

**Table 1: Spring Weeds and Wild Flowers in Kentucky**

Note that some spring weeds are food for early spring bees and other insects!

Numbers indicate plants illustrated on pages 2-6.

	<b>Species</b>	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Family</b>	<b>Notes</b>
1	<i>Aegopodium podagraria</i>	ground elder bishop's weed	Apiaceae	ternate leaves; spreading rhizomes
2	<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>	garlic mustard	Brassicaceae	white, 4 petals
	<i>Angelica purpurea</i>	purple stemmed angelica	Apiaceae	white, umbels, up to 12 feet tall
	<i>Brassica campestris</i>	field mustard	Brassicaceae	yellow, 2-3 feet tall
	<i>Calystegia</i> sp. <i>Convolvulus</i> sp.	bindweeds (white) morning glory (blue)	Convolvulaceae	vines
	<i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i>	shepherd's purse	Brassicaceae	white heart-shaped fruit
3	<i>Cardamine hirsuta</i>	bitter cress	Brassicaceae	white explosive seeds
	<i>Chamaesyce maculata</i> syn. <i>Euphorbia maculata</i>	prostrate spurge	Euphorbiaceae	flat, succulent
	<i>Cirsium</i> sp.	thistle	Asteraceae	purple
	<i>Conium maculatum</i>	poison hemlock	Apiaceae	white flowers; purple spotted stems
	<i>Cyperus esculentus</i>	yellow nut sedge	Cyperaceae	triangular stem
	<i>Erigeron</i> sp.	fleabane	Asteraceae	12 in, purple
4	<i>Fatoua villosa</i>	mulberry weed	Moraceae	flowers in leaf axils
	<i>Galium aparine</i>	bedstraw, cleavers	Rubiaceae	ground runner sticky to touch
5	<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>	gill-o'er-the-ground	Lamiaceae	violet blue, creeps scalloped leaf
6	<i>Lamium amplexicaule</i>	henbit, dead nettle	Lamiaceae	dark pink, smaller than <i>L. purpureum</i>
7	<i>Lamium purpureum</i>	purple dead nettle	Lamiaceae	purple, larger than <i>L. amplexicaule</i>
	<i>Oxalis stricta</i>	wood sorrel	Oxalidaceae	6 in; yellow
8	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i> <i>Plantago major</i>	plantain	Plantaginaceae	6-12 in, basal leaves
	<i>Portulaca oleracea</i>	purslane	Portulacaceae	Succulent, ground
	<i>Pseudofumaria lutea</i> syn. <i>Corydalis lutea</i>	yellow corydalis	Fumariaceae	yellow; deeply cleft leaves
9	<i>Stellaria media</i>	chickweed	Caryophyllaceae	white, flat to ground
	<i>Valerianella locusta</i>	corn salad	Valerianaceae	12 in; white
10	<i>Veronica filiformis</i>	speedwell	Plantaginaceae	blue, 4 petals
11	<i>Allium canadense</i> <i>Allium vineale</i>	wild onion field garlic	Amaryllidaceae	native non-native

**1. ground elder / bishop's weed**

*Aegopodium podagraria*, Apiaceae

Variegated forms are sold as 'snow-in-the-mountain'. Note the ternate (3-leafed) compound leaves. White flowers clustered in umbels appear later when the plant grows to up to 2 feet. This plant spreads aggressively by underground rhizomes.



**2. garlic mustard**

*Alliaria petiolata*, Brassicaceae

This very invasive, noxious weed in the mustard family sports four-petaled white flowers. The yellow-flowered field mustards are not a problem.



**3. hairy bittercress**

*Cardamine hirsuta*, Brassicaceae

The four petals are common to the mustard family. Note the dense rosette of leaves on this 6-inch plant. The seeds are spread explosively!



**4. mulberry weed, hairy crab weed**

*Fatoua villosa*, Moraceae

This plant shows up in June when last seasons' seeds begin to sprout. The leaves are heart-shaped. The separate male and female flowers clustered in the leaf axils. Thousands of seeds can be produced which are explosively shot up to 3 feet away. This is a very aggressive, weedy plant!



**5. gill-o'er-the-ground, ground ivy**

*Glechoma hederacea*, Lamiaceae

The violet blue flowers and scalloped green leaves are easy to spot. This plant spreads to form a dense ground cover.



## 6. henbit

*Lamium amplexicaule*, Lamiaceae

Dark pink/purple flowers arise from whorls of scalloped, sessile leaves on a plant under 6 inches.



## 7. purple dead nettle

*Lamium purpureum*, Lamiaceae

Pink/purple flowers peek out from under the hairy, green/purple, petiolate leaves on this 12-inch plant that is taller than henbit.



## 8. plantain

*Plantago* species, Plantaginaceae

A dense basal rosette of leaves appears in early spring. Flower spikes appear later each of which produces up to 200 seeds.

*Plantago lanceolata*



*Plantago major*



## 9. common chickweed

*Stellaria media*, Caryophyllaceae

Five, deeply-cleft white petals give the appearance of ten! This plant spreads aggressively to form large mats.



**10. slender or creeping speedwell**

*Veronica filiformis*, Plantaginaceae

The blue, 4-petaled flowers have a white tip. This very small naturalized plant spreads quickly because the stems root into the ground.



**11. Wild onion and field garlic are edible.**

*Allium* species, Amaryllidaceae

**Native species:** *A. canadense* (wild onion), *A. oleraceum* (wild garlic),  
*A. tricoccum* (wild ramps or leeks).

**Introduced species:** *A. vineale* (field garlic), *A. triquetrum* (3-cornered leek).

Most common in our area:

**Left:** *Allium canadense*, wild onion

flat, solid leaves; strong onion smell; bulbs solid

**Right:** *Allium vineale*, field garlic

round, hollow leaves like chives; strong garlic/onion smell; bulbs split



**See also:**

**Univ of KY Extension:**

<https://weedscience.ca.uky.edu/content/common-weeds-kentucky-0>

**KY Exotic Pest Plants Council**

[https://www.se-eppc.org/ky/KYEPPC\\_2013list.pdf](https://www.se-eppc.org/ky/KYEPPC_2013list.pdf)