

low bones, linked to each other, and rattling upon the slightest motion. It is supposed by some, that the snake acquires an additional bone every year, and that, from this, its age may be precisely known: however this may be, certain it is, that the young snakes, or those a year or two old, have no rattles at all; while many old ones have been killed, that had from eleven to thirteen joints each. They shake and make a noise with these rattles with prodigious quickness when they are disturbed; the peccary and the vulture however are no way terrified at the sound, but hasten, at the signal, to seize the snake, as their most favourite prey.

It is very different with almost every other animal. The certain death which ensues from this creature's bite, makes a solitude wherever it is heard. It moves along with the most majestic rapidity; neither seeking to offend the larger animals, nor fearing their insults. If unprovoked, it never meddles with any thing but its natural prey; but when accidentally trodden upon, or pursued to be destroyed, it then makes an able and desperate defence. It erects itself upon its tail, throws back the head, and inflicts its wound in a moment; then parts, and inflicts a second wound: after which, we are told