

tion of the origin of petals in general, as staminal structures modified to render the flower conspicuous to the insect visitors which shall effect cross-fertilization.

The pistil consists of numerous united carpets, forming an ovary with many compartments, the whole being embedded in the fleshy tissue (receptacle) which terminates the flower-stalk. The stigmas are numerous and arranged in radiating lines, there being no styles.

The flowers only come to the surface when fully developed. After opening, they close again on the approach of evening beginning as early as 4 o'clock in the afternoon, and they also close in wet weather. Pollen is supposed to be carried from one flower to another by certain beetles, which are thus the agents of cross fertilization. It is to be noted, however, that in the absence of such visitors the anthers bend over

the stigmas, thus effecting self-fertilization.

After a time the developing fruit becomes detached by the decay of the flower-stalk and sinks until mature. It then bursts and liberates a rounded mass of slimy seeds which rise up to the surface, still adhering in clusters. Each seed has previously produced an outgrowth or *aril* which takes the form of a spongy membrane surrounding the seed, and within this gases have been secreted which render the seed light and enable it to float. The floating seeds are scattered by currents. Birds also eat them, and some, as a result of their sliminess, may adhere to a bird's plumage and so be carried to other waters.

After a short time the aril loses its contained air, the seed becomes water logged and sinks to the bottom, to germinate and give rise to a new plant.

