

combining to create a new and altogether unique form of energy. I stood between the tracks and watched his advance; strong enough, it looked, to overthrow quite a massive obstacle or thrust it aside, yet gently gliding about a blade of grass without bending it, or flowing like oil round the sides of a stone. Not the slightest notice of me did he take, but lay out along the sand within a foot of the rail and basked in the sun. I stepped over to that side of the track and looked down at him; first his head and neck, and then the markings on his back. There was something strange to my eye in the appearance of this garter snake; the broad zig-zag bands of yellow seemed unfamiliar; the colour itself was not the waspy straw yellow I was expecting, but darker in part, almost red-ocre, like a British hornet; I glanced at the tail: one, two, three, four, five naked joints; it was my first rattlesnake. Just then the rumble of an approaching car forced me to step from the tracks; I had no desire to be marooned for even a moment alone with a rattler on a narrow strip of cliff-edge, so I chose the other side of the right-of-way. As soon as the coast was clear, I returned to my scrutiny; the snake had not moved, though the car had lumbered by within a foot of him, out-rattling a thousand of his kind; but he was startled, probably by the vibration of the ground, and almost immediately slid back into the bushes and so (doubtless) down to the ravine. The keepers at the Glen had not seen one all the season and showed surprise, if not annoyance, that I had not killed this fellow. Snakes are none of them aggressive, but the rattler is, I believe, more than ordinarily sluggish; unless cornered or accidentally stepped upon or jostled, he is perfectly harmless, and in cold weather can be picked up and handled with impunity.

In the rich herbage beside one of the paths that led to the flight of wooden stairs I noticed numbers of little chrysomelians feeding, at least three species, two of them black with four yellow or reddish spots on the elytra (2 basal and 2 apical), one of the beetles proving *Bassareus* and the other *Cryptocephalus*; the third species was of a uniform dark-grey and quadrate in outline, apparently *Pachybrachys*.

I had now reached the Glen itself, and proceeded to hobnob for an hour or two with some old cronies among the ferns. It ap-