

Mouse-ears, chickweeds and spurreys

Plant	Perennial knawel	Annual knawel
Species	<i>Scleranthus perennis</i>	<i>Scleranthus annuus</i>
Status	Endangered	Endangered
Distribution	One sub-species is confined to the Brecklands, the other confined to mid Wales	Scattered throughout the lowlands of the UK
Lifecycle	Biennial – Perennial	Annual or biennial
Size	Up to 20 cm	Up to 20 cm
Growth habit	Erect or sprawling	Low, spreading. Looks 'spikey'
Stem	Can be woody below	Hairless or short hairs
Leaves	Linear, fused at base in opposite pairs. Green-grey often turning reddish, and often turned to one side. Leaf tip not sharply pointed	Linear, fused at base in opposite pairs. Tiny pointed tip.
Flowers	4 mm across. Greenish and inconspicuous	4 mm across. Greenish and inconspicuous
Sepals	5 green sepals. Blunt with broad, white margins. Sepals curving inwards when in fruit	5 green sepals with sharp tips and narrow membranous margins
Petals	None	None
Flowering period	June-August	June-August

Flower head



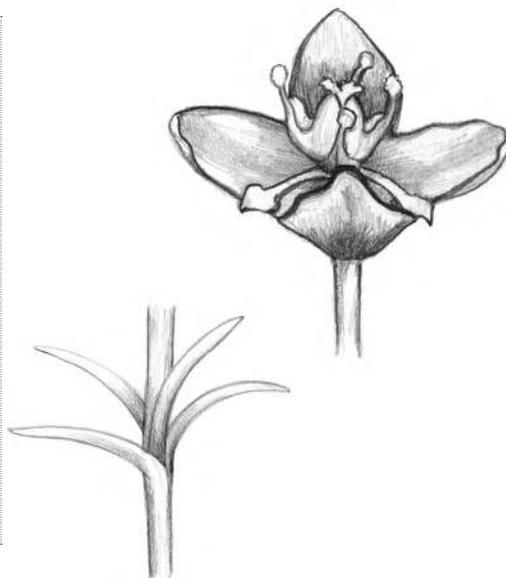
Leaves



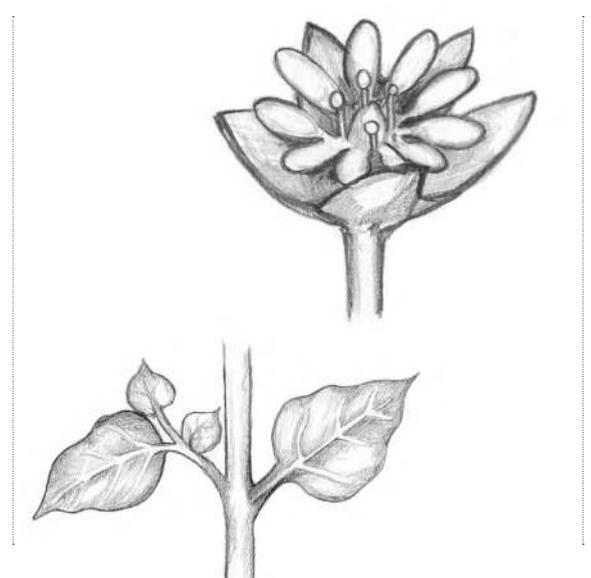
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Plant	Procumbent pearlwort	Common chickweed
Species	<i>Sagina procumbens</i>	<i>Stellaria media</i>
Status		
Distribution	Common and widespread throughout the UK	Common and widespread throughout the UK
Lifecycle	Perennial	Annual
Size	Up to 20 cm (often much shorter)	Up to 50 cm (usually less than 30 cm)
Growth habit	Matted stems that lie on the ground irradiating from a centre rosette	Sprawling, much branched. Can look quite succulent
Stem	Occasionally hairy	Single line of hairs running down the round stem. The position of the hair line changes at nodes
Leaves	Leaves linear, bristle-tipped, forming rosettes	Cordate with one central vein. Pale green and sparsely hairy above or hairless both sides. Flower stalks with sticky glandular hairs
Flowers	2-4 mm across and on long stalks	8-10 mm across. Petals equal in length to sepals
Sepals	4 green sepals	Oval, spreading, 3-5 mm without veins. Usually hairy
Petals	None (or minute)	5 deeply-divided (bifid) white petals, 1-3 mm long
Flowering period	May-Sept	All year round

Flower head



Leaves



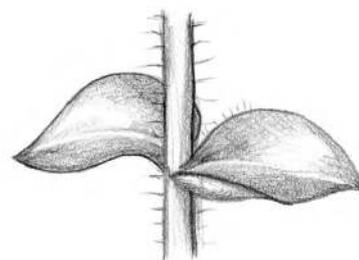
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Plant	Common mouse-ear	Sticky mouse-ear
Species	<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>	<i>Cerastium glomeratum</i>
Status		
Distribution	Common and widespread throughout the UK	Common and widespread throughout the UK
Lifecycle	Perennial	Annual
Size	Up to 50 cm (usually less than 20 cm)	Up to 45 cm (usually less than 20 cm)
Growth habit	Low growing with runners. Flowering shoots erect	Low growing with runners. Flowering shoots erect
Stem	Densely hairy (no glandular hairs)	Sticky glandular hairs
Leaves	Oblong, un-stalked and densely hairy. Dark grey-green. Look like little green 'mouse ears'	Oblong, unstalked, densely hairy (with glandular hairs near the flowers). More of a yellow-green colour
Flowers	3-12 mm across. Petals equal to or slightly longer than sepals. Flowers in loose clusters	8-10 mm across. Petals equal to or slightly longer than sepals. Flowers in dense clusters
Sepals	Hairy with narrow silvery margins	Hairy with narrow silvery margins
Petals	5 white divided (bifid) petals	5 white, shallowly notched petals
Flowering period	April-Sept	April-Sept

Flower head



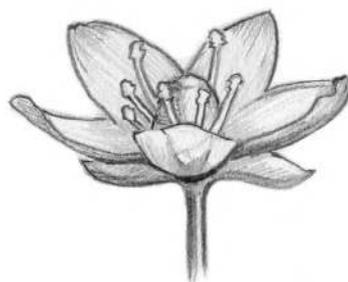
Leaves



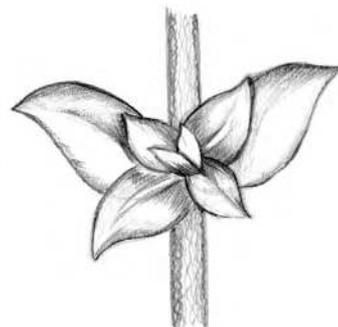
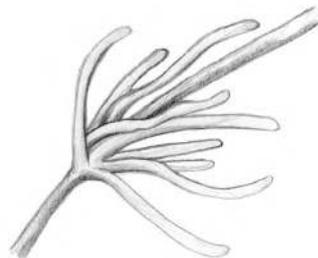
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Plant	Corn spurrey	Thyme-leaved sandwort
Species	<i>Spergula arvensis</i>	<i>Arenaria serpyllifolia</i>
Status	Vulnerable	
Distribution	Widespread but more common in west and south of UK	Fairly widespread through the UK, particularly the lowlands
Lifecycle	Annual	Annual or biennial
Size	Up to 40 cm	2.5-20 cm
Growth habit	Erect when young, tends to sprawl with maturity	Low, spreading to bushy branched
Stem	Sticky-hair (glandular hairs)	Tiny hairs present (rarely glandular)
Leaves	In whorled clusters. Linear, fleshy, channelled beneath	Oval in shape. Greyish-green, thick with sparse white hairs either side
Flowers	White, 4-8 mm across. Petals slightly longer than sepals	5-6 mm across. Petals shorter than sepals
Sepals	5 sepals	5 sharp-tipped greenish sepals
Petals	5 white petals	5 white petals without notched tip
Flowering period	June-August	June-August

Flower head



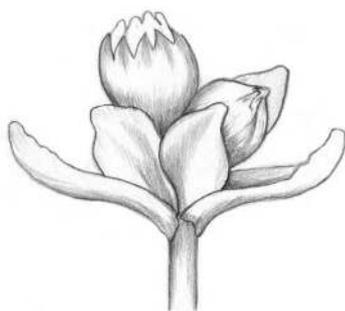
Leaves



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Plant	Four-leaved allseed
Species	<i>Polycarpon tetraphyllum</i>
Status	Nationally Scarce
Distribution	Sparse distribution, Isles of Scilly, and on the mainland confined to the coast with few inland records, and the area around London
Lifecycle	Annual
Size	5-15 cm
Growth habit	Branched erect stem
Stem	Hairless
Leaves	Blunt, oval in whorls of four (really in two pairs) 8-13 mm long
Flowers	2-3 mm across (tiny). Petals much shorter than sepals
Sepals	5 hooded sepals with white margins
Petals	5 narrow, tiny petals. Often with a notched tip
Flowering period	June-July

Flower head



Leaves

