

they are called out by the heat, to bask themselves in the sun. If attacked they at first endeavour to escape, but if much pressed they begin to hiss and put themselves into a threatening position, though incapable of doing mischief.

This snake preys upon frogs, insects, worms, mice, and young birds; and, considering the smallness of the neck, it is amazing how large an animal it will swallow.

The *Black Snake* of Virginia, which is larger than the above, and generally grows to six feet long, takes a prey proportionable to its size; partridges, chickens, and young ducks. It is generally found in the neighbourhood of the hen-roost, and will devour the eggs, even while the hen is setting upon them; these it swallows whole; and often after it has done the mischief, will coil itself round in the nest.

The whole of this tribe are oviparous, laying eighty or a hundred eggs at a time, in dung-hills, or hot-beds, the heat of which, aided by that of the sun, brings them to maturity. During winter they lie torpid, in banks of hedges, and under old trees.

The *Blindworm* is another harmless reptile, with a formidable appearance. The common length of this species is eleven inches. The
eyes