

Flower Structures

Single flower

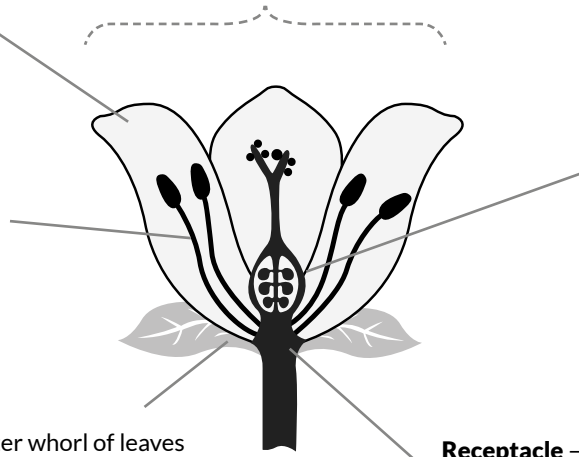
This is the most common type of flower. Species within the catchfly, buttercup and poppy families have this type of simple flowers.

Petal – the usually coloured whorl of floral leaves that surround the carpel and/or stamen

Corolla – collective term for the petals of the flower

Carpel – a collective term for the female organs of a flower; the **ovary**, **style** and **stigma**. Carpels can be free from one another (i.e. buttercups) or joined together (i.e. poppy). An ovary contains the cells (**ovules**) that develop into seeds and the outer ovary casing may develop into a fruit (**achene**). The style is the stalk-like structure expanding out from the ovary and has the stigma (which is usually sticky) at the top to receive the pollen grains. A style may have one or several stigmas

Stamen – a collective terms for the male organs of the flower; **filament**, **anther** and **pollen**. A flower may have one or more stamens. Pollen is the male cells produced within the anthers. Upon meeting a stigma the pollen grain germinates to produce a long microscopic pollen-tube which carries the male nuclei to the ovules and creates the seed



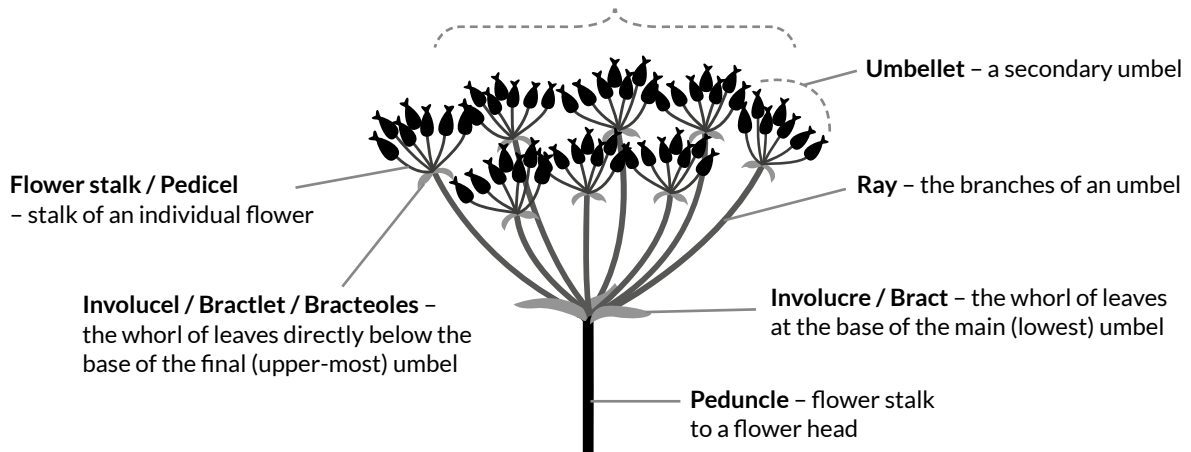
Sepal / Tepal – the outer whorl of leaves at the base of the flower. These are usually green and surround the petals (corolla). Sometimes they are modified and coloured replacing the petals

Receptacle – the tip of the flower stalk to which all of the other flower parts are attached. It can be conical (i.e. mayweeds and buttercups), dome-shaped, cup-shaped or hollowed out

Umbel flower

The carrot family have flattened flower heads called umbels.

Umbel – a flat-topped flower head (inflorescence) with several branches arising from the same point on the stem.



Compound flower

Compound flowers have many florets as part of a single flower head. Daisies, teasels and thistles have these types of flowers. All the florets may all look similar, (i.e. dandelions), or may look different (i.e. mayweeds). The differences lie between the ray-florets and disc-florets.

Beak - a terminal projection sometimes formed of a style that is persistent in the fruit. This is the stalk between the fruit (achene) and pappus in the daisy family

Pappus - a crown of hairs or bristles that can be branched like feathers. In the daisy family these can act as parachutes aiding wind-dispersal.

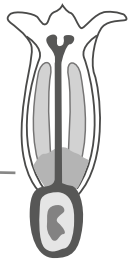
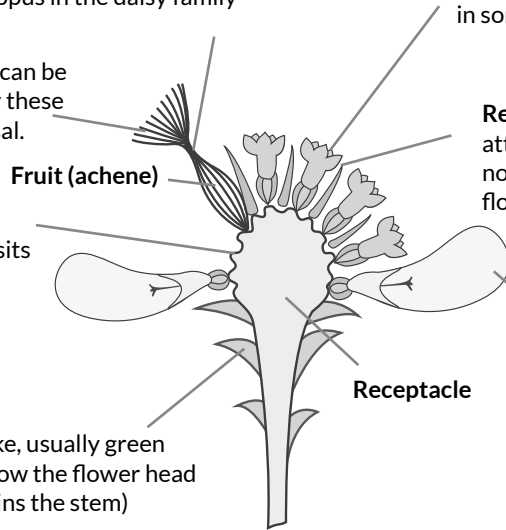
Achene pit - the place within which each floret sits

Involucre-bract - a leaf-like, usually green structure immediately below the flower head (where the flower-stalk joins the stem)

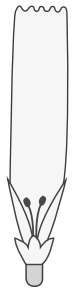
Disc-floret - the inner most tubular flowers which are present in some families (i.e. daisies)

Receptacular scale - a membranous scale attached to the base of the floret. This is not present in all species with compound flowers and is associated with disc-florets

Ray-floret / Ligulate-florets - strap-shaped spreading florets. In the daisy family these are the outer-most florets around the edge of the flower head, while dandelion flower heads are comprised of just ray-florets



DISC FLORET

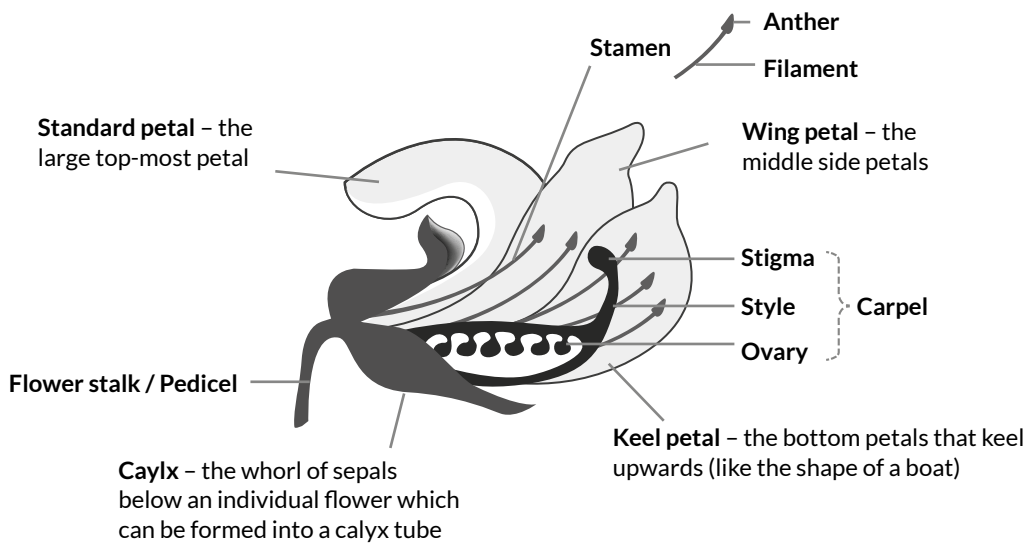


RAY FLORET

FLOWER HEAD

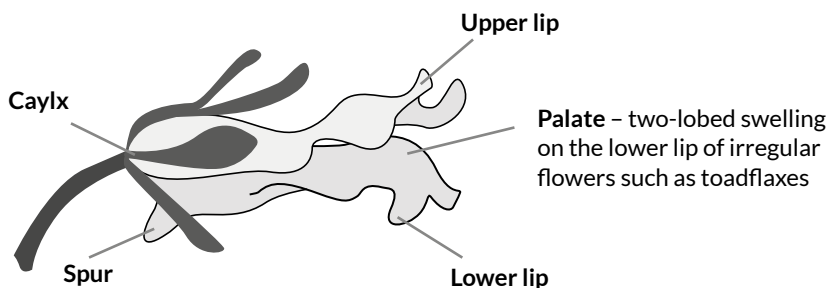
Pea flower

A bilaterally symmetrical flower.



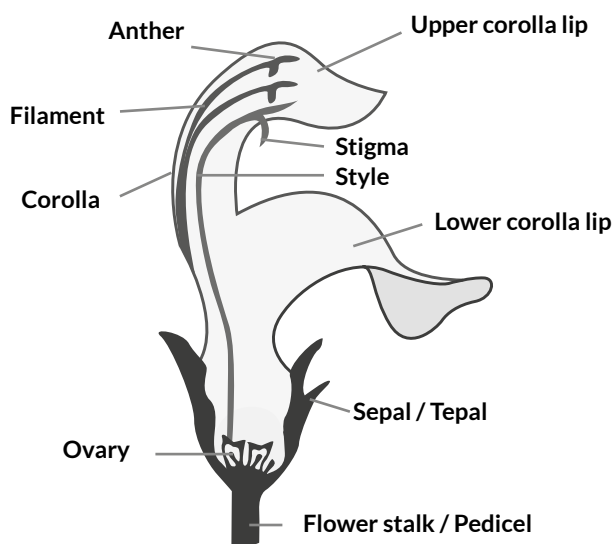
Snapdragon flower

A bilaterally symmetrical flower with a corolla tube.

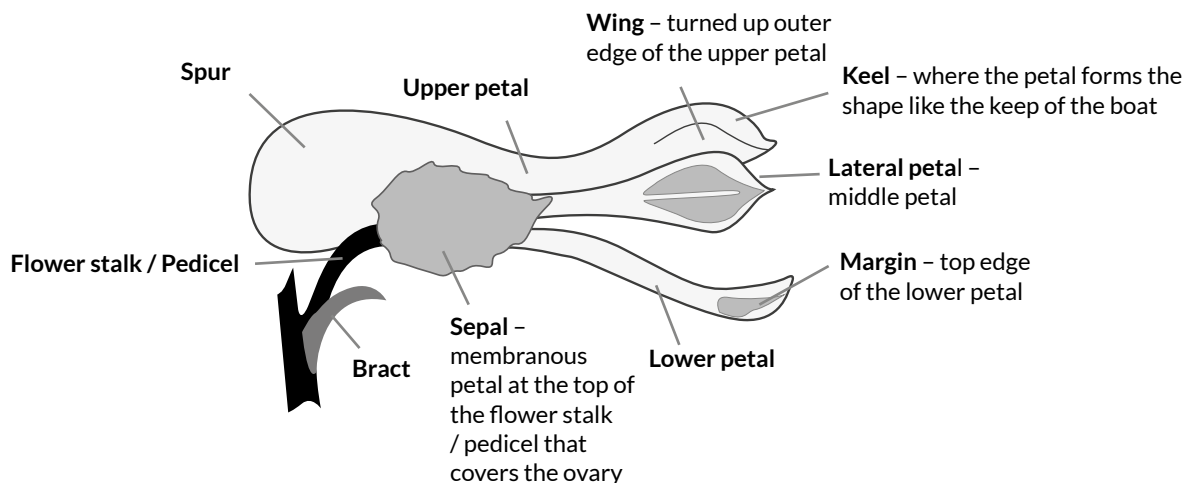


Dead-nettle flower

A bilaterally symmetrical flower with a hood.



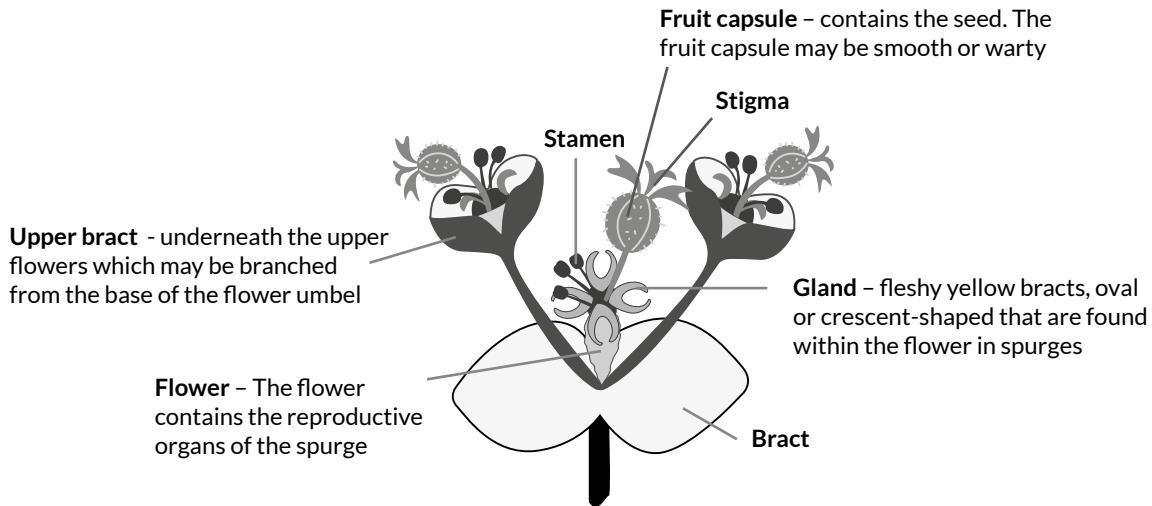
Fumitory flower



Illustrations by evansgraphic.co.uk ©Plantlife

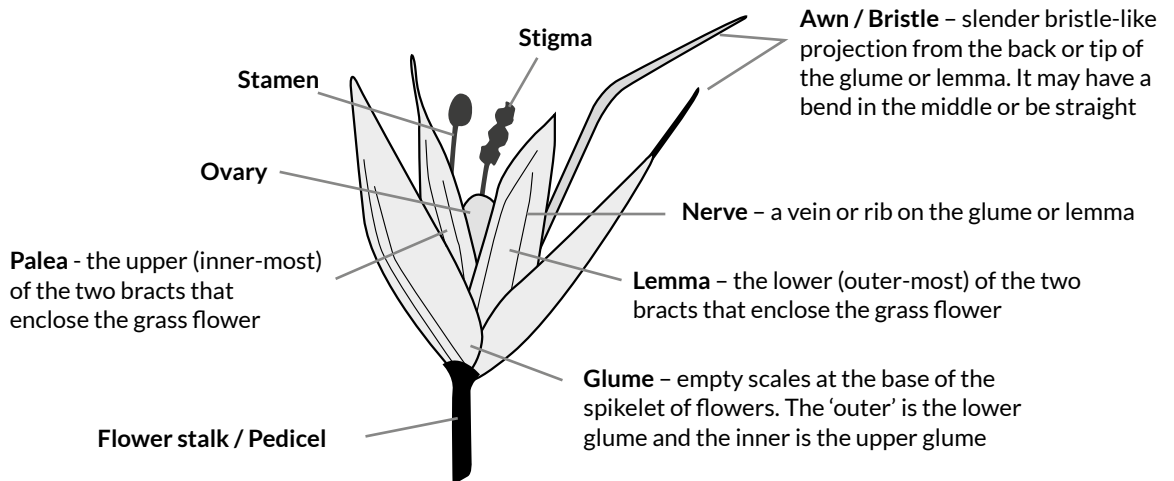
Spurge flower

The spurge family has a very different flower shape without any obvious petals. The bracts below the flowers are very large, often wider than the leaves, and the inflorescent is a cup with 4-5 rounded or crescent-shaped glands.



Grass flowers

Grass flowers are structured differently to broadleaved plants with the flowers referred to as a spikelet.



Illustrations by evansgraphic.co.uk ©Plantlife