

in fallow fields and orchards. Iguanas readily accepted its leaves, which are similar in size to those of the coltsfoot. Since we have been feeding *Heckeria peltata*, we've not lost a single iguana; just the opposite, as a matter of fact, they are thriving and are, in many instances, downright fat. They also have begun to exhibit signs of becoming tame, moving toward the keeper when he brings them food. We have in a small way endeavored to cultivate this plant, specifically for our iguanas. This is in every way simple, and I am convinced that it would serve well as a crop raised in greenhouses by zoological gardens. It grows rapidly and is easily propagated from seeds. This weed requires no special care, requiring little investment of effort or money.

"*Iguana tuberculata* [= *Iguana iguana*], called 'cameleão' by natives, occurs in great numbers on Mexiana Island, but it is not easy to find because its green color blends well with the tangled bankside vines on which it prefers to perch. These iguanas are shy and, once they take flight, literally shoot across the crowns of trees and bushes with such alacrity that they disap-

pear almost immediately from the view of the hunter and can be traced only by following the tell-tale crackling of small branches broken during their effort to escape. They will ascend the highest forest trees, and I recall one individual I shot down from an astounding height.

"The nest cavities are typically dug at an angle, with an approximately two-foot long passage leading to a slightly enlarged cavity that serves as the egg depository. Because the sand dunes are repeatedly watered during the rainy season, sufficient moisture is retained to keep the sandy burrow from collapsing. Consequently, these sites lend themselves to easy excavation through loose sand, but retain the moisture necessary to sustain the eggs. Although the nest cavities are carefully filled by the females, fresh nests are easy to find, as no effort is made to wipe out the telltale tracks. Because, however, the direction of the sloped passage is not always evident, natives probe the sand and identify the passage or even the egg chamber by the lack of resistance to their efforts."

## B I O G R A P H I C A L   S K E T C H

### Emílio Augusto Goeldi (1859–1917)

Emílio Goeldi was a Swiss-born Brazilian naturalist. He studied at the University of Naples before earning his doctorate in 1883 at the University of Jena, where he studied under the famous evolutionary biologist, Ernst Haeckel. Goeldi emigrated to Brazil in 1884 to become assistant head of zoology at the Museu Nacional in Rio de Janeiro. He lost that position as a consequence of political changes, but, in 1894, accepted an invitation by the governor of Pará, the large northern state at the mouth of the Amazon River, to become Director of the Museu Paraense. Goeldi served in that capacity until 1904, when he resigned for reasons of health and returned to Switzerland. The museum was subsequently renamed the Museu Paraense Emílio Goeldi in his honor. In 1908, he became Professor of Zoology at the University of Bern, a position he held until his death.

Goeldi published in many areas. His most widely recognized work was *As Aves do Brasil* (*The Birds of Brasil*), published in 1894–1900, followed by an atlas in 1900–1906. Most of his herpetological work dealt with classification and distribution, but he also had a special interest in reproductive biology. Goeldi discovered *Hyla* (now *Flectonotus*) *goeldii* (named by George A. Boulenger in 1895), a frog in which the female carries the eggs attached to her back. Goeldi's major work in herpetology, *Repteis do Brasil*, was completed in 1892–1894, but was never published as a single volume. Much of the content consisted of compilations from the literature, but many of Goeldi's field notes (such as those quoted here by Werner) also were included.



Emílio Goeldi (photograph courtesy of Kraig Adler).

Source: Adler, K. 1989. Herpetologists of the past, pp. 5–141. In K. Adler (ed.), *Contributions to the History of Herpetology*. Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles, Contributions to Herpetology, Number 5. Ithaca, New York.