

make choice of a natural basin, of a certain depth, near the bank, where there is no rock; they then begin to excavate under water, at the base of the bank, which they enlarge upwards gradually, and so as to form a declivity, till they reach the surface; and of the earth which comes out of this cavity they form a hillock, with which they mix small pieces of wood, and even stones: they give this hillock the form of a dome, from four to seven feet high, from ten to twelve long, and from eight to nine wide. As they proceed in heightening, they hollow it out below, so as to form the lodge which is to receive the family. At the anterior part of this dwelling, they form a gentle declivity terminating at the water; so that they enter and go out under water. The hunters name this entrance the *angle*. The interior forms only a single chamber resembling an oven. At a little distance is the magazine for provisions. Here they keep in store the roots of the yellow waterlily, and the branches of the black spruce,* the aspin,† and birch,‡ which they are careful to plant in the mud. These form their subsistence. Their magazines sometimes contain a cart-load of these articles, and the beavers are so industrious, that they are always adding to their store.

There is a species of beaver found in the great rivers in Europe—the Danube, the Rhine, the Rhone, and the Weser, which has been regarded as synonymous with the beaver of Canada, but which, though it forms burrows or holes in the banks of those rivers which it frequents, does not, like them, erect any lodges, as above described. Does this insect sleep in them, and require a certain degree of cold to awaken it? or are they a distinct species? Linné mentions one in Lapland, where the cold is sufficiently intense. Cuvier seems uncertain whether they ought to be considered as distinct. Beavers seem formerly to have

* *Abies nigra*.

† *Populus tremula*.

‡ *Betula alba*.