

attended with much trouble, on account of the depth and extent of their burrows. However, a man versed in this business commonly effects his purpose with good success and profit, for in autumn he seldom fails of finding two bushels of good corn in each habitation, and the fur of these animals is valuable. The hamsters bring forth two or three times in a year, and seldom less than five or six. Some years there are great numbers of them to be seen, and in others scarcely any to be met with. They multiply considerably when the seasons are wet, which causes a great scarcity of grain by the immense devastations they make.

“The hamster begins to burrow at the age of six weeks or two months; but they never copulate in the first year.

“The pole-cat is a great enemy to the hamsters, which he destroys in great numbers, and even takes possession of their holes.

“The back of the hamster is commonly brown, and the belly white; there are some, however, of a grey colour, and this difference may proceed from their age; besides these, others are met with entirely black.”

The hamsters destroy each other like field-mice; two of them being put into the same cage, the female killed the male in the night,