

with an abundance. Authorities cited by *Linnæus* (*Sicilia Ricerata*, &c., 1742) show that the Wolf was always a scarce animal, and is now probably extinct. The Wild Boar

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Porcupine.

was formerly common, and much hunted: and the earliest historians mention Porcupines (*fig. 346.*) or Spined Pigs (*porci spinosi, armati di spine*), as being wild in the forests of Etna: that this animal should not have been originally a native of Europe appears, therefore, highly improbable. Fazello, one of the earliest Sicilian writers, asserts that Fallow Deer (*Dama*) were found wild in abundance on the lofty mountainous chain of the Madonia (Nebrodes), and on that of Dinamare (Neptuni). From the latter, owing to its vicinity to Messina, both deer and forests have long since disappeared. We do not believe, indeed, that this noble animal is any longer wild in this island; but large herds are

stated to exist in the woods of Mimiano, belonging to the Prince of Paterno and the Duke de Montalto, where they are preserved. The same authors mention the Stag as being particularly numerous, both on the sides of Etna and in the forests of the Nebrodes. Upon these latter mountains were also found numbers of Wild Goats, whose teeth were tinged with a golden hue, probably originating from the nature of some particular plant there abundant. Hares and Rabbits are now almost the only native quadrupeds to be met with: the latter are not common; and the former are stated to have been introduced in the island by Anassila, tyrant of Reggio. (*Mong., Sic. Ric.*, vol. i. p. 283.)

Among the birds of Sicily must be reckoned many species common to the opposite shores of Africa; these are principally of the wading tribe. The swampy lakes and inaccessible morasses of Leontini and Syracuse afford shelter to vast flocks of waterfowl, which arrive during the spring and autumnal migration. The *malaria*, a most virulent and fatal species of ague, engendered by these low lands, renders them almost uninhabitable during the

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Quail.

greater part of the year, and is a sure protection to the birds themselves. The immense flocks of quails (*fig. 347.*) which pass by the way of Sicily to the northern parts of Italy, during the month of April, is almost incredible: it is no uncommon thing for a good sportsman, with one dog, to bag from fifty to sixty brace the first day after their arrival. Bee-eaters, orioles, rollers, hoopoes are then common over every part of the island, and are pursued by numerous hawks and owls; but the whole disappear towards the beginning of May. The African Flamingo is not an uncommon bird in the solitary marshes of Syracuse; where the Pelican also is an occasional visitor. The beautiful Purple Heron, the Night Heron, the Little Bit-

tern, the Long-legged Plover, the Glossy Ibis, the Pranticole, and several other rare European species, are among the common migratory visitors, and give to the ornithology of Sicily an interest which it would not otherwise possess.

The insects of Sicily are more numerous than might be expected from the bare and unsheltered nature of its surface. The character of its entomology is decidedly more allied to that of northern Africa than of central Europe. All those genera which delight in a hot, sandy soil are particularly numerous: as *Scarabæus* (*Mac Leay*) *Trox*, *Pimelia*, *Scarites*, *Gryllus*, *Sphecx*, *Amphicoma*, *Bembex*, *Chrysis*, *Osmia*, &c. Sicily is very rich in hymenopterous insects; and of the genus *Anthrax*, or Sand Flies, we discovered near thirty species in the vicinity of Messina alone.

The Butterflies (*Papilionida*) are numerous, and comprise the most elegant species known in Europe. *Podalirius europæus* Sw., *Gonepteryx Cleopatra*, *Eurymus hyale* Sw. (*fig. 348.*), *P. Daphnice*, *A. Lathonia*, &c. are common. Africa imparts to Sicily one of her most superb and imposing butterflies in the rare *P. Jasius*, *Jasia europæa* Sw., which we have occasionally captured near Messina.



Eurymus Hyale.

Flights of devastating Locusts, unknown to the other parts of Europe, have occasionally afflicted this fruitful island. The earliest upon record is mentioned by Fazello, who says that (about the 15th of May, 1355) the heavens were darkened by vast clouds of locusts coming from Africa; that they spread over the island, and began to make all verdure disappear; but that a sudden change of wind taking place, as if by miracle, they departed in dense squadrons, and were driven into the Ionian Sea, where their bodies being cast upon the shore, caused such putrefaction, that a grievous plague ensued.

More recent flights of locusts appeared in 1637, and in the four years following 1656, also in 1687, 1688, and 1689. But the most destructive appears to have been that of 1708