

ACARUS VEGETANS.



CHARACTER GENERICUS.

Pedes octo.

Oculi duo ad latera capitis.

Tentacula duo, articulata, pediformia.

Lin. Syst. Nat. p. 1022.

CHARACTER SPECIFICUS.

ACARUS crustaceus rufus marginatus convexus,
subtus planus.

- *Lin. Syst. Nat. tom. 3. p. 226.*

Quod physicis haud omnino ingratum esset me facturum arbitratus sum si insectum illud singulare a LINNÆO *Acarus Vegetans* nuncupatum, ob exiguitatem antehac pene neglectum accurate describi et depingi curarem. Aliorum insectorum corporibus plerumque se affigit hujusmodi acarus, illorum præcipue quæ *Coleoptera* LINNÆI constituunt, quæque communiter Scarabæi dicuntur.

Sæpissime illum comperi corpori aut elytris adherentem *Histeri Unicoloris* LINNÆI, parvi nempe insecti coleoptrati, in hortis, ineunte vere, minime rari. Frequenter etiam eum vidi scarabæo stercoreario LINNÆI adjunctum, et altero Scarabæo minori, fuscæ nempe varietati *finetarii* ejusdem auctoris, mensibus Aprilis et Maji, in fimo bovino ut plurimum obvii.

Mirandus

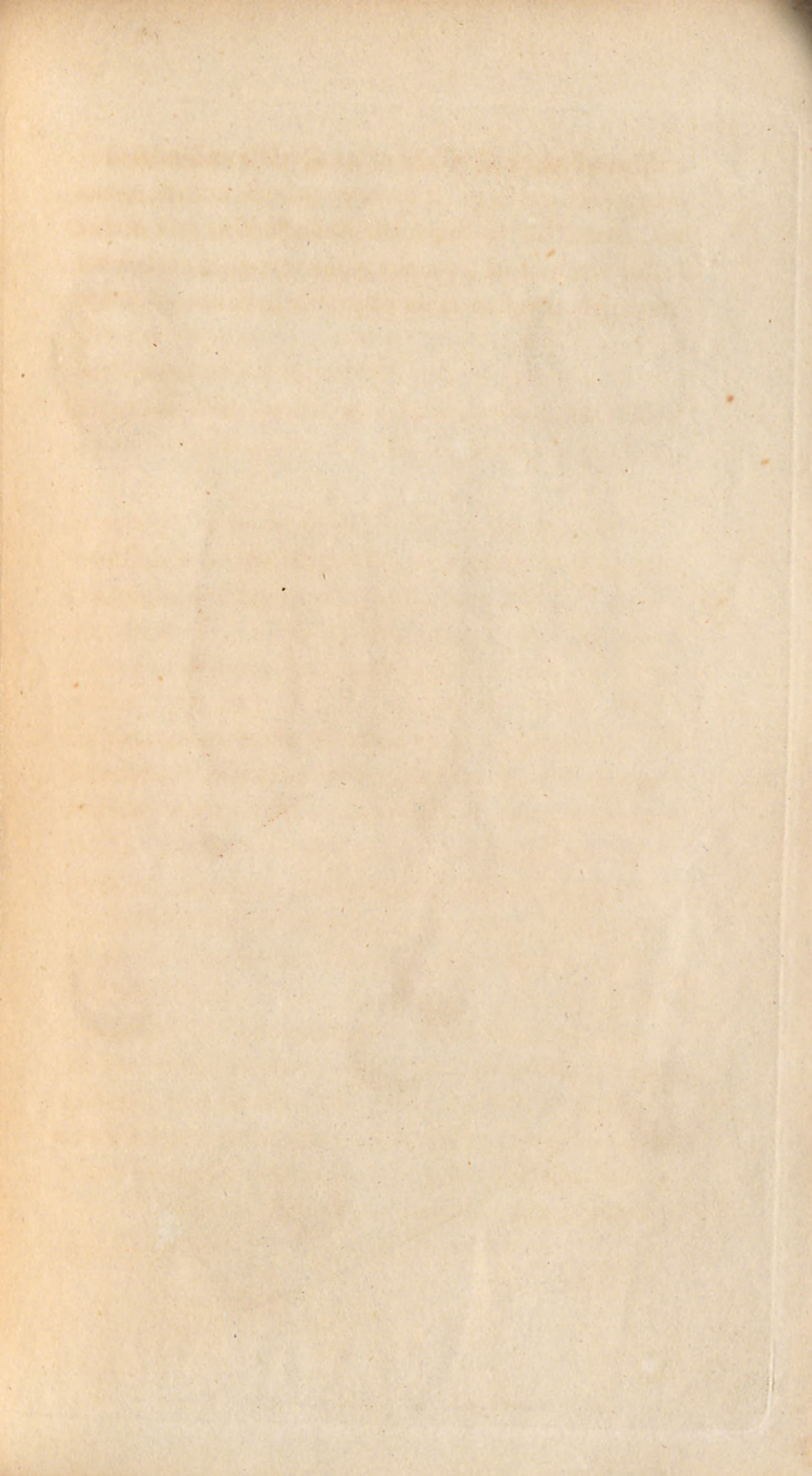
Mirandus omnino est modus quo adhærent hi acari corporibus aut elytris aliorum animalculorum, pedicello nempe, seu stipite flexili; quo fit, nisi succus nutritius ab hoc pedicello absorbeatur, (quod ut fiat tubulatum putemus,) necesse esse stipitem aliquando semicirculatim posse eos curvare, ut insectum cui affiguntur sugendo se alant. Interdum illis adeo coope-riuntur Coleoptera, ut elytra seu alarum tegumenta non possint conjungi, ipsique artus impediti ægre moveantur.

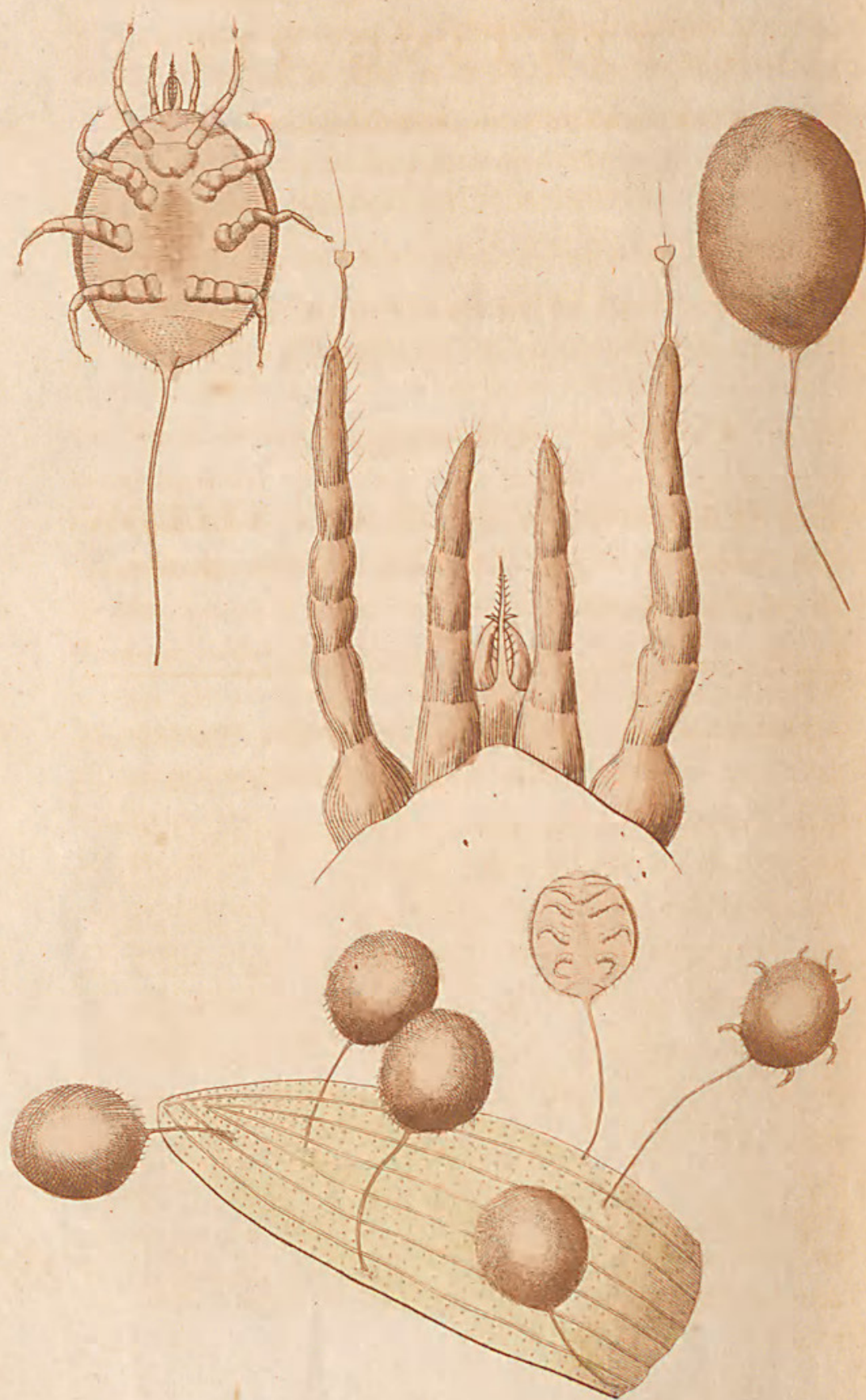
Acari Vegetantis superficies superior est glabra et convexa; inferior fere complanata. Clarius tamen patebit similitudo insectum ipsum depictum inspicienti, quam ex descriptione colligi possit. . Figuræ duæ superiores acarum anticum et posticum repræsentant. Figura autem magna ostendit plures, sex nempe, elytro adhærentes illius scarabæi quem varietatem esse *simetarii* ante diximus. Alia maxillas, cæterasque capitis partes mire conformatas, multo tamen auctius, monstrat.

Magnum horum me memini numerum Onisco a LINNÆO *Armadillo* nominato, seu *millepedæ officinarum*, ut dicitur, annexum semel conspexisse. Ut verbo dicam, acarum vegetantem nihil aliud esse suspicor præter larvam acari coleoptratorum LINNÆI, qui super scarabæos fere omni tempore possit inveniri, physicisque optime innotescit. Notandum præterea acarum vegetantem non in genere acari apud LINNÆUM reperiri, sed in appendice animalium ad finem voluminis tertii Systematis Naturæ.

Celeberrimus

Celeberrimus DE GEER in Actis Stockholmiensibus
anni millesimi septingentesimi sexagesimi octavi par-
vulum hoc animalculum descripsit et delineavit, vix
tamen satis eleganter aut accurate. In Historia Infec-
torum iterum illud descripsit idem auctor et depinxit.





THE VEGETATING MITE.



GENERIC CHARACTER.

Eight *Legs*.

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

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

SPECIFIC CHARACTER.

CRUSTACEOUS REDDISH or YELLOW-
ISH-BROWN ACARUS, convex above,
flat beneath.

That curious little insect, the acarus vegetans of LINNÆUS, or the vegetating mite, being, on account of its minuteness, less attended to than many others of its genus, it cannot be unacceptable to the admirers of Natural History to see it accurately figured and described. It is generally to be found on the bodies of other insects; and particularly on those belonging to the beetle tribe, or such as in the LINNÆAN language, belong to the class Coleoptera.

The insect on which I have most commonly observed it, is the Hister Unicolor LIN: which is a smallish coleopterous insect, frequently seen in gardens in the early part of the spring, and which at that season seldom fails to have some of the vegetating mites either
on

on its body or wing cases. I have also observed it in great plenty on the *scarabæus stercorarius* LIN: or common black beetle, as well as on a small brown variety of the *scarabæus fimetarius* LIN: which is almost always to be found in cow-dung in the months of April and May.

The manner in which these minute insects adhere is very curious; for each is affixed by a flexible stalk or pedicle to the wing-shells and other parts of the insect they infest; so that unless their nutriment is absorbed by the stalk which supports them, (and which, in this case, must be tubular,) they must have the power of bending the stalk in a semicircular direction at particular times, so as to enable them to adhere occasionally to the insect for the purpose of feeding. They are sometimes so numerous as to prevent the beetles on which they grow, from closing their wing-sheaths; and adhere to their limbs in such a manner as greatly to impede their motions.

The upper surface is smooth and convex; the lower surface flat; but the figures annexed will convey a clearer idea of the several particulars of their appearance than any description. The two upper figures represent the fore and back view of the insect. The large groupe represents six of them adhering to the elytron or wing-sheath of the brown variety above-mentioned of the *scarabæus fimetarius*. The other figure shews the singular appearance of the jaws and other parts at the head of the insect, magnified in a much greater degree.

I once observed these insects in great plenty on the oniscus armadillo, or common officinal Millepede. Upon the whole, I am strongly inclined to believe the vegetating mite to be nothing more than the larva or young of the acarus coleoptratorum, or common beetle-acarus, which infests those insects at most seasons of the year, and which is well known to every observer of insects. I should observe that the acarus vegetans does not occur under the genus acarus in the Systema Naturæ of LINNÆUS, but is mentioned in the appendix animalium at the end of the third volume of that work.

DE GEER in the Acta Stockholmiensia for the year 1768 has described and figured this insect; but his figures cannot be commended either for their elegance or accuracy. He has also figured and described it in his History of Insects.



Shaw, George. 1791. "The Vegetating Mite, *Acarus vegetans* [Pl. 64]." *The Naturalist's Miscellany* 2(XXI), <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.310715>.

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