

ACARUS AUTUMNALIS.



CHARACTER GENERICUS.

Pedes octo.

Oculi duo, ad latera capitis.

Tentacula duo, articulata, pediformia.

Lin. Syst. Nat. p. 1022.

CHARACTER SPECIFICUS.

ACARUS globoso-ovatus ruber, abdomine postice fetoso.

Omnibus fere nimis notum est molestissimum hoc animalculum, mensibus præcipue Augusti et Septembris. Acaro vulgari multo minus est, cutique affixum unguibus, præsertim tentaculis duobus brevibus supra pedes anteriores sitis, visu difficillimum est, nec sine laceratione avelli potest. Quamvis celeriter currat acarus autumnalis, tardior tamen est multis ejusdem generis. Cuicunque corporis parti se affixerit, exoritur ibi tumor magnitudine pisi, cum summa prurigine.

Color huic animalculo est vivide ruber, et ope microscopii, pars corporis posterior fetis rigidis albisque vestiri videtur. Rostrum, quod interdum visibile est, sæpius intra thecam reconditum, tubulatum est. A summo capite prodeunt parvula duo spicula, utrinque extrorsum spectantia. Discurrunt hæc insecta super

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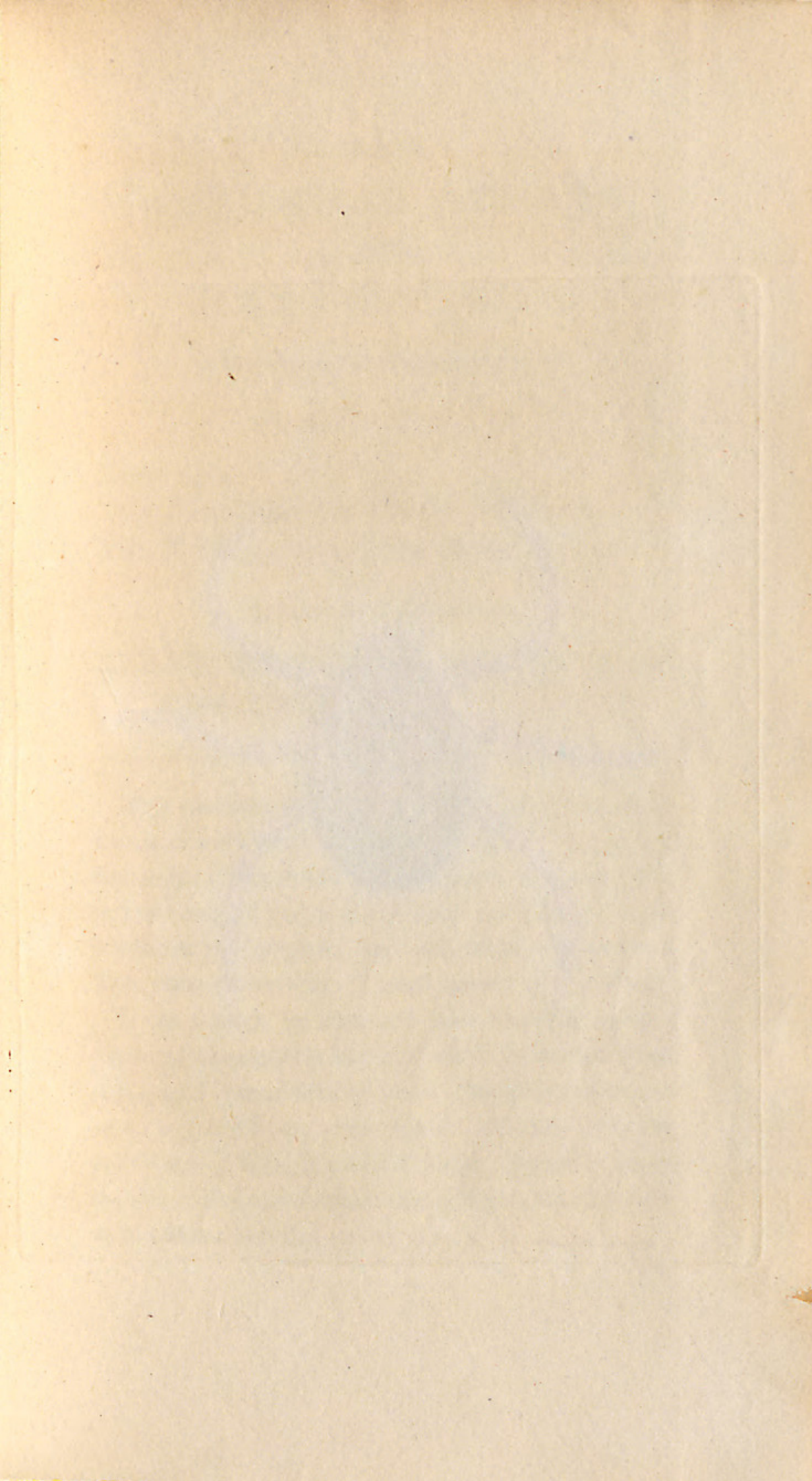
vegetabilia,

vegetabilia, præcipueque sentiuntur ab illis qui inter gramina et segetes ambulaverint.

Narrat Dominus WHITE in historia sua de Selborne in agro Hamptonienfi, cretaceas ibi regiones illis adeo infestari, ut cuniculariorum retia rubro colore tingantur, ipsique homines morfu immodico irritati, non raro febricitent.

De hac acari specie silent LINNÆUS et FABRICIUS: cursum et obiter describitur in BAKERI libro secundo de microscopiis qui et figuram addidit; quæ cum ab exsiccatō insecto delineata sit, veram similitudinem vix satis exprimit.

Qui ipsissimum animalculum commodissime spectare velit, duobus vitri frustulis leviter interpositum in microscopio examinet. Hoc modo membra omnia facillime explicabuntur, sine laceratione aut injuria.





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THE
AUTUMNAL ACARUS,
OR
HARVEST-BUG.



GENERIC CHARACTER.

Eight *Legs*.

Two *Eyes*, situated on the sides of the head.

Two *Tentacula*, jointed, and shaped like feet.

SPECIFIC CHARACTER.

RED GLOBOSE-OVATE ACARUS, with the
abdomen bristly behind.

This troublesome insect will make itself sufficiently known to most people during the months of August and September: it is much smaller than a common mite, and can but just be perceived upon the skin, to which it adheres by its claws, and particularly by the two short arms or tentacula situated above the upper legs.

It can scarcely be separated from the skin without violence, when once it has fixed itself: its motion when disengaged is considerably quick, though by no means equal to that of some other species of acari. On the part where it fixes, it causes a tumor, generally about the size of a pea; sometimes much larger, accompanied with a severe itching.

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The colour of this diminutive insect is a bright red, and when microscopically examined, the lower part of the body appears to be coated with stiff white bristles. It seems to be provided with a tubular snout, which is generally concealed or sheathed, but which may sometimes be distinctly seen. On the top of the head are two little processes or sharp implements which turn outwards each way. These insects abound on vegetables, and are generally contracted by walking in gardens, amongst long grass, or corn fields.

According to MR. WHITE in his History of Selborne, they abound to an uncommon degree in the chalky districts of that part of Hampshire. He relates that he has been assured that the warreners in the chalky downs, are so much infested by them, and that they swarm to so infinite a degree as to discolour their nets, and give them a reddish cast, whilst the men are so bitten as to be thrown into fevers. Vid. Hist. Selb. p. 89.

It is a species which seem to have escaped the notice of systematic Naturalists; and is not to be found either in LINNÆUS or FABRICIUS. A slight general description of it is given in BAKER'S Employment for the Microscope, accompanied by a figure; but as the figure was evidently taken from a dried specimen, it gives but a very imperfect idea of the animal.

The only way of viewing it to advantage is to place it on a piece of glass and to lay another piece of glass immediately upon it, by which means it will be just so much compressed as to expand all its limbs without being injured; in this situation it may be viewed, especially by a compound microscope, to the greatest possible advantage.



Shaw, George. 1790. "The Autumnal Acarus or Harvest-Bug, Acarus autumnalis [Pl. 42]." *The Naturalist's Miscellany* 2(XIV), <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.310694>.

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