

shelter themselves in a thorny thicket, they prefer the former, plunge in without dread, and swim with great facility. This particularly happens when they cannot regain their burrows, for, like the field-mouse, they dig holes in the earth, or occupy those made by rabbits. They may also be taken by means of ferrets, who pursue them into their hole with the same ardour as they do the rabbit. These animals pass the summer in the country; they live principally on fruits or grain, yet are carnivorous, devouring young hares, rabbits, partridges, and other birds, and when they get into a hen-roost they destroy, like the polecat, more than they can eat. About November the females and the young ones quit the fields, and proceed in troops to barns, where they commit infinite havock, by destroying the straw, consuming the grain, and infecting every thing with their ordure. The old males remain in the fields each in his respective hole, where they accumulate acorns, beech-mast, &c. filling it to the very edge, and remaining themselves at the bottom. They do not become torpid in the winter, like the dormouse, but come out of their holes every fine day. Those which reside in barns drive away all the

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