

February 1, 2025

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

Re: HB 3173 (Oregon Flora) - SUPPORT

Dear Committee members:

I am an urban gardener who volunteers with Habitat haven, a project of the Lane County Audubon Society that encourages property owners to plant species of trees, shrubs and perennials native to Oregon. Native plants support birds, pollinating insects and other native wildlife. This effort creates habitat for native bees, which have been declining in abundance.

I strongly support HB 3173.

The native plant information provided by OregonFlora is a treasured resource for learning what Oregon native plants are suitable for gardens in specific regions of Oregon, and how these plants benefit wildlife. I, along with the other volunteers and participants in the Habitat Haven program, rely on this information.

The OregonFlora database manages and shares ~1.5 million Oregon plant occurrence records through interactive mapping tools on its website. This comprehensive dataset is essential to understanding which plant species and communities are resilient to drought, heat waves or wildfire. Importantly, it provides the core information needed to rehabilitate landscapes and gardens for the benefit of native wildlife.

Native plants for our yards are obtained from local native plant nurseries, thus supporting these essential businesses.

OregonFlora helps Habitat Haven meet its mission to encourage homeowners to plant native species. OregonFlora also helps me be an informed Oregonian proud to live and learn in a state that values its natural resources.

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

Sincerely,

Evelyn Sherr
Eugene OR