

the teeth of the crocodile are numerous and terrible.

Alligators and crocodiles are different animals, although they are sometimes confused. There is a species of alligator which is found in the rivers of China, but, speaking generally, alligators belong to the New World, and crocodiles to the Old World. (See Alligator; Crocodile.)

It seems at first sight very extraordinary that such terrible-looking creatures as crocodiles and alligators, which walk on four feet, should lay eggs. But such, of course, is the case, and although the eggs of the crocodile are not much larger than a hen's eggs, they hatch out young which, in time, will grow 10 to 20 feet in length. These reptiles lay 30 or more eggs, which they bury either in the sand or in beds of mud and grass, and leave them to incubate.

The Turtle and Her Eggs

Turtles also lay eggs, leaving the sea for this purpose, and laying as many as 100 eggs or more in a hole in the sand. These also are covered up carefully and left, the female turtle giving no further attention to her eggs or the young.

Reptiles differ widely in their habits. Some of the snakes live almost entirely in the water, others never enter water. Some live in fresh water, others, like the turtles, are always in the sea, except when they come ashore to lay their eggs. Turtles have been found hundreds of miles from land, another remarkable instance

of the wonderful adaptability of the reptiles. One would not expect a four-footed creature to be aquatic, and yet the sea is the turtle's native element.

Reptiles have many ways of protecting themselves. The turtles and tortoises are wrapped in an almost impenetrable case, and the crocodiles and alligators, besides their horny armour, have their size and their formidable teeth in their favour. Many snakes are poisonous. Most lizards live in holes.

Great Variation in Size

Reptiles vary greatly in size, some snakes and lizards being very small. For instance, the harmless little blind worm, or slow worm, so common all over Great Britain, is a reptile. There is no outward sign of any limbs in the blind worm, but its skeleton shows the bones of the fore and hind limbs in rudimentary form. It is really not blind, having quite useful eyes.

The contrast between the tiny slow worm, one foot in length, only the thickness of an earthworm, and its huge relative the crocodile, 20 feet long, or the turtle, which is often 300 lb. in weight, is extraordinary, and in itself illustrates the wide variety of the reptile world.

Scientific names of living orders of reptiles: Tortoises, *Chelonia*; crocodiles and alligators, *Crocodylia*; lizards and snakes, *Squamata*; tuateras, *Sphenodon*. The chief extinct orders of reptiles are the dinosaurs, land-living monsters; the plesiosaurs, aquatic, with long necks and paddle feet; the ichthyosaurs, whale-shaped seawallers; and the ornithosaurs, or flying reptiles.

IN THE FAR-AWAY DAYS WHEN MONSTER ATE MONSTER



Allosaur, a flesh-eating Dinosaur, finishing a meal off his huge vegetarian cousin, Brontosaur. Allosaur was not so large as his prey, but was much quicker in moving and very fierce.

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