> (California Whip-tail).....	137
<i>stejnegeri</i> (Stejneger's Whip-tail).....	139
<i>Verticaria</i> .....	140
<i>hyperythra beldingi</i> (Belding's Orange-throat).....	141
<i>Scincide</i> .....	143
<i>Eumeces</i> .....	143
<i>skiltonianus</i> (Western Skink) .....	144
<i>gilberti</i> (Red-headed Skink).....	147
<b>Serpentes</b> .....	150
<i>Leptotyphlopide</i> .....	150
<i>Siagonodon</i> .....	150
<i>humilis</i> (Worm Snake).....	150
<i>Boide</i> .....	152
<i>Lichanura</i> .....	152
<i>roseofusca</i> (California Boa).....	152
<i>Charina</i> .....	154
<i>bottie</i> (Rubber Snake).....	154
<i>Colubride</i> .....	157
<i>Chilomeniscus</i> .....	158
<i>ephippieus</i> (Burrowing Snake).....	159
<i>Chionactis</i> .....	159
<i>occipitalis</i> (Desert Snake).....	160
<i>Contia</i> .....	161
<i>mitis</i> (Sharp-tailed Snake).....	162
<i>Diadophis</i> .....	164
<i>anabilis</i> (Western Ring-neck Snake).....	164
<i>Lampropeltis</i> .....	166
<i>zonata</i> (Californian King Snake).....	167
<i>boylei</i> (Boyle's Milk Snake).....	169
<i>californice</i> (California Milk Snake).....	172
<i>Rhinocheilus</i> .....	174
<i>lecontei</i> (Long-nosed Snake).....	174
<i>Tantilla</i> .....	176
<i>eiseni</i> (California Tantilla).....	177