upon its junction with the carapace. On the free skin, the epidermis is also formed into a kind of scales; but upon the wings and paddles the scales become stiff and hard, and they are larger along their inner and outer edges, as they are also where the skin fits close to the bones of the head. The scales on the inner edge of the paddles recall the large feathers of the wings of birds by their arrangement and their elongated form. The central scale upon the skull is the largest. The horny sheath of the bill is very strong.

As in Sphargididæ, the jugal, parietal, postfrontal, temporal, and mastoid bones of the Chelonioidæ unite to make a bony covering over the whole head back of the eyes, protecting the temporal muscles and the brain-box, and projecting even back over the first neck vertebræ; but here the parietal bones are not so exclusively devoted to this office as in the Sphargididæ, for they reach down to the floor of the skull, and add to the length of the brain-box in front. The temporal bones do not, as in the Sphargididæ, add to the width of the head, but reach directly forward and so bring the bony arch further down over the attachment of the temporal muscles to the lower jaw. The prefrontals meet before the frontals, and so carry the top of the skull further over the nasal region. The alveolar margin of the upper jaw has not the deep depressions or the sharp, tooth-like projections observed in Shargididæ. The horizontal alveolar surface is very broad all round the upper jaw, and the palatines project inward from the suture with the maxillaries, uniting, together with the end of the vomer and the alveolar surface, to make a very broad roof below the palate proper. The passages from the nasal cavity necessarily descend very obliquely over this roof, to open into the mouth behind it. The lower jaw is very thick, especially at the symphysis, and its alveolar surface is broad. The neck moves somewhat up and down upon the first dorsal vertebra, and the head may be drawn back so as to reach the carapace, but it cannot be withdrawn under it.

The size of the members of this family is very great, much greater than the average size of the Amydæ, though they do not grow so large as the Sphargididæ. The food of most of them is known to consist of aquatic plants, seaweeds, and the like. Like all the herbivorous animals, the Chelonioidæ are shy and inoffensive; they do not bite, even when hard pressed, but strike with their powerful flappers, and try to make their escape by increased speed. The North American Chelonioidæ lay their eggs towards the end of May or in the beginning of June. They lay a large number of them, about one hundred at a time, and even more, which they deposit on shore, in the dry sand. These eggs are not very large in comparison to the size of the animal, and not perfectly spherical, their orbicular outline being more or less irregular. I have no reason to trust the reports that they lay eggs more than once in a year.