Based on the position of calyx, corolla and androecium in respect of the ovary on thalamus, the flowers are described as hypogynous, perigynous and epigynous (Figure 5.9). In the **hypogynous** flower the gynoecium occupies the highest position while the other parts are situated below it. The ovary in such flowers is said to be **superior,** e.g., mustard, china rose and brinjal. If gynoecium is situated in the centre and other parts of the flower are located on the rim of the thalamus almost at the same level, it is called **perigynous.** The ovary here is said to be **half inferior,** e.g., plum, rose, peach. In **epigynous flowers,** the margin of thalamus grows upward enclosing the ovary completely and getting fused with it, the other parts of flower arise above the ovary. Hence, the ovary is said to be **inferior** as in flowers of guava and cucumber, and the ray florets of sunflower.

### 5.5.1 Parts of a Flower

Each flower normally has four floral whorls, viz., calyx, corolla, androecium and gynoecium (Figure 5.10).

#### *5.5.1.1 Calyx*

The calyx is the outermost whorl of the flower and the members are called sepals. Generally, sepals are green, leaf like and protect the flower in the bud stage. The calyx may be **gamosepalous** (sepals united) or **polysepalous** (sepals free).

#### *5.5.1.2 Corolla*

Corolla is composed of petals. Petals are usually brightly coloured to attract insects for pollination. Like calyx, corolla may also be **gamopetalous** (petals united) or **polypetalous** (petals free). The shape and colour of corolla vary greatly in plants. Corolla may be tubular, bell-shaped, funnel-shaped or wheel-shaped.

**Aestivation:** The mode of arrangement of sepals or petals in floral bud with respect to the other members of the same whorl is known as aestivation. The main types of aestivation are valvate, twisted, imbricate

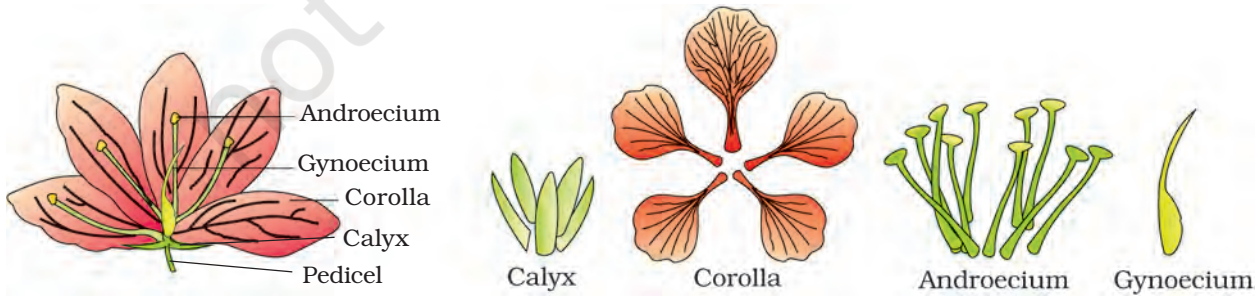


**Figure 5.10** Parts of a flower