

I will not say the talents, but the habitudes of the beaver, such as always going up against the stream, in order to return more easily down the current when loaded with his prey ; that of fitting up his house, and lining it with boards to exclude the water ; that of laying in a quantity of fish against a future scarcity ; and lastly, that of his being rendered so tame and subservient as to fish for his master, and even taking his booty into the very kitchen. All I know is, that the otter does not dig his own habitation, that he fixes his residence in the first hole he finds, under the roots of poplars or willows, in the clefts of rocks, and even among piles of floating wood ; and in those they bring forth their young ; where we also find heads and bones of fishes ; that they frequently change their residence ; that they drive away their young at the end of six weeks or two months ; that those I attempted to tame endeavoured to bite, though then feeding on milk, and unable to chew fish ; that a few days after they became more mild, probably from having become sick and weak ; that so far from being easily habituated to a domestic life, all those that I endeavoured to rear died very young ; that, in fine, the otter is of a savage and cruel disposition ; that when he gets into a fish-pond he does the same as a

polecat