

## Patterns of Plant Families

For more information please see Thomas Elpel's book *Botany in a Day* or website [Wildflowers-and-Weeds.com](http://Wildflowers-and-Weeds.com).

Family	Petals	Sepals	Stamens	Pistils	Other
<b>Mustard</b> (all species edible)	4	4	6 (4 tall, 2 short)		Seed pods form raceme <sup>1</sup>
<b>Mint</b> (all spp. edible, volatile oils antibacterial & diaphoretic)	Irregular flowers, 5 united petals	5 united sepals	4 (2 tall, 2 short)		Square stem, opposite leaves, usually aromatic
<b>Parsley</b> (Some species toxic!)	5		5 stamens		Flowers form in compound umbels, stems hollow
<b>Lily</b> (Some species toxic!)	3	3 (identical to petals)	6	3-parted stigma	Linear leaves, parallel veins <sup>2</sup>
<b>Onion Subfamily</b> (mostly edible)	6 identical petals + sepals. Flowers form in umbels, emerge from bract wrapped around flowerhead.		6		Linear leaves, parallel veins
<b>Pea</b> (some species edible)	Irregular flowers forming banner, wings, & keel <sup>3</sup>				Leaves often divided pinnately into leaflets <sup>3</sup> ; pea-like pods
<b>Aster</b> (some species edible)	Composite flowers, w/ either disk flowers, ray flowers, or both. Disk flowers have 5 petals. <sup>4</sup>				Bracts resemble sepals, often in multiple layers
<b>Dandelion Subfamily</b> (most species edible)	Straight-edged petals actually ray flowers. No disk flowers. <sup>5</sup>		May be numerous		Sticky, milky white juice in stems
<b>Oxalis</b> (all species safe)	5	5	10		3-parted leaves, heart-shaped leaflets <sup>6</sup> ; green seed pods have 5 ridges, sour lemony flavor
<b>Rose Subfamily</b> (blackberries, etc, & edible leaves)	5	5	Numerous	Numerous	Serrated ovalish leaves or leaflets <sup>7</sup> ; leaves often w/ stipules

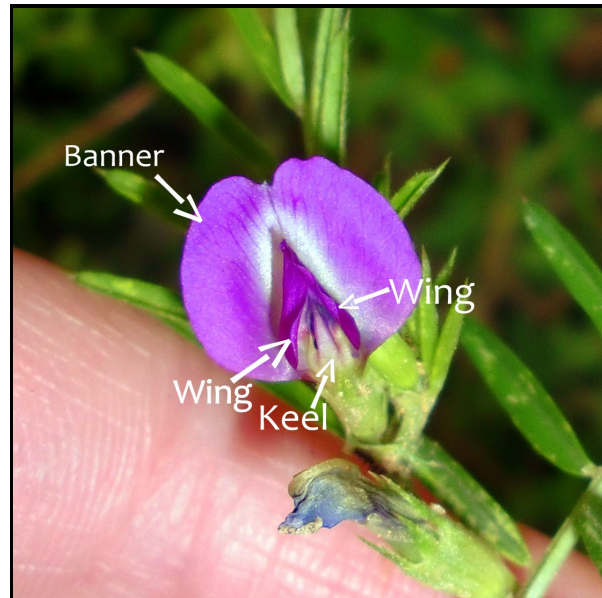


1. A mustard plant with seed pods forming a raceme. The raceme resembles a spiral staircase wrapped around the plant's stem.



2. A plant in the lily family, showing 3 petals and 3 sepals (identical), and long, linear leaves with parallel veins.

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3. Yellow rabbit bells (left), a plant in the pea family, show pea-like pods and irregular flowers. Also, this purple vetch flower (above) shows the banner, wings, and keel. The pinnate leaf (right) is also common in the pea family.





4. A flower from the aster family, showing both ray and disk flowers.



5. A flower of the dandelion subfamily. It has straight-edged ray flowers, and stamens and pistils in the center, but no disk flowers.



6. Heart-shaped wood sorrel leaflets, of the oxalis family.



7. Young blackberry leaves, from the rose subfamily.