

habit. *Suaeda fruticosa* also grows in quantity on the Chesil Bank in Dorset, and here it is bitten by hares, which travel miles for the purpose. The hare with its greater strength is able to gnaw through quite thick branches, and does not restrict itself to small twigs like the Blakeney rabbits.

The Sea Purslane (*Obione*) suffers in just the same way, and in some places is mowed down by the rabbits to form a beautiful lawn. It is interesting to note that in colour the rabbit-cropped *Suædas* are most variable, ranging through green to dull-red and crimson. *Suædas*, when untouched by rabbits, as on the Marams, show a slight tendency in autumn to assume these various shades, but it is only where they are habitually nibbled that a vivid colour mosaic is a constant feature. The inner cause of the phenomenon has not been investigated.

Crossing the marsh some distance to the north of an old steam lighter fitted up as a house-boat (*Yankee*), and moored alongside the Long Hills bank, the composition and texture of the vegetation can be examined. The marginal zone of the marsh contrasts with the main area in the presence of *Obione*, *Salicornia radicans* (a perennial species), and *Suæda maritima*, and in the absence of *Pelvetia*. *Salicornia annua*, which with *Pelvetia* forms the substance of the marsh, is here only scattered and dwarfed. On the main area the *Salicornia* owes not a little to the *Pelvetia*, which nurses it in the seedling stage, and as a mulch prevents drying of the surface during the neaps. By its disintegration much humus is added to the soil and high fertility maintained.

At many places rabbit runs crossing the *Salicornia* are evident (Plate XXIV, lower figure). If followed, they will generally be found to lead across the minor creeks at points where they are narrow, and the footprints left by the rabbits in jumping and alighting are discoverable in the soft mud of the bank. These runs lead to the Sea Asters (now becoming everywhere abundant), upon which the rabbits feed eagerly, and it is rare to find on this marsh an aster quite free from the attentions of these animals (Plate XXIV, upper photo), except in the fenced enclosure hereabouts, which serves to emphasize the effect of rabbit browsing.