

Bostock John & Riley H.T. eds. 1855. *Pliny the Elder, The Natural History. Book VIII. The nature of the terrestrial animals. Chap. 55 (37) The mice of Pontus and of the Alps [Pline l'ancien. Histoire naturelle. Livre VIII. Les animaux terrestres. Chap. 55 (37) La souris du Pont et des Alpes]*. Taylor and Francis, Red Lion Court, Fleet Street, London. In <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?lookup=Plin.+Nat.+toc>

CHAP. 55. (37.)--THE MICE OF PONTUS AND OF THE ALPS.

The mice of Pontus also conceal themselves during the winter; but only the white ones.¹ I wonder how those authors, who have asserted that the sense of taste in these animals is very acute, found out that such is the fact. The Alpine mice, which are the same size as badgers, also conceal themselves;² but they first carry a store of provisions into their retreat. Some writers, indeed, say that the male and female, lying on their backs alternately, hold in their paws a bundle of gnawed herbs, and, the tail of each in its turn being seized by the teeth of the other, in this way, they are dragged into their hole; hence it is, that at this season their hair is found to be rubbed off their backs. There is a similar animal also in Egypt,³ which sits, in the same way, upon its haunches, and walks on two feet, using the fore feet as hands.

¹ It is supposed that the white mouse of Pontus, mentioned also by Aristotle, Hist. Anim. B. viii. c. 17, is the ermine, or else the marten; but, as Cuvier remarks, Ajasson, vol. vi. p. 457, Lemaire, vol. iii. p. 467, the ermine does not hibernate.--B.

² Cuvier, *ubi supra*, conceives that the Alpine mouse is the marmot; but he remarks, that it is inferior in size to the badger.--B.

³ Cuvier, *ubi supra*, conceives the Egyptian mouse to be the jerboa, the Musjaculus of Linnæus; but it is much smaller than the marmot. Pliny, in B. x. c. 85, says, that the Egyptian mouse walks on two feet, as does the mouse of the Alps. Aristotle, Hist. Anim. B. vii. c. 37, and Ælian, Anim. Nat. B. xv. c. 26, refer to the mouse of Egypt.--B. Probably the Mus cahirinus.