

polecat in a hen-house, that is kill more than he can eat, and then carry them away in his mouth.

Though the otter is not known to shed his hair, yet his winter coat is browner than in summer, sells for more money, and makes a very good fur. Some people eat their flesh, which has a disagreeable fishy taste; their retreats are always infected with the stench of fish, which they have suffered to rot around them. Dogs have no aversion to chase the otter whom they easily overtake when at a distance from his hole or the water; when seized he defends himself obstinately, bites cruelly, and sometimes with such force as to snap their leg bones, and he never quits his hold as long as he retains his breath. The beaver, however, though not remarkable for strength, drives the otters away, and will not suffer them to dwell near his residence.

Though this species is not very numerous, they are to be met with in Europe from Sweden to Naples, and also in North America. They were well known to the Greeks, and are probably to be found in all temperate climates, especially in those places which abound with water; for he can inhabit neither burning sands, nor dry deserts; and he equally avoids rivers  
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