

# Comparison of Similar Looking Plants

*Mentha spicata* and *Pilea nummulariifolia*



**Scientific name:**

*Mentha spicata*

**Common name:** Spearmint

**Family name:** Lamiaceae

**Origin:** Europe, Asia

**Status:** Exotic



**Scientific name:**



*Pilea nummulariifolia*

**Common name:** Creeping Charlie

**Family name:** Urticaceae

**Origin:** West Indies to Peru

**Status:** Exotic

	<i>Mentha spicata</i>	<i>Pilea nummulariifolia</i>
<b>Form</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A perennial herb with creeping rhizomes</li> <li>• Grows upright (erect)</li> <li>• Few branches</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A perennial herb with low growing creeping roots</li> <li>• Grows horizontally (prostrate), close to the ground, forming mats</li> <li>• Many branches</li> </ul> 
<b>Foliage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Light green foliage</li> <li>• Ovate to lanceolate leaf shape with serrated margin, smooth</li> <li>• 1 main midvein along the leaf blade</li> <li>• Produces strong mint scent when crushed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Light to dark green foliage</li> <li>• Mostly round to oval leaf shape with scalloped margin, hirsute</li> <li>• 3 main veins running the length of leaf blade</li> <li>• No scent produced when crushed</li> </ul>

***Mentha spicata***

***Pilea nummulariifolia***

**Foliage**



Opposite arrangement



Opposite arrangement



Ovate to lanceolate leaf blade  
with serrated margin



Rounded leaf blade with  
scalloped margin



Smooth (glabrous) on both sides  
of leaves





Both surfaces hairy, but hair on  
undersides is only along the veins



Stipules absent



Stipules present, membraneous

	<i>Mentha spicata</i>	<i>Pilea nummulariifolia</i>
<b>Stem</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brownish, 4-sided and smooth</li> <li>• Growing erect from the soil</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reddish, rounded and hairy</li> <li>• Growing horizontally on the soil, produces roots when in contact with soil</li> </ul> 
<b>Flower</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pale purple to white, tubular and 4-lobed</li> <li>• Flowers arranged in spikes near the branch tip</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hardly seen</li> <li>• Cream to white to green, inconspicuous</li> <li>• Flowers borne in verticillasters near the branch tip</li> </ul>
<b>Ethnobotanical Uses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaves are used as herb and spice: eaten raw, cooked or steeped into tea</li> <li>• Essential oil as medicinal stimulant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultivated as ornamental</li> </ul>

## Reference

Plants of the World Online

ResearchGate

([https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327301698 Additions to the flora of Singapore-new and overlooked records of naturalised plant species 2](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327301698_Additions_to_the_flora_of_Singapore-new_and_overlooked_records_of_naturalised_plant_species_2))