

count of it *. Seba afterwards gave Merian's figure for the female, and added a new figure for the male, with a kind of description. This animal, says he, has very brilliant eyes, which are surrounded with a circle of deep brown hair. The body is covered with soft hair, or rather wool of a reddish yellow colour, but of a bright red on the back. The front, muzzle, belly, and feet, are whitish yellow. The ears are naked, and pretty hard. On the upper lip, and also above the eyes, there are long hairs in the form of whiskers. Its teeth, like those of the dormouse, are very sharp. Upon the tail of the male, which is naked, and of a pale red colour, there are dusky red spots, which appear not on the tail of the female. The feet resemble the hands of an ape; those before have four toes, and the thumb garnished with short, blunt nails; but on the hind feet the thumb alone has a flat, blunt nail, the other four toes being armed with small sharp claws. The young of these animals grunt nearly in the same manner as a pig. The pups of the female resemble those of the murine opossum. Seba properly remarks, that, in the

* Hic genus gliris sylvestris depictum est, qui catulos quatuor vulgo quinque vel sex una fœtura emittit in dorso secum portat; ex flavo fuscis coloris, at subocula ejus alba est: Cum antra exeunt alimenti causa, a catulis circum currunt, qui jam saturi vel molestias suspicientes, illico matris dorsum ascendunt, et caudas suas parentem caudis involvunt, qui illos statim in antra apportant; *Mar. Sicil. Merian. Infig. Surinam. p. 66. fig. tab. 66.*

figure given by Merian, the feet and toes are ill represented *. The females produce five or six at a litter. The tail is very long, and prehensile, like that of the sapajous. The young mount upon the back of the mother, and adhere firmly with their tails twisted round hers. In this situation she carries them about with great nimbleness and security.

XVII.

THE AKOUCHI, or OLIVE CAVY.

THE akouchi is pretty common in Guiana and other parts of South America. It differs from the agouti by having a tail, which is wanting in the agouti. The akouchi is generally smaller than the agouti, and its hair is not red, but of an olive colour †.

These are the only differences we know between the akouchi and agouti, which, however, seem to be sufficient to constitute two distinct species.

* Seba, vol. i. p. 47. tab. 21. fig. 4.

† Cuniculus minor, caudatus, olivaceus; *Akouchi, Barriès, Hist. Nat. de la Fr. Equin. p. 153.*

S U P P L E M E N T.

IN the original work we remarked, that the akouchi was a different species from the agouti; because the former had a tail, and the latter had no tail. The akouchi differs from the agouti still more in magnitude, being no larger than a young rabbit of six months old. The akouchi is found only in extensive woods. He feeds on the same fruits, and has nearly the same manners, with the agouti. In the islands of Saint Lucia and Grenada he is called *agouti*. His flesh is white, and has the flavour of a young rabbit; and he is ranked amongst the finest game in South America. When the akouchis are pursued by dogs, rather than take the water, they allow themselves to be seized. M. de la Borde informs us, though I doubt the fact, that the females produce only one, or at most two young at a litter. They are easily tamed, and have a small cry like that of the Guiney pig; but it is seldom heard.

We have given a figure of this animal, drawn from a well preserved skin. Messrs Aublet and Olivier assure me, that, in Cayenne, the hare is called *agouti*, and the rabbit *akouchi*; but that the agouti is the best food; and, speaking of the game of this country, they inform me, that the

Plate CXCXVIII.



A. de la Borde.

AKOUCHI.

the armadillos are still better food, except the nine-banded armadillo, which has a strong smell of musk; that, after the armadillos, the paca is the best game, because its flesh is wholesome and fat: The next in order are the agouti and akouchi. They likewise maintain, that the red cougar is used as food, and that its flesh has the taste of veal.

XVIII.

The TUCAN, or MEXICAN SHREW*.

FERNANDES has given the name of *tucan* to a small quadruped of New Spain, whose size, figure, and natural habits, make it approach nearer to the mole than to any other species. It appears to be the same animal described by Seba under the denomination of the *red mole* of America†; at least, the descriptions of the two

* Mexican shrew, with a sharp nose; small round ears; without sight; two long fore teeth above and below; thick, fat, fleshy body, short legs, so that the belly almost touches the ground; long crooked claws; tawny hair; short tail; length from nose to tail, nine inches; Pennant's *Synops. of Quad.* p. 310.

† Seba, vol. i. p. 51. tab. 32. fig. 2.