

with great quickness in the loose sand. This lizard, from its flattened body and short legs, cannot run quickly.

I will here add a few remarks on the hibernation of animals in this part of South America. When we first arrived at Bahia Blanca, September 7, 1832, we thought nature had granted scarcely a living creature to this sandy and dry country. By digging, however, in the ground, several insects, large spiders, and lizards were found in a half torpid state. On the 15th, a few animals began to appear, and by the 18th (three days from the equinox), everything announced the commencement of spring. The plains were ornamented by the flowers of a pink wood-sorrel, wild peas, œnothæræ, and geraniums; and the birds began to lay their eggs. Numerous Lamellicorn and Heteromorous insects, the latter remarkable for their deeply sculptured bodies, were slowly crawling about; while the lizard tribe, the constant inhabitants of a sandy soil, darted about in every direction. During the first eleven days, while nature was dormant, the mean temperature, taken from observations made every two hours on board the "Beagle," was 51°; and in the middle of the day the thermometer seldom ranged above 55°. On the eleven succeeding days, in which all living things became so animated, the mean was 58°, and the range in the middle of the day between sixty and seventy. Here then an increase of seven degrees in mean temperature, but a greater one of extreme heat, was sufficient to awake the functions of life. At Monte Video, from which we had just before sailed, in the twenty-three days included between the 26th of July and the 19th of August, the mean temperature from 276 observations was 58°.4; the mean hottest day being 65°.5, and the coldest 46°. The lowest point to which the thermometer fell was 41°.5, and occasionally in the middle of the day it rose to 69° or 70°. Yet with this high temperature, almost every beetle, several genera of spiders, snails, and land-shells, toads and lizards were all lying torpid beneath stones. But we have seen that at Bahia Blanca, which is four degrees southward, and therefore with a climate only a very little colder, this same tem-