

TO
THOMAS PENNANT
ESQUIRE,
FROM WHOSE LITERARY LABOURS
NATURAL HISTORY IN GENERAL,
AND THAT OF
GREAT BRITAIN IN PARTICULAR,
HAS RECEIVED SUCH AMPLE IMPROVEMENTS,
THIS FOURTH VOLUME
OF THE
NATURALIST'S MISCELLANY
IS
WITH MUCH RESPECT INSCRIBED,
BY
HIS MOST OBEDIENT HUMBLE SERVANTS,

GEORGE SHAW,
FREDERICK P. NODDER.

TESTUDO MELEAGRIS.



CHARACTER GENERICUS.

Corpus tetrapodum, caudatum, testa obtectum.

Os mandibulis nudis, edentulis.

Lin. Syst. Nat. p. 350.

CHARACTER SPECIFICUS.

TESTUDO pedibus subpalmatis? testa ovata glabra maculis innumeris flavis guttata.

Plurimas testudinum species sibi invicem nimis affines accurate dignoscere difficillimum est. De aliis ne dubitari quidem possit, quippe quæ notas gerant conspicuas et insignes ad distinctionem: qualis scilicet est testudo geometrica, quam striarum flavarum super scutum bella et ordinata serie vel tiro statim agnoverit. Illam etiam quam describere pergimus a reliquo genere satis sejungit notabilis characterum et colorum dispositio. Longa est, ut plurimum, quinque vel sex uncias. Color fusco-castaneus saturatior per totum corpus superius guttulis ovatis albido-flavescentibus pulcherrime aspergitur, in singula tegminis divisione quasi ducentis. Scutum læve est, carens fulcis et prominentiis, nisi quod per medium trium præcipuarum divisionum excurrat carina paululum levata, quæ tamen in nonnullis specimenibus

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minibus obscurius cernitur. Lævis etiam est margo scuti, seu ex partibus constans una ferie continuatis, non inæqualiter ferratis, sed figuram prope ellipticam toto ambitu efficientibus. Superficies inferior flavescit maculis aliquot fuscis et inæqualibus notata. Caput modicum. Oculi magni. Pedes iis similes quos habent reliquæ testudines terrestres et fluviatiles, unguibus muniuntur validis. Cauda longula et squamosa. Si super fundum nigriorem confluerint inter se maculæ, quod rarius evenit, perit magna ex parte pulchritudo testudinis meleagridis. In America præcipue innascitur,



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THE
SPECKLED TORTOISE.



GENERIC CHARACTER.

Body four-footed, tailed, covered with a shell.
Mouth consisting of naked toothless mandibles.

SPECIFIC CHARACTER, &c.

TORTOISE with subpalmated? feet, and ovate smooth shell speckled with innumerable yellow dots.

LA JAUNE.

Cepede Hist. Nat. des quadr. ovip. 1.
p. 135. t. 6.

So great is the similarity between several of the tortoise tribe, that it is by no means easy to distinguish with accuracy the particular species. Some however are so strongly characterized as to be at all times readily ascertained. Thus the *Testudo geometrica* or striped Tortoise is so strikingly distinguished by the beautiful and regular disposition of the yellow marks on its shield, as to be instantly recognised by any one in the least conversant with this genus. The species here represented is also, in general, so remarkable in its appearance as

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to

to be immediately known from any other kind. Its usual length is about five or six inches: its colour a deep chestnut-brown, most elegantly marked over the whole upper surface with innumerable oval specks of yellowish white. There are scarce less than 150 or 200 of these specks on each division of the shield. The whole is smooth, or undistinguished by any furrows or risings on the divisions, except that down the middle of the three chief or central pieces runs an elevated or projecting carina as it were, which is much less distinct in some specimens than in others. The edge or outline of the shell is smooth, or composed of pieces which do not project unequally, but form one continued, nearly elliptic figure. The lower surface is pale yellowish, with a few irregular patches of brown. The head is moderately large. The eyes large. The feet of the usual structure in other land and fresh-water tortoises, and furnished with strong claws. The tail longish and scaly. It sometimes happens that the beautiful appearance which generally distinguishes this species, is nearly lost, or at least greatly obliterated, by the dark ground-colour predominating too much, and the spots becoming confluent. This however is not often the case. It is a native of America.