



Oregon State
University

Department of Botany and Plant Pathology
Oregon State University
3450 SW Campus Way
Corvallis, Oregon 97331
michele.wiseman@oregonstate.edu

2/2/25

House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon

Chair Helm, Vice Chairs Hartman and Owens, and Members of the Committee,

I am a PhD candidate studying plant genetics in the Department of Botany and Plant Pathology at Oregon State University. Although my research is primarily conducted in the laboratory, I frequently utilize the valuable, expertly curated resources from Oregon Flora for both professional outreach events and personal research.

Each year, I am invited to lead multiple hikes for local naturalist groups, including the Native Plant Society of Oregon, where I educate the public on plant and fungal field identification as well as ecosystem biology. To ensure accurate information for the public, I prepare a list of taxa we may encounter before each hike and share it with attendees. In the past, this required multiple site visits, meticulous species documentation, cross-checking current nomenclature, and hours of identifying unknown taxa. Fortunately, OregonFlora has significantly streamlined this process by providing expertly curated flora lists for dozens of sites across Oregon. Now, I can simply select one of their locations which contains a list with species linked to their descriptions and distributions, often with high-resolution professional photos, greatly reducing the time and effort required for preparation. While some resources, such as iNaturalist, complement the efforts of the Oregon Flora Project, none match its level of scholarly curation, taxonomist oversight, comprehensive scope, and ease of accessibility.

Beyond my personal use of OregonFlora's resources, I am keenly aware of its impact on other research within our department. While there are too many examples to list in a brief letter (and I hope you will hear from some of these researchers directly), a few noteworthy examples include using OregonFlora to locate wild strawberry populations for genetic studies, studying pollinator preferences within the gynodioecious *Sidalcea* system, and conducting conservation projects that rely on invasive species lists and plant distribution data for seed collection efforts. These examples highlight the critical role OregonFlora plays in advancing research, conservation, and education across Oregon.

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

Thank you for your consideration,

Michele Wiseman, MSc.
michele.wiseman@oregonstate.edu
PhD Candidate, Gent Lab