



HUMBLE ROOTS  
FARM & NURSERY LLC

January 25, 2025

To: House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Re: HB 3173 (Oregon Flora) - SUPPORT

Dear Committee members:

We are the founders and owners of a native plant nursery called Humble Roots in Wasco County, Oregon, and the authors of *The Pacific Northwest Native Plant Primer: 225 Plants for an Earth-Friendly Garden* (Timber Press, 2023). As individuals and professionals who deeply understand the importance of our native flora and the gaps in our knowledge of it, we believe in the critical work of OregonFlora and strongly support HB 3173 and want to urge you to do the same.

OregonFlora is a vital resource not only for us and our business, but for the growing number of individuals, gardeners, landscapers, and professionals who understand the value of our native flora. OregonFlora is singular and unique in the information and resources that it collates and disseminates to the public. It has facilitated research on Oregon's native plants and the formulation of data on our native plant species into key volumes of printed material, as well as user-friendly online references. OregonFlora also provides increasingly vital information about native plants regarding their use in landscaping, which is a timely and growing movement among gardeners and landscapers seeking solutions to the threats our local biodiversity is currently facing.

OregonFlora is invaluable for understanding and identifying the flora of Oregon, and the work that OregonFlora has done in that arena is groundbreaking. We personally reference OregonFlora frequently and provide links to its plant profiles on our business' website. Without the information that OregonFlora provides online, and the ability for everyone to reference it easily and freely, our knowledge of Oregon's native flora would be diminished.

OregonFlora provides essential information to gardeners and landscapers in the garden fact sheets they maintain online. And OregonFlora provides a wonderful resource for gardeners and landscapers with the "Grow Natives" plant selection tools they have on their website. These are some of the best resources for native plant gardeners that we have ever come across. Additionally, the information OregonFlora provides on native pollinators and the plants they depend on is of the utmost importance as we seek to understand the unique needs of Oregon's pollinators and save them from extinction. Oregonians are indeed fortunate to have such a resource, and we often wish that all states had access to the kind of information and tools that OregonFlora provides.

OregonFlora is economically beneficial to the state and its users. It provides businesses, non-profits, educators, researchers, landscapers, and restoration professionals information that directly aides in the implementation of their work and the cultivation of an educated public and clientele. Additionally, OregonFlora makes it easy for gardeners and landscapers to see where they can purchase particular species of native plants by maintaining a list of commercial suppliers on their garden fact sheets. This is information that is otherwise hard to obtain, and it helps to facilitate this growing part of Oregon's nursery industry, which has been the state's most profitable agricultural commodity. We now know the use of native plants in landscaping is an essential direction we all must take in the face off escalating biodiversity loss, and OregonFlora gives native plant nurseries the technical information needed to operate their businesses properly. Furthermore, invasive species economically impact the nation and cost the state of Oregon hundreds of millions of dollars every year. Invasive plant species impact forest and farm production, accelerate and intensify wildfires, and threaten environmental health, as well as human health. OregonFlora is a vital tool for educating Oregonians as to which plants are invasive and which plants are native to the state, and providing the knowledge needed to recognize and combat non-native invasive plants. It is important that everyone be able to freely use OregonFlora to help them understand and identify the plants on their properties so they can properly manage them, which in turn is a key step towards eliminating point sources of invasive plants.

We all owe a huge amount of gratitude to OregonFlora for the work they have done to catalog and research the state's flora and provide this information to the public. This useful resource, by its nature, deserves to be free and openly accessible for all Oregonians. As we move forward in addressing the dire issues of species and habitat loss, climate change, pollinator decline, and invasive species, OregonFlora provides an indispensable tool in understanding the native flora that forms the backbone of both our local ecosystems and the solutions to the problems they face.

We urge your support of House Bill 3173 to ensure the resources of OregonFlora can continue to be maintained and developed for users statewide.

Sincerely,

Kristin Currin & Andrew Merritt

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