

CATALOGUE OF NORTH AMERICAN REPTILES IN THE
MUSEUM OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.

S. F. BAIRD AND C. GIRARD. 1853

Crotalus molossus, B. & G. Muzzle broad ; rostral small. Scales between superciliaries small, uniform, except the two anterior. Two frontal plates, four postfrontal. Two inter superciliary, all in contact. Five rows scales between the labials and suborbital row. Middle row, not extending beyond the middle of the orbit. Labials 18 above, fifth and sixth largest ; 17 below. Dorsal rows of scales 29. Two external rows small. Tail uniform black. Color roll sulphur, a series of chestnut -brown transverse lozenges, with exterior corners produced to the abdomen. Centres of lozenges with one or two spots. Each scale but one color. A brown patch below and behind the eye. One of the most strongly marked of all the species. Head very broad in front; outline nearly rectangular. Rostral small. Two anterior frontals ; behind these four plates, the exterior resting on the superciliary; behind these two other plates, between and in contact with the superciliaries. Anterior nasal subtriangular. Top of head with numerous smooth subtuberculous scales. Suborbitals large, extending to the anterior canthus. General aspect smoother than in *Crotali* generally, scales rounded at the posterior apex, carinated but slightly. General color above that of roll sulphur, beneath pale yellowish, posteriorly very faintly clouded with brownish. Tail black. Anteriorly the scutellae are entirely immaculate. Along the back is a series of transverse reddish or chestnut-brown lozenges embraced in a width of 12 or 14 scales and 4 or 5 scales long, and with the exterior angles produced to the abdomen. These lozenges are frames with the outline generally one scale in width and with the centres of the ground-color ; sometimes divided by a median line of brown, so as to show two yellowish spots inside of the lozenges. The scales exterior to the lozenges are rather lighter. Sometimes the brown rings and the lozenges widen at the abdomen and indicate lateral spots of four scales; at others, and especially anteriorly, the rings are obsolete, and the brown is in a dorsal series. In fact, for the anterior fourth of the body we have a dorsal patch of brown, showing alternately at successive intervals one large yellowish spot and then a pair of smaller ones, owing to the confluence of the successive lozenges. The superciliaries and scales anterior to them, as well as a broad patch below and behind the eye, light greenish brown. Tail uniform dark brown above, paler beneath. Only one button with two necks, no rattle. A remarkable character of this species is that each individual scale is of the same uniform tint to its base, and not showing two colours as in other species.