



FLOWERS OF THE YEAR



One of the best (1) _____ of a spring hike is seeing flowers **poking up** through the **dead leaves**. They are a sure (2) _____ that winter is over and summer is **on the way**.

Flowers are the **reproductive** parts of many plants. The **petals** are the flower parts we often notice (3) _____. Their shapes and bright colors **attract insects** and other animals that **spread** pollen among the plants. The *stamen* is the **male** part of the flower that produces pollen. The **female** part of the plant that **receives the pollen** is (4) _____ the *pistil*. It's often shaped like a stalk with a **knob** on top.



Many flowers (5) _____ their **common names** from their **appearances**, aromas, or other **characteristics**. Under a hooded leaf, the tiny flowers of the *jack-in-the-pulpit* look something like a little **minister about to preach**. The *turtle-head*, a plant that likes wet places, (6) _____ flowers that **look much like** small turtles.

Have you ever seen flowers that look like pairs of pants **hanging upside-down**? Those may be *dutchman's breeches*. Have you noticed colorful flowers in the (7) _____ of shoes? Those **could be** pink *moccasin flowers*.

Examine the long, yellow **blossoms** of the *goldenrod* and the dark-centers of *black-eyed susans*. Their colors are an important part of those flowers' names. A **bright splash of color** also helps identify the *butterfly weed* when it (8) _____ **in midsummer**.

A large leaf **wrapping itself** around *skunk cabbage flowers* protects them from the cold. (9) _____ **a sniff** and you'll quickly understand where the plant **gets its name**. The *wake-robin* also has a foul aroma. It **blooms** in the spring **about the time** robins **return**.

