

The only correct description I know of *Aspidonectes spinifer* is that of LeSueur.<sup>1</sup> All later writers have confounded it more or less with *Platypeltis ferox*, until the two were finally considered as identical. Its chief specific characteristics are not the spines along its anterior margin, whence the name is derived,—for such spines exist more or less in all species of the genus *Aspidonectes*,—but the blunt keel, which extends along the median line and slopes uniformly upon the sides, a character by which it is easily distinguished from *Aspidonectes nuchalis*, a species thus far overlooked, in which there is a marked depression on either side of a similar keel along the median line. When young, *Aspidonectes spinifer* (Pl. 6, fig. 1 and 2) is dotted all over the back with small ocellated spots, which increase with age, and then fade into irregular blotches upon a darker or lighter yellowish brown ground. In early age, the margin has a narrow, light-colored seam, separated from the darker disc by a black line, which fades and disappears with age. The front part of the neck is mottled with yellow and black, and so, also, is the lower surface of the feet. Besides the difference in the length of the tail, the male differs from the female by a slightly oval form. The spines along the front margin, and the tubercles which rise behind them and upon the hind part of the carapace, are less prominent in the males than in the females, exactly the reverse from *Platypeltis ferox*. The largest specimen I have seen, measured fourteen inches from end to end of the carapace. The eggs, (Pl. 7, fig. 23,) for which I am indebted to Dr. Rauch and Mr. Franklin Hill, are a little larger than those of *Platypeltis ferox*. Major LeConte questions the propriety of the name *ferox* for the southern *Trionyx*, as he says they are not more inclined to bite than most other species of *Testudinata*; but LeSueur reports that he was severely bitten by *Tr. spinifer*, and I have myself experienced the power of its jaws. This apparent contradiction, as long as *ferox* and *spinifer* were considered as the same species, may be owing to the generic differences of these Turtles. *Aspidonectes spinifer* is common from Lake Champlain and the western parts of the States of New York and Pennsylvania, through Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Iowa, to the head waters of the Mississippi and Missouri, even to the very foot of the Rocky Mountains (Lewis and Clark). It inhabits most of the tributaries of the Mississippi within the State of Wisconsin (Dr. P. R. Hoy). I have received specimens from Lake Champlain, through the kindness of the late Rev. Zadd. Thompson; and from the

<sup>1</sup> In the *Mémoires du Muséum d'Histoire naturelle*, Vol. 15, p. 258, Pl. 6, under the name of *Trionyx spiniferus*, which ought, however, to be written *spinifer*. LeSueur describes as a variety of this species,

under the name of *Trionyx ocellatus*, what was, no doubt, a young female. Wagler considers this species as synonymous with *Platypeltis ferox*. DeKay's *Trionyx ocellatus* is *Amyda mutica*.