



In general, a flower has 4 whorls, or rings, of structures. The outermost whorl is comprised of the sepals. Inside or above that will be a whorl of petals. Inside or above that will be the male stamen(s) and in the center will be the female pistil(s). Seeing what is missing or what is extra beyond these 4 whorls, may help us identify the plant or at least the plant family.

***Dodecatheon*** (shooting star)

1. Before the flower opens, the 5 pointed, green sepals are seen. The sepals are fused at the base.



2. After the flower opens, the five petals are fused at the base and reflexed strongly backward. The white stamens point forward in a beak-like structure. The pistil is surrounded by the stamens and not seen in this picture.



3. Here the style of the pistil is seen sticking out of the stamens (arrow).

