too, in descending to the plastron, reaches far forward; it is short across the pubis and ischium, and the processes of the pubis extend sidewise rather than forward; the iliac bones arch outward, but are about the same width apart at the shoulder joints as at the sacrum. The shoulder apparatus and pelvis approaching each other so nearly at the plastron, and filling the intervening space with their muscles, press the organs of digestion and respiration, and the other viscera, up into the carapace. The bones of the shoulder apparatus and of the pelvis, and those of the legs and feet, are all slender. The feet are short and round. The toes are freely movable, and joined by a web, and the whole foot very flexible within itself, and at the joint with the forearm and leg.

The head is long from the orbits of the eye backward, and short from thence forward; it is pointed in front. The upper maxillaries and intermaxillaries retreat backward and inward, so as to make the mouth small, and carry it far inward, under the head. The outer surface of the lower jaw also retreats in the same manner, so that the sides of the front part of the head slant inward from the top to the bottom. This makes the lower jaw short, and enables the temporal muscles to act upon it to advantage. These muscles have a long attachment to it, and are themselves very large, so that the bite of the animal is strong. The alveolar surfaces are broad, and the edges sharp; the lower jaw always terminates in a sharp point. The trough by the side of the brain-box, over which the temporal muscles pass, is very long; but the mastoids project but little backward, beyond it. The arch from the top of the skull, back of the eye, is very short; thus differing essentially from the broad roof of the Chelydroidæ. The temporal arch, from the ear opening forward, over the temporal muscle, is wide. The maxillaries reach back under the jugals to the temporals. The bottom of the skull-box and the palate rise continually forward to the nasal region, and approach so nearly to the top of the skull as to leave only just room enough for the passage of the olfactory nerve. The neck is long, but has not nearly as large a muscular apparatus as in the Chelydroidæ; it is also much more slender.

The shield is everywhere covered on the outside with large horny epidermal scales, which, in different genera, present considerable differences in their arrangements, especially upon the plastron. The free skin is loose, and folded around the body and limbs; its epidermis is thickened into scales in several isolated places on the legs, and under the feet, and there only these scales are continuous and imbricated. The average size of the representatives of this family is smaller than in any other family of Testudinata. The largest, which is about nine inches long, is not nearly as large as the smallest of the Chelydroidæ, or as the largest of either of the other families; and the smallest Ozotheca, which is about four inches long, is not larger than the smallest of the Emydoidæ.