

Practicing what she preaches

Lory Duralia of Bosky Dell Natives is committed to the creek that runs by her native plant nursery

For some, Bosky Dell is the go-to place for plants native to Oregon.

Others know it as a place that gives a whole lot more to the environment than naturesscaped backyards.

Owner Lory Duralia has spent years working to restore and now protect Fields Creek, which runs alongside her nearly three-acre nursery on the outskirts of West Linn.

"I believe it is possibly the only stream anyone has restored like this in its entirety," Duralia said recently while sitting beside the creek behind her home. Her effort began at the top of Petes Mountain and ended where the stream runs into the Tualatin River.

An Oregon native, Duralia began her nursery, Bosky Dell Natives, after moving to the end of Bosky Dell Lane about 20 years ago. Until then, she had been living in Northeast Portland.

Vern Uyetake



Left: Lory Duralia of Bosky Dell Natives stands alongside Fields Creek, which she has spent the past 13 years working to restore and protect. Below: Bosky Dell Natives has grown over the years to carry about 300 species of plants native to the Pacific Northwest.

Duralia was a child care provider at the time, "but I always wanted to be a farmer," she said. When her house's previous owners asked her to take on their native plant nursery, offering to teach her all she needed to know to do well in the field, she jumped at the chance.

Duralia never turned back, even though, at the time, native plant nurseries were taken for granted by many people.

"At the time, not everyone recognized the importance of native plants," she said.

Fortunately that attitude changed, and Bosky Dell — which she said means "wooded glen" in multiple languages — grew. Duralia now carries 300 varieties of species native to the Pacific Northwest.

Many of those species now reside along Fields Creek, where Duralia's restoration effort began about 13 years ago.

She and other neighbors organized Friends of Fields Creek and began organizing yearly work parties to eliminate nonnative, invasive species and replant the creek banks with natives from her nursery.

Now, an area once populated by 30-foot laurels and a 10-foot-tall solid



Vern Uyetake

canopy of Himalayan blackberry, with an understory of solid ivy, is pristine, offering habitat to cutthroat trout and native frogs.

"We wanted to inspire people everywhere to restore little creeks," Duralia said. "This creek is one of the healthiest streams in Oregon. It supports a huge amount of wildlife."

But aside from supporting environmental health, Fields Creek brims with aesthetic value, she said.

"I just had to show people how beautiful a creek can be."

Still, it takes work to keep it that

way. Duralia still relies on some volunteers with so many native plants now established, and those workers need a lot of training. Otherwise she must hire professionals to hold the ivy and blackberry brambles at bay and keep the stream pristine.

"The hardest part is being able to financially support maintenance of the entire thing," Duralia said.

She sells greeting cards, seasonal ornaments and other handmade goods to raise money for creek maintenance.

And her knack for art is evident in an old garage she has

A single parent of two children, she was driven out by concerns about crime.

And so she made her new home on a large plot of land near the base of Petes Mountain, in a rural area just outside of West Linn. Not only were the local schools great, she said, "The area was so beautiful."

◀ refashioned into a workshop for craft sales and free classes at the nursery.

The floor is made of reclaimed lumber from a Tualatin barn, the ceilings are covered in vintage tin tiles and antiques hang from the walls.

Sitting on a back patio are Duralia's "cat-proof bird feeders," made from vintage bird cages with vegetation growing up and around the bars.

Another benefit of Duralia's business are fundraisers she helps set up for schools.

Unlike a lot of fundraisers, the schools take on no risk for these events.

Duralia chooses a selection of plants she thinks will sell the best and loans them out. The schools don't have to buy anything they don't sell.

"They sell what they can and pay wholesale prices for it," Duralia explained. "There's zero financial risk for them."

Her goal is not only to help the schools but to groom the next generation of environmental stewards.

"The kids can incorporate a lot of education into it," she said. "It's good for them to learn about native plants."



53

When two greenhouses collapsed at Bosky Dell Natives in West Linn, nursery owner Lory Duralia rebuilt them and created colorful facades for added interest. Made from recycled materials, many pieces came from Aurora Mills Architectural Salvage such as this barn wood.

◀ "Ultimately, it will make a difference for the environment."

Bosky Dell Natives, 23311 S.W. Bosky Dell Lane in West Linn, 503-638-5945, www.boskydellnatives.com.
— Kara Hansen Murphey

Giving back

Bosky Dell Natives in West Linn provides:

- Plant donations for restoration projects;
- Native plant fundraisers for schools and nonprofit organizations;
- Restoration and ongoing maintenance of Fields Creek, a tributary of the Tualatin River, including creating and selling art to raise money for the effort. Lory Duralia's art can now be found at Lambs Palisades Market in Lake Oswego addition to her nursery.

Vern Uyetake



Lory Duralia stands by some of the items she makes and sells to raise money for restoration work on Fields Creek. Duralia bought a farmhouse on the outskirts of West Linn two decades ago and ended up taking over a native plant business, leading to the growth of Bosky Dell Natives, her nursery on Bosky Dell Lane. Many building materials in the house and around the nursery were salvaged from elsewhere and reused or repurposed.