

Re: HB 3173

Vote in Favor



I am fully in support of HB 3173 to permanently fund OregonFlora to keep its vital programming available for all Oregonians.

OregonFlora is integral to my personal and professional life in many ways. I use it probably weekly, sometimes daily, to look up information about Oregon's flora. Sometimes its just for personal curiosity and knowledge, and other times it is for the needs of my business, Klamath-Siskiyou Native Seeds. As an owner of a business that supplies native seeds to institutions, agencies, and the public, I rely on the information OregonFlora provides, currently for free. The information is invaluable and crucial for my professional needs.

OregonFlora's mapping tool helps me identify which species are natives to the different areas of Oregon where I work and recreate, and helps me create native planting plans, habitat restoration plans, and native seeding plans for my clients.

I use OregonFlora to help me identify native plants that I encounter on a regular basis. The botanical keys, maps, photos, descriptions, etc. are go-to information for me. Without it, I would need to refer to the information provided by another state that would not be specific to Oregon. Accurate and up-to-date information about Oregon's flora provided by OregonFlora helps nurseries, botanists, scientists, educators, recreationalists, Tribes, foragers, academics, researchers, gardeners, habitat restoration practitioners, and so many more people learn about Oregon's flora, for a wide variety of reasons and applications.

Keeping track of, managing, and expanding the massive body of data that OregonFlora curates is a huge undertaking that constantly needs to be updated for accuracy. For it to remain viable and useful constant updates to botanical name changes, mapping, and research takes a lot of time and money, and OregonFlora can't continue to do so with grants and donations alone — it must get state funding, just like CalFlora in California benefits from state funding. Oregon is way behind California in supporting its Flora, and we need to do more to support OregonFlora at the state level. HB 3173 will do that.

As the interest in growing native plants for the benefit of pollinators, wildlife and biodiversity continues to increase, OregonFlora will continue to be a huge resource for those of us that provide native plant materials for restoration and gardens. The Grow Natives tool on the website is a great resource for Oregonians interested in transitioning their gardens to native plants. The Grow Natives tool helps my customers learn about which species to grow, and it helps bring sales to my company.

OregonFlora is important for all Oregonians. Native plants are part of our lives. Many people define themselves by the plants that surround them.

As a resident that lives in southern Oregon's Siskiyou Mountains, OregonFlora is integral in helping identify the enormous amount of rare, endemic, threatened and endangered species in the region. The Siskiyou Mountains have some of the highest botanical diversity in the United States, and we need an organization like OregonFlora to help track, map, identify and educate about the special plants of Oregon, some that only grow in Oregon and nowhere else on earth.

- Oregon has 4,886 unique plant species that grow without cultivation. Of these, 70% are native species, and 120 are endemic and grow only in Oregon.
- The oregonflora.org website offers sophisticated search and plant identification tools, 1.48 million mappable plant occurrence records, 63,000+ color field photos, and fact sheets for every plant taxon.
- Oregon's economy depends upon its botanical resources. Healthy forests, productive rangelands, agricultural operations, outdoor recreation sites, and native plant horticultural businesses all need reliable data which OregonFlora provides.
- The requested support will leverage 30 years of research, volunteer effort, and citizen science contributions to develop the OregonFlora resources. Sustainable support will help ensure it is maintained.

Thank you for voting in favor of funding OregonFlora through HB 3173.

Sincerely,
Suzie Savoie
Co-owner Klamath-Siskiyou Native Seeds
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