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Wild Hollyhock  
==== or ====  
Mallow Family

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### Wild Hollyhock or Mallow Family

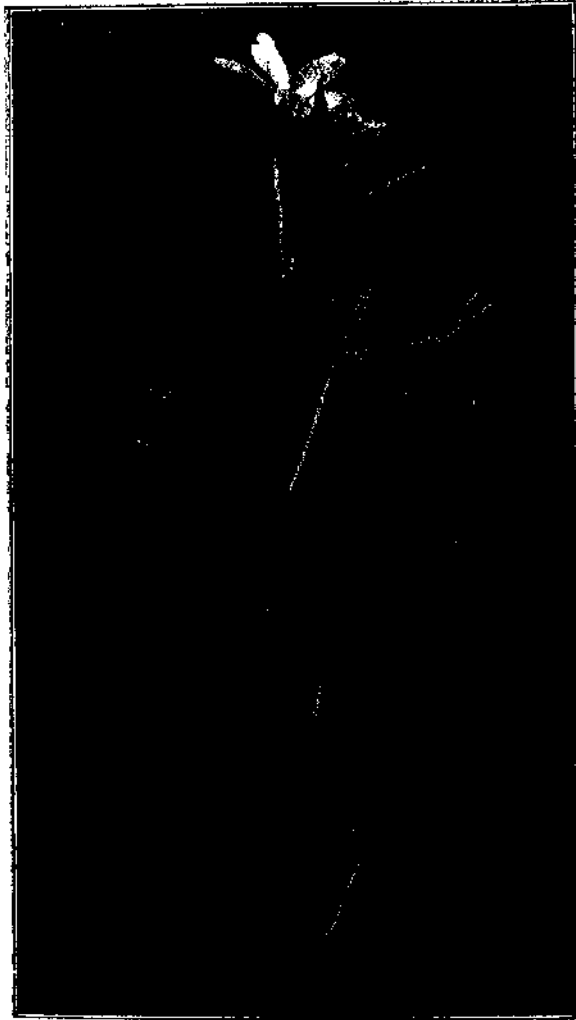
THE mallow family ( *Malvaceae* ) includes a considerable number of plants, some of which are native while others are cultivated in our gardens. The marsh mallow is used in medicine and the mucilage extracted from its root was once the basis of a confection of the same name. The cotton, the woolly covering of the seeds of which supplies us with our cotton thread and cloth and the seed itself the cotton seed oil, is a member of this family.

Perhaps the best known and most widely distributed is that ever present weed, the flat seed pods of which are known to the children as "cheeses". Its flower is small and inconspicuous and its leaf is rounded and scalloped with several main veins, palmately veined. Its stem is weak and reclining and is often a troublesome resident of our cultivated as well as wild ground.

The family characteristics are clearly shown in the large beautiful flowers of the stately hollyhock of our gardens. The hibiscus and abutilon are also included in this group.

Figure 1 is a reproduction of a photograph of the field hollyhock ( *Sidalcea* ), to be found in all parts of the state. It is a continuous bloomer all through the summer, varying in color from white through pink to purple. It is commonly about two feet high but in some cases reaches four feet. In eastern Oregon we have a wild mallow with small but beautiful scarlet flowers.

The leaves are palmately veined, having several main veins, all springing from one point. In some cases the margin is merely scalloped while in others the leaf is deeply cut into lobes and divisions. The flowers are clustered and on the plan of five. The stamens are numerous and are joined together by their lower portions to form a tube around the pistil. The flowers of this family are particularly interesting in the device



The Field Hollyhock ( *Sidaicea* )

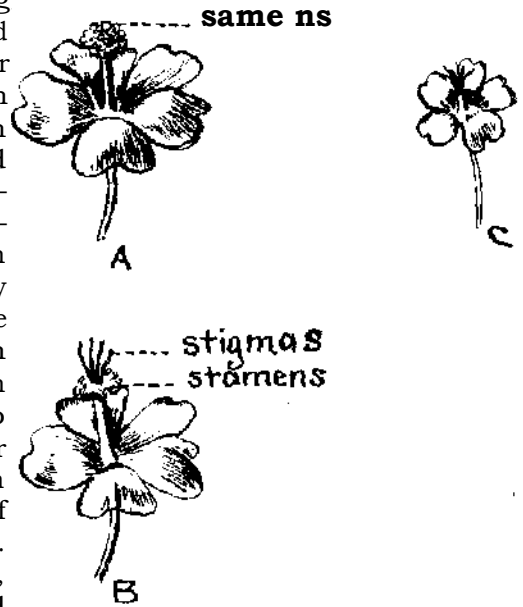
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which they show for cross-pollination. It is to be remembered that the vegetal egg must be energized or fertilized before it can develop a seed and the first step is the placing of the pollen on the receptive portion of the pistil known as the stigma, and the growth of a tube from the pollen to the egg, down which tube the nucleus travels to combine with that of the egg. Figure 2, a, is a drawing of a young flower with the stamens erect and covering

the stigmas and shedding their pollen, which cannot reach the enclosed stigmatic surfaces. If an insect visits it in search of honey he will become covered with pollen and can transfer it to another flower in the condition shown in b of the same figure. The stamens, having shed their pollen, now curl down and expose the stigmas, which are ready to receive pollen from a visiting insect.

Figure 2, c, shows an incomplete flower sometimes found, having only aborted stamens.

NOTE: The botanical department will gladly name any of the wild flowers or shrubs for those who may desire it. Pick enough of the plant to show the typical characteristics: flower, fruit if present, leaves and in some cases the root. Send by mail to the herbarium of the University of Oregon, Eugene. **Sometimes six or seven** requests of this kind are received in a day by the department.



Wild Hollylock ;lower