

are silent, but hissing is the sound which they most commonly send forth, either as a call to their kind, or as a threat to their enemies. In the hot climates, in which they most abound, they are never heard in the middle of the day, but as soon as the cool of the evening approaches, they issue from their cells with continued hissings.

Some serpents in their motions, particularly those of the viper kind, move very slowly, while others, such as the ammodytes, dart with amazing swiftness. Their method of getting forward is nearly similar in all; the viper makes way in a heavy, undulating manner, advancing its head, then drawing up its tail behind, and bending the body into a bow; then, from the spot where the head and tail are brought together, advancing the head forward as before; this bending the body into an arch seems to be the motion of most serpents; but there are many which dart with such amazing swiftness, that they rather appear to leap than advance in that manner. It is most probable, however, that no serpent can dart upon a level surface farther than its own length at one effort, though it has been asserted by some, that they will dart to a great distance; but this we rather apprehend to have arisen from apprehension of the consequences