



COMMENTARY

THE COMPLEAT DICTIONARY OF ZOOLOGY:
I. VERNACULAR NAMES IN HERPETOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

Definitions of vernacular names in herpetology that are available in current dictionaries of zoology and of herpetology are incomplete and hence are frequently a source of confusion to the beginning student, interested amateur, and professional herpetologist. To help fill this lexicographic hiatus, I have searched the literature for definitions that have been omitted from orthodox scientific dictionaries. These alternative definitions are quoted and presented in the spirit of fostering precise communication within the science of herpetology.

*“... the circle of the English language has a well-defined centre
but no discernible circumference.”*

*“If there is any truth in the old Greek maxim that a large book
is a great evil, English dictionaries have been steadily growing
worse ever since their inception more than three centuries ago.*

*Historical Introduction to The Compact
Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary*

INTRODUCTION

IT IS AXIOMATIC that successful scientific communication requires that the sender and the receiver share a common understanding of the precise definitions of words, terms, or phrases. Fortunately, a variety of dictionaries and glossaries of zoology are currently available (Council of Biology Editors *Style Manual*, 1972, pp. 256-260), including a dictionary of technical terms in herpetology (Peters, 1964). Unfortunately, even a superficial inspection reveals that the definitions in these works are frequently incomplete. The resulting lexicographic confusion can be formidable: “The beginner in herpetology today encounters many problems that are strictly terminological in nature. He finds that the same word can mean several different things in current usage, and that several words can have the same meaning” (Peters, *ibid.*).

To help fill this gap, I have been accumulating a file

of definitions of vernacular names in zoology that are usually ignored by orthodox scientific dictionaries. Here I present sample definitions of vernacular names in herpetology. Subsequent papers in this series will treat and analyze comparable names and definitions in ornithology, mammalogy, and ichthyology (Huey, in prep.).

While the author is neither an etymologist nor a professional lexicographer, he is, nevertheless, qualified for this task. A dictionary was always on his bookshelf during his formative years, and he has owned his own copy of a dictionary since 1962.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Sample definitions of vernacular names in herpetology were obtained by searching *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary* (hereafter, OED). Appropriate definitions are quoted verbatim, except

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where minor editing was necessary. A few supplementary definitions from *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* (hereafter, WTD) and from *6,000 Words, A Supplement to Webster's Third New International Dictionary* (hereafter, *6,000*) are included. Unless otherwise noted, however, all definitions are from the OED.

Only definitions of herpetological names used as nouns are arbitrarily included. Interested readers are encouraged to locate other definitions applying to these words when used as adjectives or verbs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Adder: "He who adds." ". . . *fig.* The 'old serpent,' the devil . . . By extension, A dragon, *i.e.* a supposed serpent with wings." "An adding machine." (Author's note: see also adder-deaf, adder footed, adder's-meat.)

Agama: ". . . one of a class of tantric treatises accepted as scripture within Hinduism and Buddhism . . . (WTD)."

Alligator: "One who binds or ties." "A rock-breaker operating by jaws." "An inhabitant or native of the Mississippi region . . ." "A lean hog." ". . . a boat used in handling floating logs." "A 'Squeezer' or machine for reducing the puddle-ball to a compact mass." (Author's note: a puddle-ball is a rounded mass or iron formed in puddling).

Amphibia: "A being that lives either in water or on land, or is equally at home in either element." "A being of doubtful or ambiguous position." "A being having a double existence." ". . . a tribe of Mammals including seals and their allies."

Amphibian: "Often *fig.* esp. of persons who have a double character or live a two-fold life; also *transf.* of seaplanes." ". . . a flat-bottomed vehicle that moves on tracks having finlike extensions by which it is propelled on land or water and that is typically used for landing assault troops (WTD)."

Amphisbaena: "A fabled serpent of the ancients, with a head at each end, and able to move in either direction: retained by the moderns as a poetical conception." (Author's note: the adjective form, *amphisbaenous*, is defined as "walking equally in opposite directions").

Apoda: ". . . any of several different groups of animals that have been so named from their lacking limbs or feet: as . . . an order of slender wormlike holothurians . . . a group of fishes without pelvic fins . . . an order or suborder of parasitic segmented cirripedes . . . worms without appendages (WTD)."

Asp: "A tree of the poplar family (*Populus tremula*), with greyish bark and spreading branches, the leaves of which are specially liable to the tremulous motion that characterizes all poplars. Sometimes loosely used of other poplars." (Author's note: see also aspworm).

Basilisk: "A fabulous reptile, also called a *cockatrice*,

alleged to be hatched by a serpent from a cock's egg; ancient authors stated that its hissing drove away all other serpents, and that its breath, and even its look, was fatal." "A large cannon, generally made of brass, and throwing a shot of about 200 pounds weight." "Obs. name of the star Regulus, in Leo." "Obs. name of the Golden-crested Wren or Kinglet (*Regulus cristatus*)." (Author's note: see also basilisco-proof).

Beak-head: "The beak or prow of an ancient war-galley." "A small platform at the fore part of the upper deck." "The part of a ship in front of the fore-castle, fastened to the stem, and supported by the main knee." "An ornament shaped like a bird's beak used in Norman mouldings." ". . . a space forward of a fore-castle containing latrines for crewmen (WTD)."

Bloodsucker: "An animal which sucks blood; *esp.* the leech." "One who draws or sheds the blood of another; a blood-thirsty or blood-guilty person." "One who extorts or preys upon another's money or substance; an extortioner; a sponger."

Boa: "A snake-like coil of fur worn by ladies as a wrapper for the throat." "Nile green (WTD)."

Cascabel: "Formerly the knob or pommel at the rear end of a cannon; now the whole rear part behind the base ring, including the knob and base." ". . . a small hollow perforated spherical bell enclosing a loose pellet which causes it to jingle when moved — called also *jingle bell* (WTD)."

Chameleon: "An . . . inconsistent or variable person." "One of the southern circumpolar constellations, lying between Apus and Mensa." "Manganate of potassium, the solution of which in water changes color on exposure to air from deep green to deep purple." ". . . something subject to quick or frequent change esp. in appearance . . . (WTD)." (Author's note: see also chameleonic and chameleonize).

Coachwhip: "A whip used in driving a coach." "*fig.* A long thin strip; *pl.* shreds, tatters." "Naut. 'The Pendant.'" "Ocotillo (WTD)."

Cobra: "Shipworm (WTD)."

Copperhead: "A nickname given, during the Civil War (U.S.), to a northern sympathizer with the Secessionists of the south . . ." "A descendent of the Dutch settlers of New York . . . Presbyterians . . . An American Indian." ". . . one whose loyalty is questioned (WTD)." ". . . a ground squirrel (*Citellus lateralis*) of the western U.S. having a yellowish head and shoulders and conspicuously striped body (WTD)." ". . . American Goldeneye . . . Yellow-headed Blackbird (WTD)."

Crocodile: "A person who weeps or makes a show of sorrow hypocritically or with a malicious purpose." "Name of an ancient sophism or dilemma; see *Crocodilite*." "A girls' school walking two and two in a long file." "Applied to any long procession of moving objects close together." "A mechanical appliance with a notched or serrated edge suggestive of the upper jaw of a crocodile: . . . used with a builders' crane as a

means of attaching the chain . . ." (Author's note: the OED quotes this version of the Crocodolite, "A Woman sitting by the side of Nilus, a Crocodile snatch'd away her Child, promising to restore him, if she would answer truly to what he asked; which was, Whether he meant to restore him or not? She answer'd, Not to restore him, and challenged his promise, as having said the Truth. He reply'd, that if he should let her save him, she had not told true.'").

Dragon: "A mythical monster, represented as a huge and terrible reptile, usually combining ophidian and crocodilian structure, with strong claws, like a beast or bird of prey, and a scaly skin; it is generally represented with wings, and sometimes as breathing out fire. The heraldic dragon combines reptilian and mammalian form with the addition of wings." "In the Bible versions . . . a great sea- or water-monster, a whale, shark, or crocodile, also a large serpent; or . . . a desert mammalian animal now understood to be the jackal, and so rendered in the Revised Version." "An appellation of Satan, the 'Old Serpent.'" "An evil power embodied." "An appellation of Death." "A fierce violent person; *esp.* a fiercely or aggressively watchful woman; a duenna." "A representation or figure of the mythical creature." "A northern constellation, *Draco* . . . The part of the moon's path which lies south of the ecliptic . . . Applied to a shooting star with a luminous train." "A paper kite." "An early fire-arm . . . A soldier armed with this: = Dragon." "The Angler, *Lophius*." "A fancy variety of pigeon." "The plant *Dracunculus vulgaris* . . ." "A disease of the eye of a horse . . ." "*slang.* A sovereign: from the device of St. George and the Dragon." "A very powerful armoured tractor." ". . . a beneficent supernatural creature in Chinese mythology connected with rain and floods (WTD)." (Author's note: see also dragon-kind, dragon-womb, dragon-ridden, dragon-penned, dragon-water, dragonhood, dragonship.)

Eft: "? Malice." "*obs.* lizard (WTD)."

Fer-de-lance: "*Her.* A lance-head used as a charge."

Frog: "As a term of abuse applied to a man or woman. Also . . . a Dutchman." "An elastic, horny substance growing in the middle of the sole of a horse's hoof." "An attachment to the waist-belt in which a sword or bayonet or hatchet may be carried." "An ornamental fastening for the front of a military coat or cloak, consisting of a spindle-shaped button, covered with silk or other material, which passes through a loop on the opposite side of the garment." "A name given to certain diseases of the throat or mouth." ". . . [so called fr. their reputation for eating frogs]: frenchman—usu. taken to be offensive (WTD)." ". . . a device made of rail sections constructed and assembled to permit the wheels on one rail of a track to cross another rail of an intersecting track (WTD)." ". . . a shallow place for mortar in the upper face of a brick (WTD)." ". . . the frame or block to which the share, moldboard, landslide, or beam of

a plow are secured (WTD)." ". . . the nut of a violin bow: heel . . . (WTD)." ". . . the junction of two branches of a flume . . . a guiding timber at the mouth of a slide (WTD)." ". . . a device for supporting and mutually insulating trolley wires that cross each other (WTD)." ". . . the seat for the plane iron in the stock of a carpenter's plane (WTD)." ". . . a loom device that actuates a stop motion when the shuttle is out of position (WTD)." ". . . an imperfectly ripened prune of inferior quality (WTD)." ". . . a card game developed from tarok and popular esp. in Mexico . . . the lowest bid in this and similar games . . . (WTD)." ". . . a small holder with perforations or spikes that is placed in a bowl or vase to keep cut flowers in position (6,000)." (Author's note: see also frogface, froggery, froghood, frogskin.)

Hamadryad (= *Hamadryas*): "A wood-nymph fabled to live and die with the tree which she inhabited." "A large baboon of Abyssinia . . ."

Hawk's-bill: "Part of the striking action of a clock."

Hellbender: "A protracted and reckless debauch or drunken frolic." ". . . *slang:* one that is exceedingly reckless or otherwise extreme (WTD)."

Lizard: "A fancy variety of the canary." "A piece of rope having a thimble or block spliced into one or both ends." "A crotch of timber or a forked limb, used as a sled to support a stone being hauled off a field; a stone-boat . . ." ". . . *usu cap:* Alabamian — used as a nickname (WTD)." ". . . leather made from lizard skin (WTD)." (Author's note: see also lizardly, lizard-seeker, lounge lizard, and lizard-wine.)

Loggerhead: "A thick-headed or stupid person; a blockhead." "A local coin or token . . ." "A head out of proportion to the body; a large or 'thick' head . . ." "An iron instrument with a long handle and a ball or bulb at the end used, when heated in the fire, for melting pitch and for heating liquids." "An upright rounded piece of wood, near the stern of a whale-boat, for catching a turn of the line to' . . ." "The beam . . . for the purpose of transmitting the motion of the piston to the pumps in the mine." "applied to . . . two species of tyrant-bird inhabiting Jamaica . . . a North American shrike . . . a large duck of the Falkland Islands . . ." "applied to various fishes, as the bullhead; also to the tadpole . . . to various large moths . . ." "A plant of the genus *Centaurea*." ". . . a disease of cotton characterized by a shortening of the internodes of stems and branches (WTD)." (Author's note: see also loggerheaded.)

Matamata: ". . . any of several So. American trees of the genus *Eschweilera* of the family Lecythidaceae . . . (WTD)."

Moccasin: "A kind of foot-gear made of deerskin or other soft leather, worn by the Indians of North America, and by the trappers and backwoodsmen who have adopted Indian customs." ". . . U.S. name for the orchidaceous genus *Cypripedium* (Lady's Slipper) . . ." ". . . Argus brown (WTD)."

Moloch: "The name of a Cannanite idol, to whom children were sacrificed as burnt-offerings (Lev. xviii. 21); represented by Milton as one of the devils. Hence (as appellative, but now always with capital M), applied to an object to which horrible sacrifices are made." "A Brazilian monkey, *Callithrix moloch*."

Monitor: "One who admonishes or gives advice or warning to another as to his conduct . . . one who advises another to do some particular action, an instigator." "A senior pupil in a school, or (formerly in England and still in America) a student in college, who has special duties assigned to him, esp. that of keeping order, and who may occasionally (as in some elementary schools) act as a teacher to a junior class." "Something that reminds or gives warning." "(A) back-board." "An ironclad having a very low free-board and one or more revolving turrets containing great guns, built on the model of the vessel invented by Captain Ericsson . . ." "An ironclad railway truck carrying a big gun." "A raised part of a roof (e.g. in a railway-carriage or omnibus), with openings for light and ventilation . . ." "A jointed nozzle used in hydraulic mining, which may be turned in any direction." ". . . one that monitors something. . . an observer responsible for reporting misdeeds . . . an instrument that measures (as vital signs during surgery) or gives warnings (as of excessive radiation) (WTD)." ". . . a small modern warship with shallow draft and two 15-inch guns for coastal bombardment . . . (WTD)." ". . . a tool-holding turret on a machine (WTD)."

Mugger: "A hawker of earthenware." "One who 'mugs' or studies diligently." "A comedian who 'mugs' or grimaces." ". . . a comprehensive term understood to include all persons with an ambition for University distinction." ". . . one who attacks usu. from behind with intent to rob (WTD)."

Peeper: "One who peeps or peers; esp. one who looks or pries furtively, a pryer, a 'Paul Pry.'" "An eye." "A looking-glass . . . a spyglass . . . pl. a pair of spectacles . . . A small window . . ." "As a local name of animals and plants . . . A species of Tub-fish, *Trigla cuculus* . . . A local name of the Pimpernel . . ." ". . . one (as a young chicken or pigeon) that peeps or chirps (WTD)."

Polliwog (= *Pollywog*): "U.S. As a political nickname." ". . . one who crosses the equator for the first time and undergoes an initiation (as being tossed into seawater) by shellbacks (WTD)."

Python: "a familiar spirit, the demon possessing a soothsayer . . ." ". . . also, one possessed by such a spirit and acting as its mouthpiece." "The huge serpent or monster fabled to have been slain near Delphi by Apollo; hence poet. any monster or pestilential scourge." (Author's note: see also pythoness and pythonic.)

Racer: "One who takes part in a race." "A race-horse." "Any animal having great speed, or fit for racing; spec. as the name of several species of Amer-

ican snakes . . . , of a sand-crab, and of some varieties of American lake-trout." "Anything used for racing, as a bicycle, yacht, etc.; anything capable of great speed." "A part of a machine having unusually rapid motion." "A rail, forming a horizontal arc, on which the carriage or traversing-platform of a gun is moved." "A scalpel, Razor." ". . . a poor, thin, or spent fish (WTD)."

Rattler: "One who rattles out . . . A stutterer." "A thing which rattles . . . a rattle." "*slang*. A (rattling) coach." "An arrant lie." "A hard, brittle, jet-like coal, usually lying on the top of seams." "A razor with a very thin blade." ". . . a bicycle . . . a train." "Also, an energetic or active person." "A long resounding word." ". . . something extraordinarily good of its kind: a fine specimen (as of a horse, storm, blow, game, or book) . . . (WTD)." ". . . a revolving drum in which paving bricks are rotated with a charge of cast iron to test their abrasive resistance (WTD)." ". . . a device for shaking out the cores from small castings . . . (WTD)." ". . . a device for finishing materials (as metal, concrete blocks, or bricks) . . . (WTD)." ". . . Rattlebrain (WTD)."

Reptile: "A person of a low, mean, grovelling, or repulsive character." (Author's note: see also reptilism, reptility, reptilivorous, and reptiliary.)

Salamander: "A lizard-like animal supposed to live in, or to be able to endure, fire." "A spirit supposed to live in fire." "A woman who (ostensibly) lives chastely in the midst of temptations." "A soldier who exposes himself to fire in battle." "A fire-eating juggler." "Applied to various articles used in fire or capable of withstanding great heat . . . Asbestos." "An iron or poker used red-hot for lighting a pipe, igniting gun-powder . . ." "A mass of solidified material in a furnace hearth . . . , called also *bear*, *horse*, and *sow*." "A circular iron plate which is heated and placed over a pudding or other dish to brown it." "A pouched rat or gopher, esp. *Geomys pinetis*." "A form of drinking a toast common among German students ('. . . einem einen salamander reiben . . .')." ". . . a term sometimes applied to a fire-proof safe." ". . . a drum or box for containing hot coals, etc., used in drying plaster." "A figure of the mythical salamander used as an emblem." (Author's note: see also salamander's wool and salamandership.)

Serpent: "Applied to serpent-like animals inhabiting the sea; cf. Sea-serpent." "In proverbial and allusive phr. referring to the serpent's guile, treachery, or malignancy . . . *The serpent's tongue*, vulgarly supposed to be the 'sting'; allusively used for 'venomous' speech; also . . . for hissing." ". . . the Tempter, the Devil, Satan." "*fig.* as a symbol of envy, jealousy, malice, or williness." "A treacherous, deceitful, or malicious person." "A representation of a serpent, esp. as a symbol or ornament." "The sign of Scorpio . . . The southern constellation *Hydra* . . . The northern constellation *Serpens*." "A kind of firework which

burns with a serpentine motion or flame." "An obsolete brass wind instrument of deep tone, about 8 feet long, made of wood covered with leather and formed with three U-shaped turns. Also, an organ-stop of similar tone." "Miscellaneous transferred uses: A candle of spiral form; a 'rope' of hair; the crank-shaft in a weaving-machine . . ." "As the name of a fashion shade." ". . . a large canon of the 15th to 17th centuries . . . (WTD)." ". . . a pale green . . . (WTD)."

Side-winder: "A heavy blow with the fist delivered from or on the side." ". . . a falling tree that upon hitting another tree rolls on its axis . . . a tree knocked down by a falling tree (WTD)."

Siren: "An imaginary species of serpent." "One of several fabulous monsters, part woman, part bird, who were supposed to lure sailors to destruction by their enchanting singing." "One who, or that which, sings sweetly, charms, allures, or deceives, like the Sirens." "A drone bee." "An acoustical instrument (invented by Cagniard de la Tour in 1819) for producing musical tones and used in numbering the vibrations in any note." "An instrument, made on a similar principle but of a larger size, used on steamships for giving fog-signals, warnings, etc." ". . . an alluringly beautiful woman . . . *esp.* one who is usu. insidiously or deceptively enticing or seductive to men . . . (WTD)." ". . . sirenomelus (WTD)." ". . . sea cow (WTD)." (Author's note: see also sireniacal, sirenize, and sirenioid.)

Skink: "A skinker; a tapster or waiter." "Drink, liquor. (In contemptuous use)." "A kind of soup made from shin of beef." "Ham." ". . . obs. variant of skunk . . ."

Slider: "One who slides . . . a skater." "*Rowing*. One who uses a sliding seat." "A beam or plank on which something heavy may be slid; also *dial.*, a sledge." "*Minng* . . . 'timbers for the support of shafts and sumps in mines.'" "A thing or part which slides or may be slid; *esp.* a sliding part or device in some mechanical apparatus." "*Organ-bullding* . . . 'strip of wood which, passing under a row of pipes from right to left, admits the air to a particular row of pipes or stops.'" "*Locksmthing*. A tumbler that moves horizontally." "Part of a guillotine." "A device for holding, and inserting in a microscope, the glass or other plates with the objects to be studied." "A lantern-slide." "A sliding ring, loop, or similar device, used to fasten an article of dress, the hair, a long purse, etc." "A stand or holder for a bottle or decanter, intended to be slid along the table; a coaster." "Ice-cream sandwiched between wafers." ". . . a pitch in baseball that looks like a fast ball but curves slightly (WTD)." ". . . a zipper pull . . . (WTD)."

Snake: "In pl. as an exclamation, *esp.* *great snakes!*" "Used to denote some lurking danger, suspicious circumstance or person, etc.; *esp.* in the phrase *a snake in the grass* (after Virgil . . .)." "Applied to persons, *esp.* with contemptuous or opprobrious force . . . A poor,

needy, or humble person; a drudge." "A long curl or tail attached to a wig." "The long flexible tube of a hookah." "A kind of firework burning with a snake-like movement or having a snaking form." "Some dicing game." "A kind of man-trap used in Ireland." "A species of mediaeval war-vessel." ". . . a plumber's tool consisting of a long, flexible metal rod for removing obstructions from pipes, etc. (WTD)." (Author's note: see also snake juice and snake foot).

Snapper: "*Cant.* ?An accomplice or sharer." "A thing which snaps or produces a sharp cracking sound . . . A pistol." "*pl.* Bones . . . castanets?" "*pl.* Prince Rupert's drops." (Author's note: Prince Rupert's drops are ' . . . a sort of glass drops with long and slender tails, which burst to pieces, on the breaking off those tails in any parts.') "A cracker-bonbon." "*U.S.* a word, sentence, verse, etc., used as a finishing touch or wind-up." "*U.S.* a cracker on the end of a whip-lash. Also *fig.*, a sharp or caustic remark." "One who snaps *up* or seizes upon a thing quickly." "A snappish person; one who speaks or answers snappishly or roughly." "*Angling*. A snap-hook or snap-rod." "One or other of various fishes . . ." "A woodpecker . . ." "*U.S.* a flysnapper . . ." "*dial.* Something exceptionally large, heavy, etc." "*dial* . . . The greater stichwort, *Stellaria Holostea* . . . The bladder campion, *Silene inflata* . . ." ". . . snap-bean . . . click beetle . . . phainopepla (WTD)." ". . . a bit of business, turn of phrase, or other matter that gives new orientation to a situation or utterance (WTD)." ". . . snap fastener (WTD)." ". . . a small clamshell bucket used *esp.* for collecting samples of deep-sea mud and ooze (WTD)." ". . . a glassworker who uses a snap-dragon . . . a taker of snapshots . . . a mine car brakeman or coupler . . . (WTD)." ". . . *slang*: whopper (WTD)."

Spadefoot: ". . . a terminal enlargement of the straight square furniture leg *esp.* of the late 18th century that sweeps outward in an abrupt curve on each side and then gradually tapers downward . . . (WTD)."

Stinkpot: "=Stinker . . ." (Author's note: a stinker is a ". . . pot or jar containing a disinfectant.") "A hand-missile charged with combustibles emitting a suffocating smoke, used in boarding a ship for effecting a diversion while the assailants gain the deck." "A sailor's name for a petrel . . . Also, in S. Africa, applied to the Sooty Albatross, *Phaebetria fuliginosa*, and the Cape hen, *Majaqueus aequinoctialis* . . ." "A term of abuse for a person or thing." ". . . a powerboat (WTD)."

Swift: "The common newt or eft. Now only *dial.*" "A bird of the family *Cypselidae*, comprising numerous and widely distributed species, outwardly resembling swallows . . . and noted for their swiftness of flight; *esp.* the common swift, *Cypselus apus*, a summer visitant to the British Isles and Europe generally." "Name for a breed of domestic pigeons having some resemblance to swifts. . ." "A proper name for a swift-running hound." "Collectors' name for moths of the

genus *Hepialus* or the family *Hepialidae*, distinguished by their rapid flight . . ." "A light kind of reel, usually of adjustable diameter, upon which a skein of silk, yarn, etc. is placed in order to be wound off . . ." "A cylinder in a carding-machine." "A rapid current; a rapid." "The sail of a windmill." "*Printers' slang*. A quick or expeditious typesetter." ". . . the sail of a windmill (WTD)." ". . . one that is swift . . . (WTD)."

Tadpole: "Sometimes applied to the tailed larva of a tunicate, the swimming tail of which is afterwards dropped or absorbed." "A local name in U.S. of a water-fowl, the Hooded Merganser . . ." "In *Tadpole and Taper*, names of two political schemers in Disraeli's *Coningsby*; hence allusively, in the sense 'professional politicians, the hacks of a political party.'" ". . . Mississippian — used as a nickname (WTD)." (Author's note: see also tadpoledom, tadpolehood, tadpolism, and tadpoleward).

Taipan: ". . . the head of a foreign house of business in China: a great merchant (WTD)."

Terrapin: ". . . a moderate brown . . . (WTD)."

Toad: "As a type of anything hateful or loathsome." "Applied opprobriously to human beings and animals." "Dutch fishing boat." "=Today." (Author's note: a today is a ". . . servile parasite; a sychophant, an interested flatterer; also a humble dependent; =Toadeater . . .") ". . . *slang*: derail (WTD)." (Author's note: see also toad-eater, toadery, toadlet, toadling, toad-pole, and toadship).

Tokay: "A rich sweet wine of an aromatic flavor, made near Tokay in Hungary. Also applied in U.S. to a California wine made in imitation of this."

Tortoise: "Taken as a type of slowness of motion; hence, applied to a very slow person or thing." "A sort of penthouse, under which besiegers were protected as a tortoise by its shell . . ." ". . . a strong brown . . . (WTD)."

Triton: "*Gr. and Rom. Myth.* Proper name of a sea-deity, son of Poseidon and Amphitrite, or of Neptune and Salacia, or otherwise of Nereus; also, one of a race of inferior sea-deities, or imaginary sea-monsters, of semi-human form." "A figure of Triton in painting, sculpture, etc.; in *Her.* represented as a bearded man with the hind quarters of a fish, and usually holding a trident and a shell-trumpet . . ." "*fig.* and *allusively*: esp. applied to seaman, waterman, or person connected in some way with the sea . . . a large ship . . ." "*Zool* . . . A genus of marine gastropods with trumpet-shaped shells; an animal, or shell, of this genus or of the family *Tritonidae* . . ."

Turtle: "=Turtle-dove . . . (Often mentioned as a type of conjugal affection and constancy . . ." "*Green-*

land turtle, Sea-turtle, names for the Black Guillemot . . ." "*fig.* Applied to a person, as a term of endearment, etc. . . or (esp.) to lovers or married folk, in allusion to the turtle-dove's affection for its mate." "*To turn turtle* . . . *lit.* To catch turtle by throwing them on their backs. *fig.* (in earlier use *to turn the turtle*.) To turn over, capsize, be upset." "*American turtle*: =Torpedo . . .)." "*Typog.* A curved bed in which types or stereotypes are secured, and which is mounted on one of the cylinders of a rotary printing-press: so called from a fancied resemblance of the bed to the back of a turtle." ". . . sienna brown (WTD)." ". . . a 2-wheeled form truck for making up and transporting a newspaper page prior to stereotyping (WTD)." ". . . a turtle-neck (WTD)." (Author's note: see also turtle-frolic, turtle-insect, turtledom, turtler, turtlet, turtlize, and turtly).

Uta: ". . . a leishmaniasis of the skin occurring in Peru . . . (WTD)."

Viper: "*fig.* A venomous, malignant, or spiteful person; a villain or scoundrel." "In other figurative or allusive uses . . . In allusion to the supposition that the female viper was killed by her young eating their way out at birth . . . In allusion to the fable of the viper reared or revived in a person's bosom: One who betrays or is false to those who have supported or nourished him; a false or treacherous person." "With intensive force . . . =Venomous, extremely bitter, viperous." (Author's note: see also viper-broth, viper-wine, viper-mouth, and viperling.)

Waterdog: "A dog bred for or trained to the water; esp. one trained to retrieve waterfowl. Formerly as a specific name, the barbet or poodle imported from the continent. Any kind of dog that swims well, and is habituated to or not shy of the water . . . A sailor . . . A good swimmer." "A name for various animals . . . The otter . . . A variety of Dogfish . . . The water-rat or water-vole . . ." "A small dark floating cloud supposed to indicate rain."

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