

a long time under water he cannot be properly called an amphibious animal; viz. one equally capable of living in air or in water; his conformation is not calculated for his living in the latter element, and he requires to breathe as much as any terrestrial animal. If they happen to be entangled in a net while pursuing a fish they drown, and this evidently for want of time to destroy a sufficient quantity of the meshes to effect their escape. His teeth are like those of the polecat, though larger and stronger in proportion to its size. For want of fish, frogs, water-rats, or other food, he will eat the young branches and bark of aquatic trees; and in the spring he will eat the young grass. He is as little afraid of cold as moisture. It couples in winter and brings forth in March, and commonly three or four at a time. In general young animals are pretty; but the young otters are not so handsome as the old: from the awkwardness of its motions deformity of figure, and a kind of mechanical cry, which it repeats almost without intermission, one should suspect it a stupid animal. He, however, becomes industrious with age, at least sufficiently so to wage a successful war with the fishes, who with respect to instinct and sentiment, are greatly inferior to other animals; and yet I can scarcely believe he has,