

in the zoölogy of the Pampas. It is found as far south as the Rio Negro, in lat. 41°, but not beyond. It cannot, like the agouti, subsist on the gravelly and desert plains of Patagonia, but prefers a clayey or sandy soil, which produces a different and more abundant vegetation. Near Mendoza, at the foot of the Cordillera, it occurs in close neighborhood with the allied alpine species. It is a very curious circumstance in its geographical distribution that it has never been seen, fortunately for the inhabitants of Banda Oriental, to the eastward of the river Uruguay: yet in this province there are plains which appear admirably adapted to its habits. The Uruguay has formed an insuperable obstacle to its migration; although the broader barrier of the Parana has been passed, and the bizcacha is common in Entre Rios, the province between these two great rivers. Near Buenos Ayres these animals are exceedingly common. Their most favorite resort appears to be those parts of the plain which, during one half of the year, are covered with giant thistles, to the exclusion of other plants. The Gauchos affirm that it lives on roots; which, from the great strength of its gnawing teeth, and the kind of places frequented by it, seems probable. In the evening the bizcachas come out in numbers, and quietly sit at the mouths of their burrows on their haunches. At such times they are very tame, and a man on horseback passing by seems only to present an object for their grave contemplation. They run very awkwardly, and when running out of danger, from their elevated tails and short front legs, much resemble great rats. Their flesh, when cooked, is very white and good, but it is seldom used.

The bizcacha has one very singular habit; namely, dragging every hard object to the mouth of its burrow: around each group of holes many bones of cattle, stones, thistle-stalks, hard lumps of earth, dry dung, etc., are collected into an irregular heap, which frequently amounts to as much as a wheelbarrow would contain. I was credibly informed that a gentleman, when riding on a dark night, dropped his watch; he returned in the morning, and by searching the neighbor-