

THE MOUSE.

THE mouse is much smaller, equally numerous, and more generally diffused than the rat. It has the same instinct, the same constitution and natural dispositions, and differs only by its weakness, and the habits which result from this circumstance. Timid by nature, and familiar from necessity, fear and want are the sources of all his movements. He never issues from his hole but in quest of food, and runs in again upon the smallest alarm. He goes not, like the rat, from house to house, unless he be forced; and he is not near so destructive. His manners are gentle, and he may be tamed to a certain degree; but he

* An animal that needs no description; when found white, it is very beautiful, the full bright eye appearing to great advantage amidst the snowy fur; *Fennet's Synops. of Quad.* p. 302.

In Greek, *Moos*; in Latin, *Mus*, *Musculus*, *Sorex*; in Italian, *Topo*, *Sorice*, *Sorgia di casa*; in Spanish, *Rat*; in German, *Mys*; in Swedish, *Mus*; in Polish, *Mysz*; in French, *La Souris*.

Mus domesticus communis, vel minor; *Gesner. Icon. Animal. Quad.* p. 114.

Mus domesticus vulgaris, seu minor; *Ray. Synops. Animal. Quad.* p. 218.

Mus musculus, cauda elongata, palmis tetradaactylis, plantis pentadaactylis; *Linn. Syst.* p. 23.

Mus minor, musculus vulgaris domesticus, cauda tereti longa; *Klein. Hist. Nat. Quad.* p. 57.

blau cauda longissima, obscure cinereus, ventre subalbent; *Brisson, Rege. Anim.* p. 169.

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never discovers the smallest attachment to his benefactors. It is not, indeed, easy to love those who are perpetually laying snares for us. Though weak, the mouse has many enemies, from whom he has no means of escape, but those of agility and minuteness. Owls, birds of prey, cats, weasels, and even rats, make war upon the mice. They are shot, caught in traps, and destroyed by millions. In a word they subsist by their amazing fecundity alone.

They bring forth at all seasons, and several times in the year. The litter generally consists of five or six. In less than fifteen days the young are strong enough to disperse and to procure food for themselves. The duration of life in those small animals must, therefore, be short, since their growth is so rapid; and this circumstance still farther augments the idea of their prodigious multiplication. Aristotle tells us, that, having shut up a pregnant mouse in a vessel, along with plenty of grain, he, in a short time after, found 120 mice, all sprung from the same mother.

These little animals are by no means ugly; they have a vivacious and elegant air. That species of horror which some people feel at them, arises from the surprise and inconveniencies they sometimes occasion. All mice are whitish under the belly, and some are altogether white. Others are more or less brown and black. The species is generally diffused over Europe, Asia, and Africa; and,

and, it is alledged, that those of America, where they are very numerous, came originally from the Old Continent. It is, however, certain, that this little animal follows man, and flies from uninhabited places, probably on account of its natural appetite for bread, cheese, butter, oil, and other aliments which men prepare for themselves.

S U P P L E M E N T.

WHITE mice, with red eyes, are found not only in our temperate climates, but in the southern and northern regions of both Continents. 'White mice, with red eyes,' says Pontoppidan, 'have been found in the small village of Ramf-dallem; but, whether they are indigenous, or brought from the East-Indies, is uncertain.' This last supposition seems to have no foundation; for it is natural to expect white mice in Norway, as well as every where else in Europe; and mice, in general, are equally numerous in America as in the Old Continent.

The Long-tailed FIELD-MOUSE*.

THIS animal is less than the rat, and larger than the mouse. It never lives in houses, but is found in the fields and woods. Its eyes are remarkably large and prominent; and it differs still more from the rat and mouse, by the colour of its hair, which is whitish under the belly, and of a reddish brown on the back. It is very generally and copiously diffused, especially in elevated countries. It seems to take a considerable time in arriving at full growth, because it varies greatly in size. The largest are between four and five inches long; and the smaller ones, which appear likewise to be adults, are an inch shorter. And, as we find them of all intermediate sizes, both the

* This animal has full black eyes; its head, back, and sides are of a yellowish brown, mixed with some dusky hairs; the breast is of an ochre colour; and the belly is white: its length, from the tip of the nose to the tail, is four inches and a half, and that of the tail, which is slightly covered with hair, is four inches; Pennant's *Synops. of Zool.* p. 302.

Mus agrestis major, macrourus Gessneri; Ray, *Synops. Zool.* p. 219.

Mus cauda longa, supra e fusco flavescens, infra ex albo cinereus; Brisson, *Zool.* p. 123.

Mus domesticus medius; Ray, *Synops. Zool.* p. 218.

Mus sylvaticus, cauda longa, palmis tetradactylis, plantis pentadactylis, corpore griseo pilis nigris, abdomine albo; Linn.

Zyl. Nat. p. 34.

Le Mulot; Buffon.

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