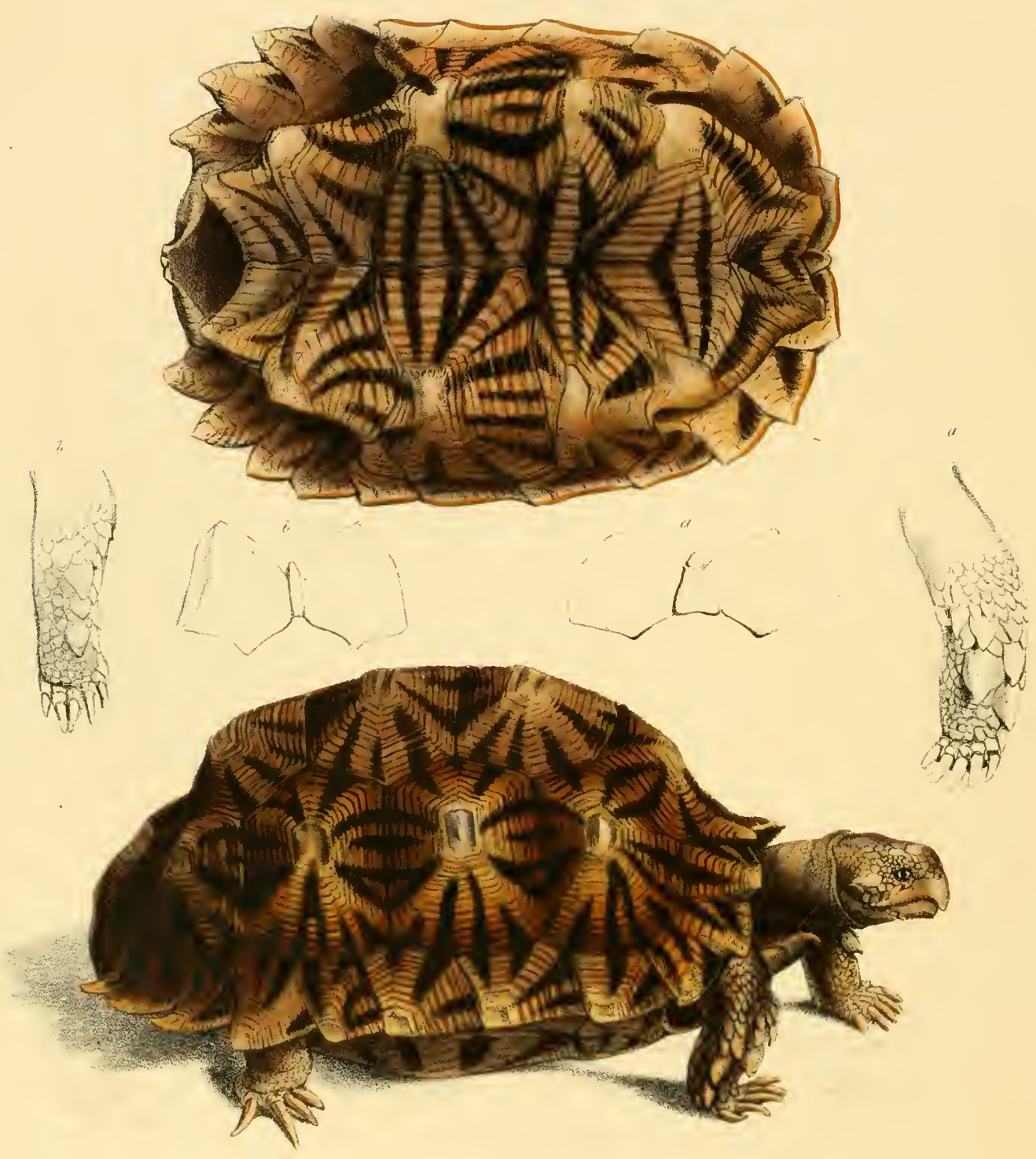


SMITH, ANDREW. 1839a. Illustrations of the Zoology of South Africa; consisting chiefly of Figures and Descriptions of the Objects of Natural History collected during an Expedition into the Interior of South Africa, in the years 1834, 1835, and 1836. Part No. 6. London: Smith, Elder and Co., 23 pp., 10 pls. [Reptilia, Plate 6].



TESTUDO SEMISERRATA
(Reptilia Plate 6)

TESTUDO SEMISERRATA.—SMITH.

REPTILIA.—PLATE V.

T. supra bruunco-nigra; scutarum areolis et radiis ab illis divergentibus, subochreis; infra flavâ radiis brunneo-nigris variegatis. Scuto nuchale triangulare; pedibus anterioribus paulum supra unguis anticè squamis magnis tuberculosi obtectis; mandibulâ superiore uncinatâ.

LONGITUDO testæ 5 unc.

COLOUR.—Shell above deep reddish or brownish black, with numerous ochrey or brownish yellow variegations, which are partly in the form of irregular blotches and partly of radii, the breadth of which is greatest at the margins of the plates. On the dorsal and costal plates, the areolæ are principally of a yellowish tinge, and from each ten or more yellow radii diverge and terminate by joining others of a similar description which intersect the surrounding plates. In the last-named plates one radiation generally proceeds from the anterior and another from the posterior edge of each, while three or four extend from the lateral sides, and those from the parts first mentioned, together with one from each of the lateral angles, generally divide into two limbs before they reach the margins of the plates, and by this arrangement several oblong black spots appear inclosed within these radii. The marginal plates are generally marked with three radii, the hindermost in many instances bifid prior to its joining the costal plates. Nuchal plate broadly edged and tipped with yellow. Beneath, the shell is yellow variegated with brownish black radii, each of which proceeds from the areolæ, when they exist, and increase in width as they approach the circumference of the plates; their direction is either straight or oblique, and from the manner in which they join each other, the under-surface of the shell appears varied with waved, angular or arched black stripes. Upper and under mandibles greenish yellow. Eyes dusky black. The scales of the head are a pale straw yellow, those of the neck greenish brown; the legs pale yellowish brown, with the large tubercular scales of the fore-legs and the *discs* of the small flat scales of all the legs dull yellow; claws yellowish. Tail dull greenish brown.

FORM, &c.—Shell oblong ovate and above moderately convex; its lateral outline as formed by the marginal plates is rather strongly serrated in front and behind, on the sides but slightly; its dorsal outline strongly arched towards the nuchal and caudal plates, slightly along the middle of the back. The surface of the shell above the lateral margins uneven, but none of the plates palpably projecting, as is the case in *Testudo geometrica*, *T. tentoria*, &c.; areolæ smooth and slightly depressed, the other parts of the plates rough

TESTUDO SEMISERRATA.

and irregular from their being strongly cut by numerous polygonal grooves. Nuchal plate triangular; the first and fourth dorsal plates pentagonal, the second, third and fifth hexagonal, but the form of the last is very different from the other two; the caudal plate pentagonal, its apex slightly incurved; the first costal plate rather irregular in shape and generally octagonal, some of the sides very short and indistinct, second and third plates hexagonal, the fourth pentagonal. The anterior and posterior marginal plates somewhat triangular, the intermediate ones subquadrangular; those of the first description, particularly the four last of each side, with prolonged points, each of which are inclined obliquely backwards. The sternum is slightly convex, and its anterior and posterior extremities bifurcate; the gular plates are somewhat diamond-shaped; the humeral ones large and quadrangular; the pectoral ones narrow where they are in contact with each other, and from thence gradually increase in breadth to their outer margins which are two-sided; the abdominal plates are large and square; the femoral ones broader at their outer than their inner edges, and the caudal ones are quadrangular, the outer and hinder angle being slightly prolonged and rounded at the tip. Upper surface of head closely covered with small flat and irregular-shaped scales, those immediately over eyes smallest; upper mandible cut by several vertical furrows and strongly hooked at the point, its cutting edge waved and finely dentated; lower mandible pointed, the point ascending. Neck closely coated with minute granular scales; fore-legs covered with subovate scales, among which, above the claws, are interspersed a few large tubercular ones, the form of one of which, the largest, is nearly that of a shell of the genus *Crepidula*; hind-legs coated with small delicate scales, and, internally, each has at its base a strong conical tubercle; claws of fore-feet rather short and nearly straight, those of the hinder feet much longer and slightly curved. Tail short and conical, with a small, prominent, conical tubercle on each side of its base. The length of the largest shell we obtained was nearly five inches, and as specimens of the same size, as well as of others much smaller, occurred in great abundance, we had reason to consider the largest as examples of full-grown individuals.

The districts between Latakoc and the Tropic of Capricorn abound in individuals of this species.

The shape of the nuchal plate and the form of the tubercular scales upon the fore-legs, are characters by which *Testudo semiserrata* is readily to be distinguished from *T. geometrica*, to which it closely approximates. For the appearances of these parts in both species, see Plate, *a a* *Testudo semiserrata*; *b b* *Testudo geometrica*.