

Dear Committee members, I write in strong support of H 7230, which would designate the month of May, annually, as "Rhode Island Native Plant Month."

Native plants are an integral part of a forest ecosystem. Insects, reptiles, mammals, and birds depend on these native plants.

The best way to protect native plants is to protect a forest in its natural state and prohibit the use of logging vehicles in our public state forests, so these vehicles don't crush native plants and disturb the soil.

There is also a significant issue with invasive species in Rhode Island that thrive in disturbed areas.

For example, when trees are cut down instead of trimmed near power lines, it leads to invasives growing along the roads.

Education about the importance of native plants, which is an important part of this bill, will lead to more people taking care of the natural forests where many of these native plants grow, as well as planting native plants instead of invasive ones and taking precautions to avoid causing disturbances that would lead to invasive plants taking over.

Please pass H 7230, so protecting native plants will become a priority in Rhode Island.

Thank you,

Nathan Cornell

President of the Rhode Island Old Growth Tree Society

Warwick, RI 02886

saveriforests.org