

To: House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Re: HB 3173 (Oregon Flora) - SUPPORT

Dear Committee members:

I have been interested in the recognition and naming of plants since early childhood and I went on to make it the focus of my lifelong career. I spent 30 years at the University of Hawaii teaching and conducting research in this area (taxonomy & systematics) so I am intimately familiar with the value of floristic treatments, especially state floras. Unfortunately, Hawaii is known as the state with the greatest extinction of native plants in the nation, so completion of the first comprehensive flora in 1990 was a great advancement in recognizing the remaining diversity as a step toward pursuing effective conservation measures.

Of course, reliable floras are valuable and often critically important in myriad ways, in most cases starting with proper identification and recognition of plants. Such knowledge can then be used effectively in relation to conservation, restoration, and management of public lands, private farms, and rangelands. State floras can be used to generate locally useful lists that can be tailored to most any situation or endeavor. The massive amount of data that is already available on-line to various agencies and the general public through OregonFlora can serve in ways limited only by imagination.

I retired as Emeritus Professor in 2005 and relocated from Honolulu to Corvallis, accepting a Courtesy appointment at OSU. I have contributed treatments for several genera to the Flora of Oregon Vol. 2 and have one pending in the unpublished Vol. 3. However, most of my time has been spent traveling (without external support) far and wide in the state, taking several thousand high resolution images of plants from which each "kind" can be identified to species and variety. These, as well as images from other photographers, are posted on the OF Photo Gallery as just one of the several on-line resources that are available. I have gotten positive feedback from many conservation workers who have used my images from the OF Gallery to enhance their efforts. Plant enthusiasts, nature-lovers, and hikers have also expressed their appreciation for the utility of these images and other OregonFlora on-line resources. My images are freely available for instructional or other non-profit use.

I strongly urge your support HB 3173 to ensure the ability of OregonFlora to continue to provide free access to statewide citizenry of factual knowledge regarding one of Oregon's most valuable assets, its diverse assemblage of plants. This knowledge has social, environmental, educational, economic, and aesthetic implications.

Sincerely,

Gerald Carr

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