

# Malvaceae

---

Erica S Elms  
Master Gardener Trainee 2018

# Why is this family a hot mess?

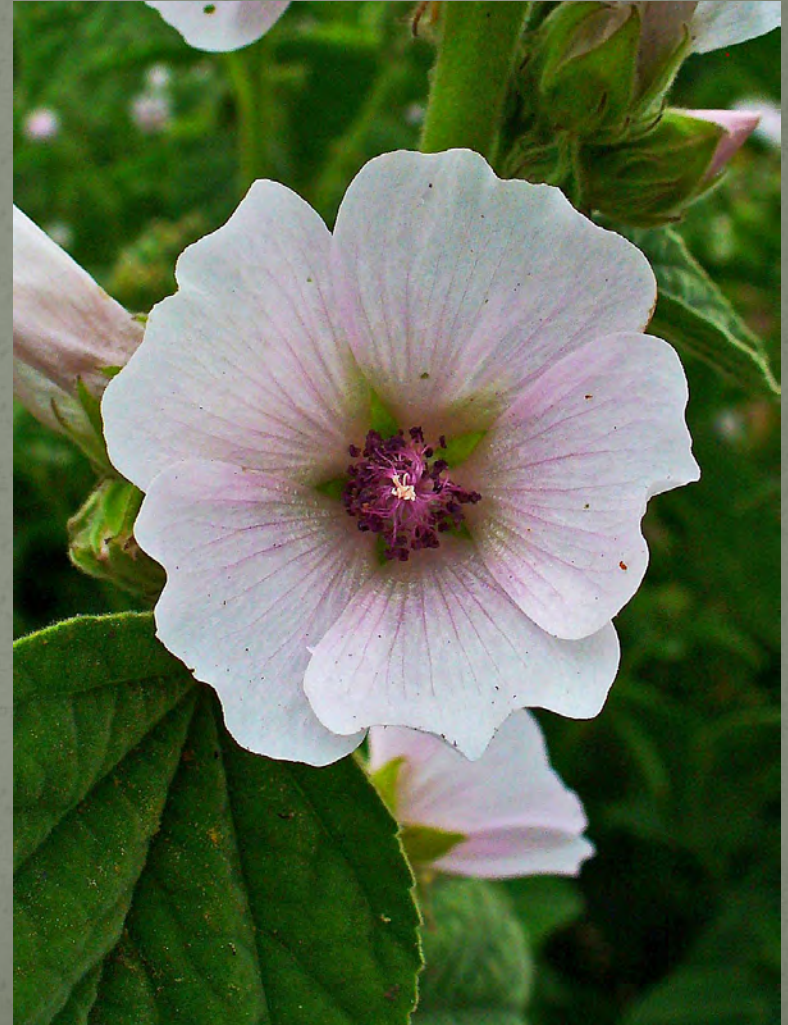
Hint: Also known as the Mallow family





# *Althaea officinalis*

## Common Marshmallow





# *Althaea officinalis*

## Common Marshmallow

- Indigenous to Europe, Western Asia, and North Africa
- Ornamental and medicinal uses
- The first marshmallows were made by Ancient Egyptians around 2000 B.C.
  - Strictly for gods and royalty
  - Used to sooth coughs and soar throats and heal wounds
- First Marshmallows were made by boiling pieces of the root with honey until thickened then strained and cooled
- Modern day marshmallows do not contain the plant



# *Theobroma cacao* cacao or cocoa tree





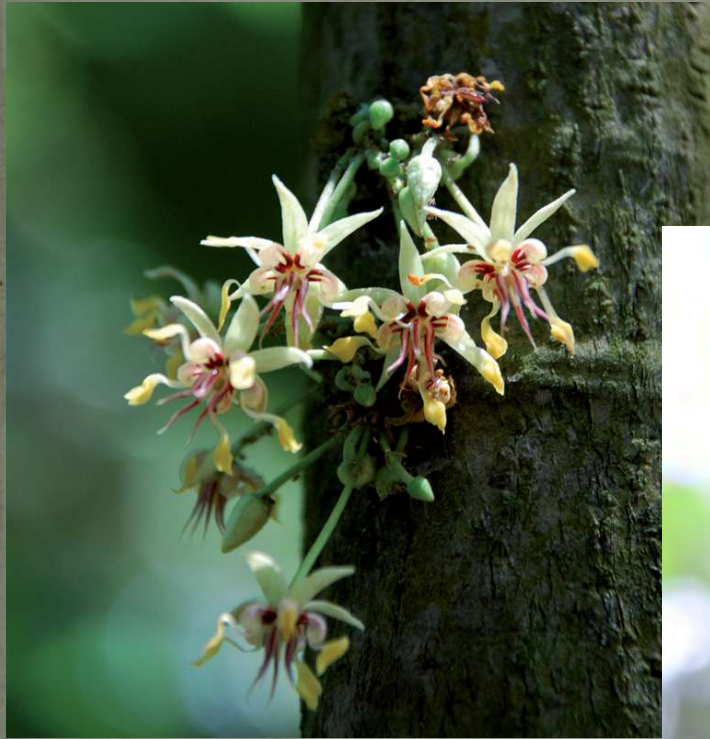
# *Theobroma cacao*

## cacao or cocoa tree

- Small evergreen tree
- Native to tropical regions of Central and South America
- Seeds (cocoa beans) are used to make cocoa powder and chocolate
- Flowers grow directly on the trunk and are pollinated by tiny flies
- The seeds (called beans) are used to make chocolate while the pulp is used to make juice, smoothies and jelly
- Each seed is 40-50% fat or cocoa butter
- Name derived from Greek *theos*=god *broma*=food
  - Food of the gods



*Theobroma cacao*  
cacao or cocoa tree





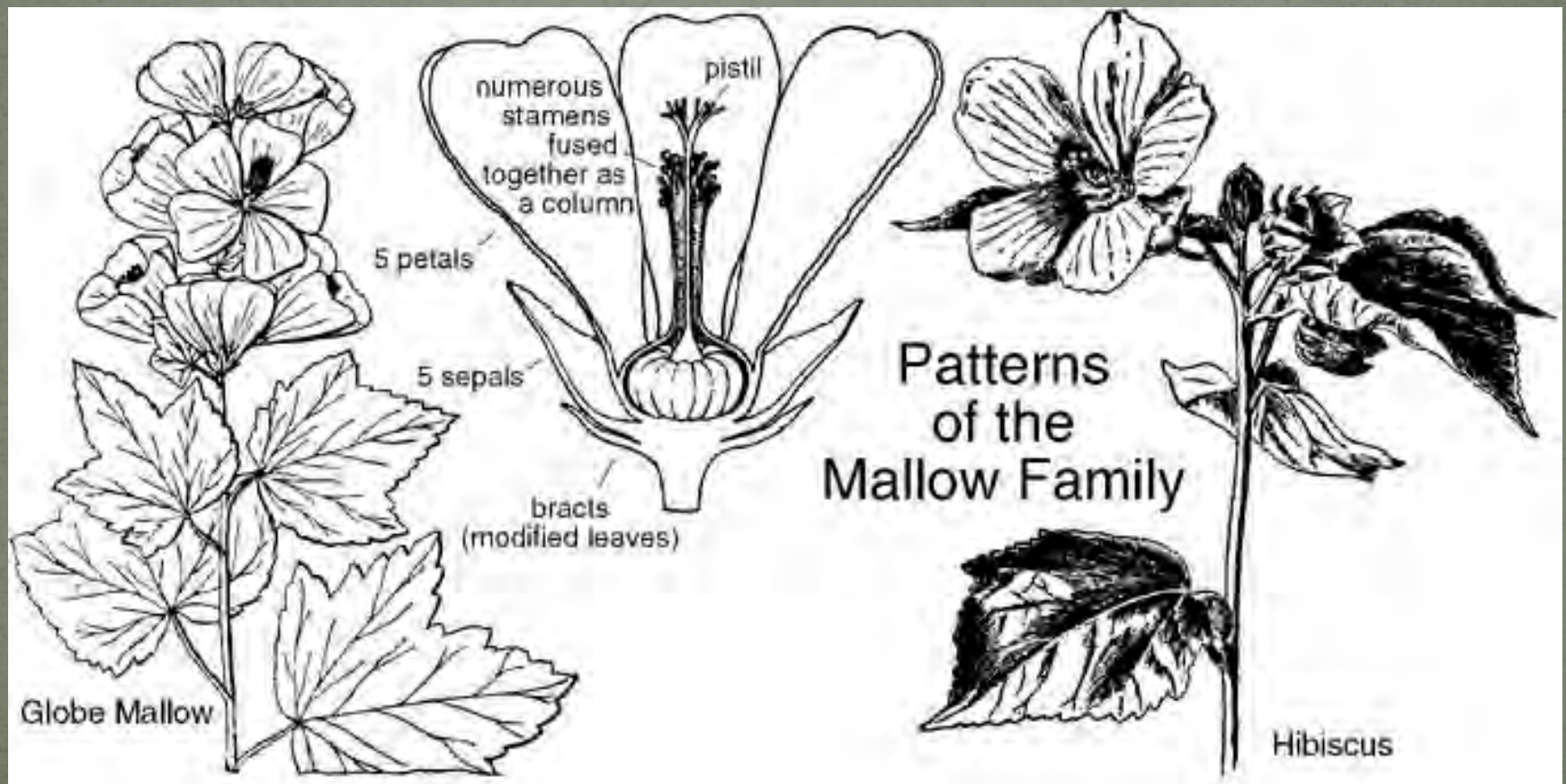
# Malvaceae

also known as the Mallow Family

- 244 genera
  - 4,225 known species.
- Well-known members of economic import:
  - okra, cotton, cacao and durian
- Familiar ornamentals:
  - *Alcea* (hollyhock), *Malva* (mallow) and *Lavatera* (tree mallow), *Hibiscus* (300 species), *Sterculia* (250 species), *Dombeya* (250 species), *Pavonia* (200 species) and *Sida* (200 species).



Easy to spot funnel shaped flower with five separate petals and a column of stamens surrounding the pistil





Some common  
members of the  
Malvaceae family



# Round-leaved Mallow, Button weed, Cheese plant, Cheese weed



- Annual or biennial
- Reproduces by seed
- Pinkish-white flowers
- Round leaves with five to seven lobes and heart-shaped base
- Indicates fertile soils
- Spreading growth from deep taproot
- Edible - leaves can be used in salads





# Hibiscus



The background of the slide is a collage of six photographs of Hollyhock (Alcea) flowers. The top-left photo shows a close-up of a large, dark purple flower. The top-middle photo shows a pink flower with dark purple stripes in the center, surrounded by large green leaves. The top-right photo shows a tall, slender stem with several pink flowers growing vertically. The bottom-left photo is another close-up of a dark purple flower. The bottom-middle photo shows a cluster of green leaves with small, light pink flowers. The bottom-right photo shows a tall stem with many small, pink buds and a few open flowers.

# Hollyhock (*Alcea*)





# Tree Mallow (*Lavatera*)





# Mallow Flowers Requirements

- Full sun to partial shade. More sun=more flowers
- Can tolerate most soils even sand and clay
- Little fertilizer needed
- Mostly enjoy neutral soil 6.0-7.0
- Require moderate water- deep watering every 7-14 days
- Can require staking in windy areas
- Cut back after bloom to promote re-blooming



