

bed of moss in the trunks of those which are hollow; he also shelters himself in the clefts of rocks, and always prefers dry places. He avoids moisture, drinks little, and rarely descends to the ground; but there is a material difference between him and the squirrel, as the latter is easily tamed, but the loir always remains wild. They couple about the end of spring, and the females bring forth in summer, generally producing four or five at a time. Their growth is quick, and it is asserted that they do not live more than six years. In Italy, where they still eat them, the inhabitants dig pits in the woods, which they line and cover with straw and moss; for these pits they chuse a dry spot, sheltered by rocks and exposed to the south; to which the loirs resort in great numbers, and the people find them there in a torpid state, about the end of autumn, when they are fittest to eat. They are full of courage, and will defend their lives to the last extremity; their fore-teeth are both long and strong, and they bite violently; they have no fear of the weasel nor small birds of prey; they baffle the attempts of the fox by mounting to the tops of the trees, nor have they any very formidable enemies but the martens and wild cats.

This