

April 1. The sap of the sugar maple began to run; on the 4th small holes began to perforate the ice; on the 9th the first wild ducks of the season came, and on the 10th, butterflies, blue flies, and gulls were noticed; 20th, the general thaw commences at this period; ground frozen to the depth of three feet nine inches; 21st, *Anser Canadensis*, and *Anas boschas* and mergansers frequenting the neighbourhood; heard a nightingale (*tendus?*); 30th, river partially open.

May 2nd. River free of ice; bay of the lake full of drift ice; 6th, *Anser hyperboreus* passing in flocks; 8th, mosquitoes seen; 10th, the birch tree and maple budding.

June 15th. Swallows building in the outhouses, 17th, sturgeons spawning in the rapids of the river; 19th, *Catastomi* beginning to descend the river from the rapids; 21st, *Conogonus lucidus* comes to the entrance of the river in shoals.

July 3rd. The *Canagini* have left the mouth of the river; 15th, barley just coming into ear; potatoes in flower; the *Lepus Americanus* having its second litter of young; 21st, raspberries ripening.

August 8th. Red currants and blueberries (*vaccinium*) perfectly ripe; 10th, reindeer begin to rut; 19th, barley ripening; 19th, peas quite ripe, 31st, the swallows have disappeared.

September 2nd. Reindeer rutting season ends; on the 7th the leaves of the birch and aspen change colour; 10th, small trout begin to spawn, 13th, potatoes, cabbages, turnips, and cauliflowers nipped by the frost; 14th, a few ducks arriving from the north, 16th, the first stock ducks arrived from the north this autumn; 20th, small trout spawning abundantly on the shoals; 23rd, the orioles have departed for the south; 30th, *Conogonus lucidus* at this date begins to spawn in the rapids of the river.

October 8th. The large trout begin to spawn in the lake at the Shaquinah Islands, they cease on the 18th; thunder; 7th, leaves of the birch and aspen falling; 10th, the *Conogonus-lucidus* has ceased spawning in the rapids; 14th, thunder, *Anser hyperboreus* arriving from the north; 15th, passing in large flocks; 20th, hail, thunder, and lightning. plovers, divers, snipes, orioles, geese, and ducks in the neighbourhood; on the 31st snow birds begin to arrive from the north.

November 3rd. The small lakes frozen over, on the 9th the river *Kaministiquia* covered by a sheet of ice, which broke up again; 21st, the spawning season of the *conogonus albus* terminates.

December 1st. Ice driving about on the lake with the wind. On the 17th, the bay was frozen across to the Welcome Islands.

No. 2.

BRIEF NOTICES OF THE FUR-BEARING ANIMALS IN RUPERT'S LAND AND CANADA.*

Hudson's Bay Sable (*Mustela Canadensis*). The sable skins next in repute to the Russian are those imported by the Hudson's Bay Company, of which no less than 120,000 are annually brought into this country; as the natural colour of the skins is much lighter than the prevailing taste, it is the practice to dye many of them a darker colour, and the furs thus treated are scarcely inferior to the natural sable.

Fisher. There are about 11,000 of these skins annually brought to this country from North America; they are larger than the sables, and the fur is longer and fuller; the tail is long, round, and full, gradually tapering to a point, and quite black; a few years since it formed the common ornament to a national cap worn by the Jew merchants of Poland, and at that time was worth 6s. to 9s., but its present value does not exceed 6d. to 9d.

Mink (*Mustela mison*). There were 245,000 skins of this little animal brought to this country last year from the possessions of the Hudson's Bay Company and North America; the fur resembles the sable in colour, but is considerably shorter and more glossy; it is a very desirable and useful fur, and is exported in large quantities to the continent.

North American Skunk (*Mephitis Americanus*). The skins known under this name are imported by the Hudson's Bay Company; the animal from which they are taken is allied to the polecat of Europe, and from the fetor it emits when attacked, which has been known to affect persons with sickness at a hundred yards' distance, has received the soubriquet of "*enfant du diable*;" it has a soft black fur, with two white stripes running from the head to the tail, which is short and bushy; the skins, though imported into England, are usually re-exported to the continent of Europe.

Musquash or muskrat (*Fiber zebethicus*). The animal known under this name is found in great numbers in North America, frequenting swamps and rivers, and like the beaver, building its habitations of mud with great ingenuity. Dr. Richardson states that it has three litters of young in the course of the summer, producing from three to seven at a litter. The animal has a peculiar smell similar to that of musk; but it must not be mistaken for the animal from which the musk of commerce is procured, which is a native of Tibet. About one million skins are brought to this country annually; the fur resembles that of the beaver, and is used by hat manufacturers; the skins are also dyed by the furrier, and manufactured into many cheap and useful articles.

Beaver (*Castor Americanus*). Beaver skins are imported by the Hudson's Bay Company in less quantities than formerly. The use of the fur in our hat manufactories has greatly diminished since the introduction of silk hats, and a considerable depreciation has taken place in their value. This beautiful fur is sometimes used for articles of dress. In order to prepare the skins for this appropriation, the coarse hairs are removed and the surface is very evenly cut by an ingenious machine, somewhat similar to that used in dressing cloth. The fur thus prepared has a beautiful appearance, not unlike the costly South Sea otter, and has the advantage of lightness, with durability and cheapness.

Otter (*Lutra vulgaris*, *Lutra Canadensis*). The large supply of otter skins used by the Russians and Chinese is derived principally from North America. The quality of the fur is in most respects similar to the otter of the British Isles, of which there are about 600 skins collected annually. This animal has frequently been tamed, and from its extreme agility in the water, has been rendered serviceable in catching fish for the use of its owner. The American otter is much larger in size than the

* From the Report of the Juturs; Exhibition of all Nations, 1851.