

**Flowering parts in 3s** (or multiples)  
**Leaves with parallel veins**

Lily, Orchid, & Iris

**Flowering parts in 4s**  
Leaves with veins in branching pattern

Evening Primrose  
Mustard

**Flowering parts in 5s** (leaves with branching veins)

Flowers with **bilateral symmetry**

Petals fused

Petals free

Mint  
Figwort

Pea  
Violet  
Buttercup - some

Flowers with radial symmetry

Many **small flowers in tight bunches**

Flowers not in tight bunches

Buckwheat  
Parsley  
Waterleaf  
Valerian  
Rose - some

Buttercup  
Rose  
Sunflower – technically belongs with “Many small flowers in tight bunches”

Flowers with **central clusters** or seemingly so  
(more than 10 stamens crowding the center)

**Normal flowers** (10 or fewer stamens)  
(or just use the “handles” to Id. these 7 Families)

Heath  
Phlox  
Primrose  
Borage

Pink  
Purslane  
Saxifrage

Petals fused

Petals free (or nearly so)

Key to common plant families



## Lily Family

- Flowers: radial
- 6 tepals & 6 stamens



## Iris Family

- Flowers: radial
- 6 tepals & 3 stamens
- Leaves: basal in flat plane

Flower parts in 3s



## Orchid Family

- Flowers: bilateral
- Lower petal forming lip or bowl



Leaves

PARALLEL VEINS

Flower parts in 4s



- Ovary inferior
- Leaves: often opposite
- Long seed pods in 4 sections

## Evening-Primrose Family



- Ovary superior. **Mustard Family**
- 6 stamens – 4 long, 2 short usually
- Leaves: alternate
- Seed pods in many shapes. 2 sections



## Figwort Family

- Petals fused into **tubes** w/ **distinct** & sometimes **dissimilar "lips"**
- Leaves: opposite or alternate

**5s** Flowers **bilateral**..... **Fused**

## Mint Family

- Leaves: opposite
- **Square stems**
- **Aromatic** usually

## Pea Family

- Flowers: **pea-like** banner & wings/keel
- **Seed/pea pod**
- Leaves: **palmate or pinnate**



**5s** Flowers **bilateral**.....**Free**

## Buttercup Family (some)



## Violet Family

- **Lower petal the largest**
- Leaves: **simple**





## Buckwheat Family

- Flowers: **small & in tight bunches**
- 6 tepals form small flowers
- Leaves: basal or on stem
- **Leaves entire & usually not toothed**



## Rose Family (some)



## Parsley Family

- Flowers: **small & in true umbels**
- **Leaves: usually compound & often fern-like**



## 5s **Flowers radial & small in tight bunches**

- Flowers: small - forming **bottlebrush**  
**or oval clusters**
- Stamens long exerted
- **Leaves: usually pinnately compound**

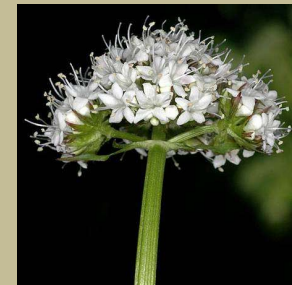
## Waterleaf Family

(In Borage Family now)



- Flowers: small & in dense clusters
- Petals fused into narrow 5-lobed tube
- **Small family**

## Valerian Family





## Buttercup Family

- Flowers: **petals 5 to 12**
- Flowers radial or bilateral
- Flowers simple to **elaborate**
- **Leaves: compound or deeply divided**



## Rose Family

- Flowers: **petals 5**
- Flowers radial
- Leaves: often oval & serrated



## Sunflower Family

- Flowers: **appear many "petaled"**
- **Central cluster present or appears to be absent entirely.**
- **A compound flower:** tiny flowers with 5 fused petals. All flowers packed into a single head.

**5s Radial Not bunches**  
**Flowers w/central clusters**

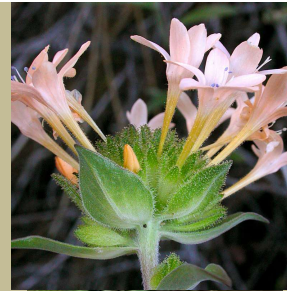
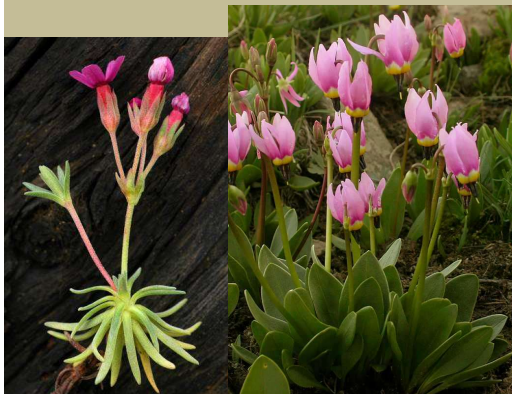


## Heath Family

- Flower: Petals fused into bells or urns

## Primrose Family

- Flower: petals fused & sometimes reflexed
- Leaves: often basal



## Phlox Family



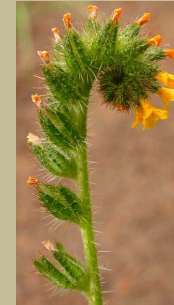
- Flower: petals fused forming a tube with nearly perpendicular lobes
- Leaves: often narrow or like ladder

**5s Radial Not bunches**  
Normal flowers Petals fused

## Borage Family

(Includes Waterleaf now)

- Flower: petals fused
- Some flowers with central ring
- Fiddlenecks often
- Plant often hairy





## Purslane Family

- Flowers: petals free, pink strips often, 2 sepals
- Leaves: often succulent



## Pink Family

- Flowers: petals free, often notched or divided
- Leaves: opposite, often narrow & borne on enlarged nodes

**5s Radial Not bunches**  
Normal Flowers Petals Free

## Saxifrage Family

- Flower: petals free, stigmas 2 & often flaring apart
- Leaves: often basal





## Sedum Family

- Small very succulent plants with short fleshy leaves
- Flowers: petals free & yellow



## Appendix Unique plants & common

## Current Family

- Medium sized shrub to about 6'
- All have maple shaped leaves
- All have berries
- Flowers: petals fused

