

Vascular Plants of Williamson County
Veronica agrestis – WAYSIDE SPEEDWELL [Plantaginaceae]

Veronica agrestis Fries. (incl. *V. polita*), WAYSIDE SPEEDWELL. Annual, taprooted, several-stemmed at base, prostrate or decumbent, much-branched, in range 3–10 cm tall; shoots with only cauline leaves and canopy = an inflorescence with leaflike bractlets, short-hairy. **Stems:** cylindric, to 1 mm diameter, ± tough, lower stem often pinkish to purple-red, internodes to 18 mm long, puberulent and sometimes with hairs to 1 mm long. **Leaves:** opposite decussate at the lowermost nodes and helically alternate leaflike bractlets, simple, petiolate to sessile (bractlets), without stipules; petiole 2–3 mm long, somewhat flattened on upper side, lower side villous; blade ovate to broadly ovate, 5–9 × 4–11 mm, subtruncate to broadly tapered at base, crenate-serrate on margins with 2–4 teeth per edge, obtuse at tip, with 3 veins from base slightly sunken on upper surface and raised on lower surface, upper surface sparsely short-hairy with upward-pointing hairs, lower surface with hairs along veins. **Inflorescence:** leafy raceme, terminal, to 40 mm long, hairy like shoot; peduncle < 3 mm long; bractlet subtending pedicel similar to foliage leaves, not noticeably decreasing upward; pedicel at anthesis ascending and 3–3.5 mm long, increasing to 8 mm long and curving downward in fruit, puberulent. **Flower:** bisexual, bilateral, in range ca. 4 × 5 mm across; **calyx** 4-lobed; tube at anthesis ca. 0.5 mm long increasing slightly in fruit, with some long hairs; lobes unequal, ovate, 2–3.2 mm long (1 comparatively short) increasing to 3.9 mm long in fruit, 3-veined with principal veins slightly raised on both surfaces, entire and short-ciliate on margins, lower surface with short hairs especially along veins, upper surface with some short hairs at tip, lacking glandular hairs; **corolla** 4-lobed, ca. 2.5 mm long; tube ± 0.7 mm long and wide, white but yellowish and glossy between stamens, with conspicuous, colorless short hairs concealing orifice; lobes overlapping, roundish, 1.7–2 mm, violet-blue with conspicuous nectar lines, broadly attached at base, 3 lobes similar and with 7 nectar lines, the lower lobes narrower and with 5 nectar lines; **stamens** 2, fused to base of corolla tube; filaments sigmoidal, ± 1.2 mm long, white; anther basifixed, dithecal, 0.3 mm long, dark blue-violet, arrow-shaped at base, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen cream-colored; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, on stalk ca. 0.2 mm long, broadly heart-shaped compressed side-to-side, ca. 0.7 × 0.9 mm, lacking notch at tip, green, minutely glandular-hairy, 2-chambered, each chamber with 9–12 ovules; style increasing width from base to tip, 1–1.4 mm long but not increasing in fruit, whitish aging reddish; stigma capitate, whitish, entire, papillate. **Fruit:** capsule loculicidal and septicidal, 2-valved (rarely 1 chamber 3-valved), in range to 18-seeded, with 2 divergent, spreading lobes, broadly heart-shaped and conspicuously inflated, ca. 3.2 × 4 mm, to 2.5 mm thick (chambers often of 2 different thicknesses), brown, not keeled, shallowly notched, conspicuously glandular-hairy, not veiny; style persistent; persistent calyx lobes ascending, not strongly veiny. **Seed:** ovate in outline and shell-shaped, 0.9–1.4 × 0.8–0.9 mm, cream-colored, lower edge inrolled, upper faces transversely low-ridged (verrucose).

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