

C I R C U L A R

RELATING TO

COLLECTIONS OF LIVING REPTILES.

The Smithsonian Institution is at present engaged in the preparation, for exhibition in the National Museum, of a series of plaster casts of American reptiles taken from the living or recently dead specimens, and carefully colored from nature. For this purpose it respectfully invites contributions of the following objects :

First. Specimens of any of the turtles and terrapiis found in your vicinity, with information as to whether the collection embraces all the species known ; and, if not, whether others may be looked for hereafter.

Second. The largest procurable specimens of serpents, with the exception of the poisonous kinds (such as rattlesnakes, copper-heads, and moccasins) in reference to the transmission of which, further and special correspondence is requested.

Third. The various kinds of salamanders, water-lizards, or ground puppies, to include the large hell-bender of the western waters ; the mud pup or water-lizard of the northern lakes, or *Menobranchus* ; the congo eel or ground puppy (*Siren* and *Amphiuma*) of the Southern rice-fields, etc., as well as the smaller kinds found in damp places under stones and logs. A series of the frogs will also be acceptable.

All these animals should be suitably boxed and transmitted, as far as possible, alive; or, if dead, packed in ice, so as to insure their coming in good condition. The serpents require no special precautions in the way of packing; if of nearly the same size several may be sent together. If the disproportion be very great, there is, however, danger that the larger may devour the smaller. No rattlesnakes, copperheads or moccasins should be transmitted. The turtles should be wrapped or sewed up in some kind of cloth, so as to prevent friction. They should not be sent loose with the softer objects. Serpents require no moisture; frogs and salamanders should be packed with wet moss.

Among the turtles should be included the soft-shell species, the true terrapins, the land tortoises, etc.

Single specimens of any living reptiles, as well as larger numbers, including duplicates, will always be gladly received, and due acknowledgment made for the same.

The largest procurable representatives of each species is desirable.

Transmissions may be made by any express company, freight to be paid in Washington.

JOSEPH HENRY,
Secretary S. I.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION,
WASHINGTON, *February 1, 1878.*