

## SECTION VIII.

## THE FAMILY OF EMYDOIDÆ.

Since the genus *Testudo* of Linnæus began to be subdivided into minor groups, and before the family of Emydoidæ was circumscribed within its present limits, the fresh-water Turtles have been combined, by different authors, in various ways with one another and with the land Turtles.<sup>1</sup> J. E. Gray tells us, that Th. Bell was the first to consider them as a separate family,<sup>2</sup> distinct from the Trionychidæ, which, five years later, are still united with them by Wagler.<sup>3</sup> At that time, however, Gray associated the Chelyoidæ with the Emydoidæ; and though he afterwards separated these two families, the Emydoidæ still include the Chelydroidæ and the Cinosternoidæ in his latest publications.<sup>4</sup> Fitzinger,<sup>5</sup> in 1826, and Wiegmann,<sup>6</sup> in 1832, adopted also the family of Emydoidæ as distinct from the Trionychidæ or Chilotæ, while, in 1836, Canino<sup>7</sup> considers it as a sub-family of the Testudinidæ, as he calls the Amydæ, exclusive of the Trionychidæ. In 1835, Duméril and Bibron<sup>8</sup> unite the Emydoidæ and Chelyoidæ as one family, under the name of Elodites; distinguishing, however, the Emydoidæ as Elodites Cryptodères, to which they still refer Chelydra and Cinosternum, from the Chelyoidæ, which they call Elodites Pleurodères.

This is by far the most numerous family in the order, as it includes over sixty well known species; it presents also the broadest range of differences in habits, size, and structure.

The body rests upon a very broad and long flattened surface. It is high, and arched upward both lengthwise and crosswise, highest and broadest about the middle. The median longitudinal arch is not regular, but descends more steeply as it approaches the ends; the sides, too, curve more sharply around the ends than about the middle; the outlines, however, have no well defined angles so combining as to divide the body into distinct regions, but run gradually into one another, and the whole carapace is like an overturned elongated bowl. The plas-

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Chapt. 1, Sect. 2, p. 241.

<sup>2</sup> See J. E. Gray's genera of Reptiles in Ann. of Philos. 1825, vol. 10, p. 210, where that family name is spelled Emydide. Bell also writes it Emydide in the Zool. Journ. 1825, vol. 2, p. 302.

<sup>3</sup> Natürl. System der Amphibien, 1830.

<sup>4</sup> Cat. Brit. Mus. 1844.

<sup>5</sup> Neue Classif. der Reptilien, 1826; under the name of Emydoiden.

<sup>6</sup> Handb. d. Zool. 1832.

<sup>7</sup> Chelon. Tab. Anal. 1836.

<sup>8</sup> Erpét. génér. vol. 2d, 1835.