

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

Dear Committee members:

I am writing to urge your support of HB 3173. All natural resource decisions hinge on understanding what those natural resources *are*. OregonFlora is essential for understanding and managing Oregon's diverse plant life.

I am a 20-year volunteer with the Glide Wildflower Show, which celebrates its 60th anniversary this year in the small Douglas County town of Glide. The pre-eminent and largest wildflower show in the Pacific Northwest, it draws visitors from multiple states who come to see, enjoy, and learn about not just native and naturalized flowers, but also shrubs, trees, ferns, lichens, and mosses. With a motto of "Appreciation - Education - Conservation," the show upholds the words of its founder Reggie Miller: "By knowing our wildflowers, we can better preserve them for ourselves and for the future."

OregonFlora enables the people of Oregon to know its plants, so that we can preserve them for ourselves and for the future.

OregonFlora has become critical to the Glide Wildflower Show. Scientific accuracy is ensured as show botanists use for their identifications the database, images, and descriptions developed by OregonFlora. Visitors closely study the plant labels, which contain scientific and common names plus maps of where the plant is found in Oregon -- all taken from OregonFlora data. The show's database and Flora Book, a comprehensive listing of all plants ever in the show, both reflect the latest scientific knowledge of plant relationships and nomenclature, which OregonFlora compiles and continually updates.

One might think that once a plant has been named, classified, and documented, that work is done with. Not so -- modern scientific advances in DNA analysis continue to generate new understandings of plant genetics, evolution, and relationships. OregonFlora is *the* mediator between the scientists and everyone in Oregon who need to use the information -- such as natural resource managers, horticulturists, teachers, and Glide Wildflower Show volunteers.

The work of OregonFlora is ongoing, and so is the need for ongoing funding to support it. The information it provides to Oregon's natural resource economy is too important to be trusted to the whims of grantors and donors. This work needs to be acknowledged and supported by the state of Oregon.

Nancy Tague
Glide Wildflower Show Council member
Collection Coordinator and Flora Database Manager

