

It is narrowly concave beneath and broadly convex above. The upper, posterior edge recurves between the internasals, imparting to the latter well-rounded anterior median borders. The internasals are bounded laterally by the nasals and posteriorly by the prefrontals. The frontal is hexagonal, somewhat longer than wide; the anterior angle obtuse, the posterior acute. It lies directly between the orbits, is bounded anteriorly by the prefrontals, laterally by the supraocular and posteriorly by the parietals. Each prefrontal touches the preocular, loreal and nasal ventrally. The supraocular is about twice as long as wide and makes a broad contact with the preocular and postocular. The parietal plates are longer than wide, the length being considerably more than that of the frontal. The nasal is single, pierced a little above the center. It is in contact with the rostral and loreal. The loreal is elongate, wedge-shaped, and in contact with the first and second supralabials. There are two postoculars, the upper twice as large as the lower. Temporals, one to two. Supralabials, seven on either side, the third and fourth of which are beneath the eye; fourth longest, the last which closely resembles the scales behind it, smallest. Of the seven infralabials the fourth is the largest. The first meets the corresponding one of the opposite side behind the symphyseal. The symphyseal is acutely pointed anteriorly, the tip fitting a corresponding concavity in the rostral. The anterior genials are broad and somewhat more than twice as long as the posterior ones. The gular scales are well developed, the dorsal scales smooth, in fifteen rows, smallest near the middle of the back. The gastrosteges number 174, the urosteges 44. The anal plate is divided. The pupil is large and round. The tongue is black, tipped with white.

The rarity of specimens of this snake in collections is apparently due both to its restricted distribution and to its habit of burrowing in the desert sands. Little is known of its food or its general habits. Although probably not nocturnal, it may spend most of its time hidden from sight, much as do the

similar little snakes *Contia mitis* and *Diadophis amabilis*.

C. H. RICHARDSON, JR.

STANFORD UNIVERSITY

A NEW VARIETY OF THE SUNFLOWER

THE northern sunflower (*Helianthus annuus lenticularis* or *H. lenticularis* Dougl.) is exceedingly abundant in Colorado and New Mexico, where I have seen many thousands, possibly millions. In all these, I have never seen a noteworthy variation in the color of the rays, until a few days ago my wife discovered a single plant of a most remarkable variety, growing along with the common form, within sight of our house in Boulder. This variety, for which I propose the name *coronatus*, may be described as follows: Leaves much darker green; petioles strongly purplish; heads in bud dark, the ends of the bracts dark purplish; disc dark, normal; rays a full orange (darker than the type), strongly suffused, especially about the middle, with bright chestnut red, the color more or less streaky, the basal 3 or 4 mm. yellow; beneath, the rays have the middle third or more of about the apical two-thirds red.

We have moved the plant to our garden, and hope to increase it by seed. It will make a fine addition to the series of horticultural sunflower varieties, and it is hoped an interesting subject for experiments in crossing. According to Shull¹ the sunflowers are self-sterile, so it will be necessary to cross the new variety with the normal one and afterwards extract the pure strain of the variety.

In the manner of discovery, this case recalls that of the Shirley poppy, but the poppy had lost a character, while the sunflower has gained one, or more precisely, appears to have a double dose of the anthocyan pigment which is present in normal plants. It will be interesting to enquire whether there is any doubling of the chromosomes, after the manner of *Oenothera gigas*, but it hardly seems likely that any cytological character will be visible, accompanying the increase of pigment.

T. D. A. COCKERELL

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

¹ *Botanical Gazette*, February, 1908, p. 104.