

I am writing in support of HB 3173 in support of the OregonFlora Program at Oregon State University. For 27 years, I taught various botany and ecology courses at Linfield College (now University). The OregonFlora was an invaluable resource for educating my students about Oregon's floristic diversity, teaching them to identify rare and endangered species and weedy invasives, and about the history of land use in the state and the value of conservation of our native landscapes. Every year, we visited such sites as the coastal dunes and cliffsides, Siskiyou Mountain serpentine outcrops, Willamette Valley wetlands and prairies, and Harney County's high desert. Prior to the OregonFlora, we had to haul around many heavy books to help us identify plants. As an online resource, the OregonFlora is easily accessible using a cell phone, a benefit that has transformed our ability to learn about our natural environments. Even today, when I reside in a retirement community, I use the OregonFlora often as I lead residents on guided tours of our 42 acre campus and along the riparian path that runs along the Willamette River to George Rogers Park.

Thank you for your support!
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