

NORTH AMERICAN HERPETOLOGY.

ORDER I. CHELONIA.—CONTINUED.

FAMILY III. POTAMITES.* *Dumeril et Bibron.*

CHARACTERS.

1. The bony carapace is greatly depressed, covered with skin instead of horny plates, which is more extensive than the ribs, and thickest and movable at their external extremities.
2. The sternum is short, and truncated behind, but longer than the carapace before, and is nowhere joined to it by symphysis.
3. The head is small, elongated, narrow, and covered above, as well as at the sides, with skin.
4. The nostrils are tubular, closely approximated, and open in front, at the extremity of a short, fleshy, movable appendix.

* Πετάνις, Πεταμύς: fluvialis, amnicus.

5. The eyes are prominent, near each other, and are directed forwards and a little upwards.
6. The jaws are strong, with their cutting margins nearly naked, being covered externally only by a thick revolute fold of skin resembling lips.
7. The neck is very long and retractile.
8. The extremities are very short, thick, and depressed; there are five fingers and as many toes, but only three nails to each extremity, and these are nearly straight and slightly grooved below.



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