

soned arrows, whilst, with upraised heads and paws extended, the animals are warming themselves in the sun.

Though the little turtles (*tortuguillos*) may have burst the shells of their eggs during the day, they are never seen to come out of the ground but at night. The Indians assert that the young animal fears the heat of the sun. They tried also to show us, that when the *tortuguillo* is carried in a bag to a distance from the shore, and placed in such a manner that its tail is turned to the river, it takes without hesitation the shortest way to the water. I confess, that this experiment, of which Father Gumilla speaks, does not always succeed equally well: yet in general it does appear that at great distances from the shore, and even in an island, these little animals feel with extreme delicacy in what direction the most humid air prevails.

Reflecting on the almost uninterrupted layer of eggs that extends along the beach, and on the thousands of little turtles that seek the water as soon as they are hatched, it is difficult to admit that the many turtles which have made their nests in the same spot, can distinguish their own young, and lead them, like the crocodiles, to the lakes in the vicinity of the Orinoco. It is certain, however, that the animal passes the first years of its life in pools where the water is shallow, and does not return to the bed of the great river till it is full-grown. How then do the *tortuguillos* find these pools? Are they led thither by female turtles, which adopt the young as by chance? The crocodiles, less numerous, deposit their eggs in separate holes; and, in this family of saurians, the female returns about the time when the incubation is terminated, calls her young, which answer to her voice, and often assists them to get out of the ground. The *arrau* tortoise, no doubt, like the crocodile, knows the spot where she has made her nest; but, not daring to return to the beach on which the Indians have formed their encampment, how can she distinguish her own young from those which do not belong to her? On the other hand, the Ottomac Indians declare that, at the period of inundation, they have met with female turtles followed by a great number of young ones. These were perhaps *arraus* whose eggs had been deposited on a desert beach to which they could return. Males are extremely rare among these