

Botany Activity

starring Prairie Phlox



1. Pick a *Phlox pilosa* flower from one of your plants
 - a. How many petals does it have?
 - b. Where do you think the **nectar** is?
2. Grab your magnifying glass!
3. Carefully pull off the pink **corolla** (which is just what we call all the petals together) to separate it from the rest of the flower (the green parts).
4. The green, bottom part is made up of the **sepals** (the five thin, green “petal-like” things) which surround the **ovary**. If you peel off a few of the sepals, you’ll see the **style** emerging from the ovary. At the end of the style is the **stigma**, which is made up of three lobes.
 - a. The stigma is where **pollen** gets stuck, which eventually leads to the plant making **seeds**. How would pollen get on the stigma?
 - b. From the stigma, the pollen then travels down the style and meets up with an **egg** in the ovary. What do you think happens when these two meet??
5. The nectar is found near the base of the ovary. (You may not be able to see it.)
 - a. Why would it help the plant to have its nectar all the way at the bottom of the flower?
6. Now let’s explore the corolla! Carefully peel it open.
 - a. Can you find the **anthers**? They’re covered in **pollen**! How many anthers are there?
 - b. What color is the pollen?
 - c. Are all the anthers at the same height inside the corolla? If not, why do you think that might be?

