

This noisome odour, and the aversion of the cats, most probably gave rise to the notion that the shrew mouse is a venomous animal, and that its bite is hurtful, particularly to horses; but the truth is, that it is neither venomous nor able to bite, for its mouth is not capable of sufficient extension to take in the double thickness of another animal's skin, which is absolutely necessary in order to bite. Besides, the distemper among horses, which is vulgarly attributed to the shrew mouse, is a swelling proceeding from an internal cause, and therefore can have no connexion with the bite, or the puncture of this little animal.

The shrew mouse, especially in winter, fixes its residence in stables, hay-lofts, or barns; it feeds on grain, insects, and putrid flesh. It also resides in woods and fields, where it lives on grain; it sometimes conceals itself under moss, leaves, the trunks of trees, and sometimes in holes abandoned by moles, or in holes of a smaller size, which it digs for itself, with its claws and snout. The shrew produces, it is said, as many young at a time as the common mouse, but not so frequently. Its cry is more sharp, but it is not near so nimble, and as it sees imperfectly, and runs slowly, there is very little difficulty in taking it. Their usual
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