THE WATER-RAT*.

HIS animal is about the fize of a rat; but. from its manners and dispositions, has a much greater refemblance to the otter than to the common rat. Like the otter, it frequents the fresh water, and is found in the margins of rivers, brooks, and pools, and lives mostly on fishes. Gudgeons, minnows, blays, and the fry of carps, pikes, and barbels, are his ordinary food.

. Rat with a thick blunt nofe; ears hid in the fur; eyes fmall; teeth yellow: On each foot five toes; inner toe of the fore foot very small; the first joint very slexible; Head and body covered with long hairs, black mixed with a few ferraginous hairs; belly of an iron gray; tail covered with that black hairs, the tip whitish ; Weight nine ounces; length, from note to tail, 7 inches; tail only 5; Pennant's Synopf. of Quad.

p. 101. In Latin, Mus aquations, Mus aquatilis; in Italian, Sorge mar. panye; in German, Waffer-may'z; in Polish, Moff waden; in French, Le Rat d'eau.

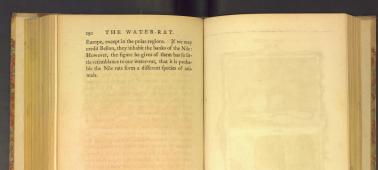
Mas agnations: Geforr, Hill. Sund. p. 732.

Mus aquatilis, quadrupes Bellom ; Icon. p. 154-Mus aquaticus major, five rattus aquaticus ; Ray, Syussi. Quel.

Mus amphibies, cauda elongata pilofa, plantis palmatis; Liny, Sell. Nat. p. 82.

Mus rattus aquatilis ; Klein. Quad. p. 07.

Mus cauda longa, pilis, fupra ex nigro et flavescente mixtis, infra cinereis veftitos. Mus aquaticus; Briffin. Regn. Axin. He likewise cats frogs, water infects, and sometimes the roots of plants. He has not, like the ofter, membranes between his toes. This error has been copied from Willoughby by Ray and other naturalists. Though all his toes be feparate, he fwims with eafe, keeps long under the water, and carries off his prev to be devoured upon the grafs, or in his hole. He is fometimes furprifed by fishers when searching for craw-fifh; and he endeavours to escape by biting their fingers, or leaping into the water. His head is shorter, his muzzle thicker, his hair more bushy, and his tail much shorter, than those of the rat. Like the otter, he avoids large rivers, or rather those which are much frequented. He never vifits houses or barns, but keeps upon the margins of waters, from which he wanders not upon dry land fo far as the otter, which is fometimes found at the diffance of a league from water. Water-rats are feldom met with in elevated places, or in dry plains, but are extremely numerous in moift and marshy valleys. The females come in feafon about the end of winter, and bring forth in the month of April, the litter generally confifting of fix or feven. Perhaps they bring forth more than once a year; but of this we have no proper knowledge. Their flesh is not intolerably bad, being eaten by the peafants, as well as that of the otter, during the feafon of Lent. They are found every where over







WATER BAT.