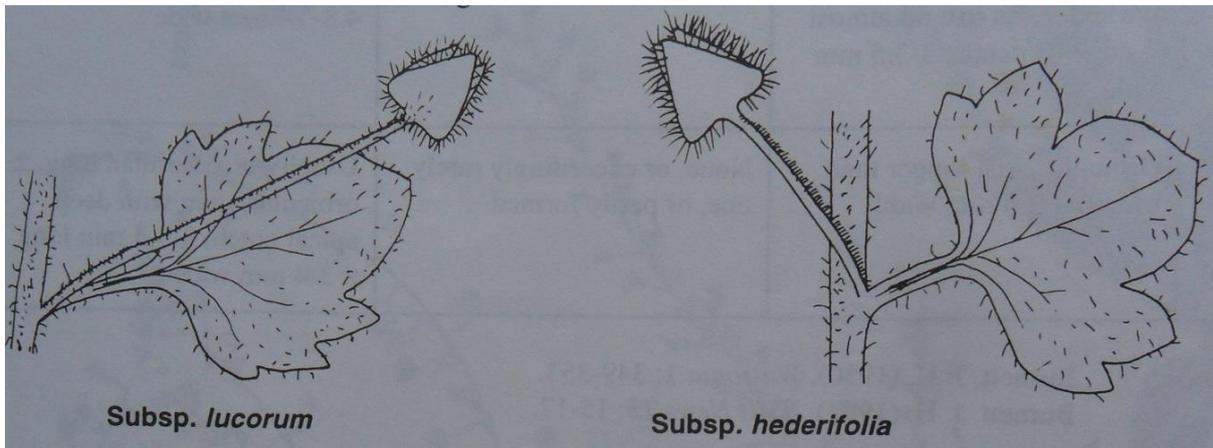


# Key to Spring flowering Veronica/Speedwell

By Paul Green

1. Bushy shrub.....*Veronica x franciscana* (Hedge Veronica)  
Not shrub like .....2
2. Flower head forming a spike.....3  
Flower born on a stalk arising from where leaf joins stem.....6
3. Stems with hairs in 2 rows .....*Veronica chamaedrys* (Germander Speedwell)  
Stems hairs not in 2 rows.....4
4. Leaves with no lobes or teeth.....*Veronica serpyllifolia* (Thyme-leaved Speedwell)  
Leaves with at least a few teeth or lobes.....5
5. Petals deep blue, leaf stalk very short.....*Veronica arvensis* (Wall Speedwell)  
Petals pink, leaf with a stalk more than 3mm long..... *Veronica montana*  
(Wood Speedwell)
6. Leaves with no teeth or lobes..... *Veronica serpyllifolia* (Thyme-leaved Speedwell)  
Leaves round or kidney shaped .....*Veronica filiformis* (Slender Speedwell)  
Leaves not round or kidney shaped, with some teeth or lobes .....7
7. Flower stalk 3mm or less long..... *Veronica arvensis* (Wall Speedwell)  
Flowers with stalks much longer than 3mm.....8
8. Each flower/fruit with 2 calyx .....*Veronica crista-galli* (Crested Field-speedwell)  
Each flower/fruit with 4 calyx.....9
9. Calyx triangular in shape.....*Veronica hederifolia* (Ivy-leaved Speedwell)  
See note 1. below for subspecies of *V. hederifolia*  
Calyx not triangular in shape.....10
10. Capsule with glandular hairs only (each hair has a sticky blob at the end) .....  
.....(see note 2. below for petal colour) *Veronica agrestis* (Green Field-speedwell)  
Capsule with glandular hairs and non-glandular hairs.....11
11. Leaves grey-green, petals dark blue, white at base only, length less than 10mm long  
(see note 3. below for petal colour).....*Veronica polita* (Grey Field-speedwell)  
Leaves green, petals a mix of blue and white, length more than 10mm .....  
.....*Veronica persica* (Common Field-speedwell)

### Note 1.



The subspecies of *Veronica hederifolia* (Ivy-leaved Speedwell) are not always possible to work out.

**Subsp. *lucorum*** – petals pale blue, undehisced anthers whitish, hairs all around flower/fruit stalk, calyx with hairs on margin and sometimes a few on flat surface.

**Subsp. *hederifolia*** – petals dark blue, undehisced anthers blue, hairs in one line on flower/fruit stalk, calyx with hairs on margin only.

### Note 2.

In Ireland the most common colour petals in *Veronica agrestis* (Green Field-speedwell) are pure white. Also frequent with blue and white petals. Some books also give pink petals, I have never seen this colour in over 30 years of recording.

Normally a weed of cultivation, gardens and graveyards. In Donegal and Galway I have seen it on rocky outcrops in natural grassland.

### Note 3.

Across Ireland I have only ever seen *Veronica polita* (Grey Field-speedwell) with dark blue petals. With the exception of in Wexford where it occasionally has pink petals. Not been able to find any books that give pink as the petal colour. This pink flowered form also has greener leaves than the normal grey-green leaves which gives Grey Field-speedwell its English name.

### Extra note

*Hebe* is now *Veronica* in many books