

raisin. But he plunges every thing that is dry into his basin.

"He abhors children; their crying irritates him; and he makes every effort to spring upon them. A small bitch, of which he is fond, he chastises severely when she barks too loud. I know not why several animals equally detest sharp cries. In the year 1770, I had five white mice. I happened to make one of them cry; the others attacked it: I continued to make it cry; and they killed it.

"This raccoon is a female; she comes in season in the beginning of summer, and her ardour for the male continues six weeks. During this period, nothing can quiet her; every object is disgusting; and she hardly takes nourishment. A hundred times each day she passes, between her thighs and between her fore-feet, her bushy tail, which she seizes by the end with her teeth, and agitates perpetually, to give friction to the parts.

"This animal acquires not its full growth till it be two years and a half old."

## The COATI, or BRASILIAN WEASEL\*.

THIS animal has been called *Coati-mondi* by several authors. We have had it alive; and, after comparing it with the Coati mentioned by Thevet, and described by Marcgrave, we discovered the Coati and Coati-mondi to be only varieties of the same species; for Marcgrave, after describing the Coati, says that there are other Coati of a dark brown colour, called, for the sake of distinction, *coati-mondi* by the Brazilians. He admits not, therefore, any other difference between the coati and coati-mondi, but that of the colour of the hair; and hence they can be regarded as varieties only of the same species.

\* Weasel with the upper jaw lengthened into a pliant movable proboscis, much longer than the lower jaw; ears rounded; eyes small; nose dusky; hair on the body smooth, soft, and glossy, of a bright bay colour; tail annulated with dusky and bay; breast whitish; length from nose to tail eighteen inches; tail thirteen inches; Pennant's *Synops. of Zood.* p. 229.

Coati; Thevet, *Singular. de la France Antrolique*, p. 95. Marcgrave, *Hist. Nat. Brasil.* p. 228.

Coati-mondi; *Hist. de l'Acad. tom. iii. part. ii.* p. 17.

Valpes minor, rostro superiori longiusculo, cauda annulata ex nigro et rufo variegata; Barreire *Hist. de la France Equivale.* p. 167.

Ursus natio productio et mobilis, cauda annulata variegata; Brisson, *Regn. Animal.* p. 190.

Viverra nasua, rufa, cauda albo annulata; Linn. *Syst.* p. 64.

The coati is very different from the raccoon described in the preceding article. He is of a smaller stature; his body and neck, head and muzzle, are much longer; the upper jaw is terminated by a kind of moveable snout, which stretches an inch, or an inch and a half, beyond the extremity of the under jaw. This turned up snout, joined to the length of the jaws, gives to the muzzle a curved and elevated appearance. The coati has also smaller eyes than the raccoon, shorter ears, longer, coarser, and less variegated hair, shorter legs, and longer feet; and it rests still more upon the heel. Like the raccoon, it has an annulated tail\*, and five toes on each foot.

Some authors regard the sow-badger as a coati, and have added to this genus the *taxus fuillus*†, of which Aldrovandus has given a figure. But when it is considered, that the sow-badger mentioned by hunters is supposed to be found in France, and even in colder European climates, and that, on the contrary, the coati never appears but in the southern climates of the New Continent, this notion must be rejected, as having no foundation to support it‡; for the figure given by Aldrovandus is nothing more than that of a

\* Some coatis have the tail of one uniform colour; but, as there are no other differences, they must be considered as varieties only, and not as distinct species.

† Brisson, Regn. Anim. p. 203.

‡ See what we remarked concerning the *Taxus fuillus*, article Badger.

badger,

badger, with the addition of a sow's snout. The author pretends not to have drawn this animal from nature; and he has not described it. The long muzzle and moveable snout sufficiently distinguish the coati from all other animals. Like the bear, the coati stands with ease on his hind-feet, resting upon his broad heels, which are terminated by large callosities, extending outward, and augmenting the base of the feet.

The coati has a trick of gnawing his own tail, which, when not mutilated, exceeds the length of the body; he generally carries his tail erect, and sweeps it about from side to side. This remarkable practice of gnawing the tail is not, however, peculiar to the coati; the monkeys, the *makis*, and some other animals which have long tails, shorten them one third, or one fourth, by eating both the flesh and the vertebrae. This circumstance gave rise to a general conclusion, that, in very long members, the extremities of which are, of course, removed to a great distance from the centre of sensation, the feeling is weak, and that this weakness of feeling is proportioned to the distance and the thinness of the part; for, if the extremity of the tail, in those animals, was very sensible, the pain excited would be stronger than the desire of mutilation, and they would preserve their tails with equal anxiety as the other parts of their bodies. Upon the whole, the coati is an animal of prey,

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which

which lives upon flesh and blood, and which, like the fox or martin, devours small animals and fowls\*, eats eggs, and hunts for the nests of birds†; and it is, probably, from this conformity of disposition, rather than from any resemblance to the martin, that the coati has been considered as a small species of the fox‡.

\* Maregrave, Hist. Brasil. p. 228.

† Thëvet, Singular. de la France Antarc. p. 96.

‡ In the Seventh Volume of the Transactions of the Swedish Academy, we have the following remarks, concerning the coati-mondi, by Linnaeus, which we shall transcribe, without pretending to vouch his facts.

“ This animal,” says Linnaeus, “ is equally numerous both in *Sassib* and in *North America*. In the length of his hind-legs, the inclination of his head, the bushiness of his hair, and in his paws, he resembles the bear. But he is small and familiar; and his tail is very long, and variegated with different colours. The Prince of Sweden made a present of one of these animals to Linnaeus, who kept it a considerable time, but lost all the labour he bestowed in attempting to civilize it; for the coati-mondi, when it could slip into the court-yard, violating all the rights of hospitality, tore off the heads of the poultry, and drank their blood. It was so obstinate, that it would do nothing contrary to its inclination. Notwithstanding the smallness of this animal, he defended himself with great force, when any body attempted to seize him against his will; and he stuck fast to the legs of those with whom he was familiar, when he wanted to *rescind* their pockets, and carry off what he found in them. But there is a remedy for this obduracy. The coati has an extreme aversion to hog’s bristles; and the smallest *brag* makes him desert his enterprise. He was *one day* worried by a mad dog; and M. Linnaeus *disgusted* him. His mode of living was very singular.

PLATE CVII.



*Alcedo'sculp.*

BLACK COATI.



BROWN COATLI.

lar. He slept from midnight till noon, waked the rest  
of the day, and uniformly walked about from six in the even-  
ing till midnight, without the least regard to the weather. This  
is probably the time assigned by nature to this species of ani-  
mals, when in their own country, for procuring their food, for  
hunting birds, and discovering their eggs, which constitute  
their principal nourishment; *Bibl. raijhuat, tom. xli.*

part. i. p. 25.