



The Chinquapin

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Summer 2009

The Official Publication Of The Royal Oak Nature Society

NATURE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

If you would like to become a Royal Oak Nature Society member for the 2009/2010 season (September 2009-August 2010), please fill out a membership form (page 5) and mail it to us along with your check or give the form and check/cash to a Nature Society board member. **If a family membership, please list all of your family members.**

A membership entitles you to have our newsletter, "The Chinquapin", mailed to you four times a year. The mailing begins with the Summer 2009 issue and ends with the Summer 2010 edition. Your membership will help to cover the cost of printing and mailing of our newsletter and will also assist in funding educational programs that we provide.

Non-members are still welcome to come to our monthly speaker programs as well as our nature walks. Those programs and walks are, and always will be, free to anyone who enjoys learning about nature.

Donations are tax deductible.

A Walking Tour in Tenhave Woods

by Don Drife and Ted Vickers

Tenhave Woods contains a wide variety of tree species, many of which are native to Michigan. So we have set up a tour on some of the Tenhave trails where we pass by more than 20 of these species. A map on page 5 shows the location of all of the numbered trees referred to in this article.

This tour will begin outside of the Lexington Blvd entrance. Near the fence, you will see two **Burr Oaks [1]** on either side of the sidewalk. The largest one is probably a centennial tree. These trees formed part of the fence row separating what once was in the 1800's, the Goodwin's farm (to the north) from the White's farm (to the south). Most of the oaks you can see from this spot, both inside and outside the fence are Burr Oaks. Their leaves have lobes that are cut almost to the mid-vein. The acorns are large and have caps that look moss covered. Another name for this tree is Mossy Cup Oak.

Just as you enter the turnstile, look left (west) about eight feet alongside the fence. There you will see a **White Mulberry [2]** that is four inches in diameter. It has orange-brown bark and the upper surface of the leaf is shinny. It is a native of China and was brought to this country in an attempt to produce silk because it is the food plant for the silk worm.

Walk north up the Pond Trail until you come to the intersection with the Sandbar Trail. On your immediate right just before crossing the intersection, you will see several trees **[3]** just a few feet away. The first one is a tree about five inches in diameter with smooth grey bark. This is a **Red Maple**. The tree that is right behind it is a dead **Red Ash**. The mature ashes in Tenhave (and most of southeastern Michigan) were killed by an insect from East Asia, the Emerald Ash Borer. We have

only seedling Ashes in Tenhave and our trees are too small to produce seeds. A few more feet behind the ash is another Red Maple that is about 18 inches in diameter and has a rougher bark that peels off in strips. This larger tree has the shaggy, mature bark type.

Just after just crossing the intersection, there are two small **American Elm [4]** trees at the corner on your right that are about three inches in diameter. Continue heading up the Pond Trail. Many of the trees we are walking by are oaks. The small one inch diameter multi-trunked trees overhanging the trail on both sides are **Witch Hazels [5]**. These trees have yellow flowers in the fall. The seed capsules can be seen on the plants year round. The liniment witch hazel is made from the bark of this tree.

Continue up to Dragonfly Pond. On this side of the pond and south of the benches is a two-trunked **Silver Maple [6]**. On this side of the pond and to your right, you will see a Silver Maple with a wood duck box mounted on it. On the far side of the pond to your right are two large **Eastern Cottonwoods [7]**. One of them has a wood duck box nailed to it. This is a fast growing tree and these individuals are probably only 30 years old. They often grow in wet habitats. The tree gets its name from its seed capsules that look like miniature cotton plants.

From the edge of the pond, continue along the Pond Trail. After walking about 20 paces (1 pace is approximately 2 feet), you will see a **Black Cherry [8]** tree on your right about ten feet off the trail. It has a black bark with plates about the size of potato chips. The bark has been

(Continued on page 2)

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described by some as burnt potato chip bark. A few feet after passing the Cherry tree, you will see a six inch diameter **Norway Maple [9]** along the right side and about a foot off of the trail. This tree has smooth bark with faint white stripes. It is not a native species but comes from Europe. Continuing on, you will see three more Black Cherry trees. The largest Black Cherry is about ten inches in diameter.

As you come to a fork in the trail, you will see a large **White Oak [10]** on your right. On the left in the "Y" of the fork, you will see two trees [11]. The one on the left with alternate leaves (one leaf or bud is at each point along the stem) is a **Bitternut Hickory**. The one on the right with opposite leaves (two leaves or buds that are at each point along the stem) is a **Sugar Maple**.

Turn left and head north on the Pond Trail towards the Goodwin Trail. At a point on your left just as the trail bends to the right, you will see an eight inch diameter Silver Maple, followed by a Black Cherry about eight paces away, then an American Elm [12] just a few feet further on. Being close to two feet in diameter, this is the largest Elm in the park. Most Elms in Michigan die from Dutch Elm Disease just after they are large enough to bear seeds. This particular individual often weeps a wet, slightly slimy, liquid from its upper branches, causing the trunk to appear wet even on dry days. This condition is known as Elm Wetwood and is caused by a fungus. A little further on as the trail bends to left, a large **Black Oak [13]** can be seen along the right edge of the trail.

At the intersection with the Goodwin Trail you will see many large Silver Maples. Turn right and walk up the Goodwin Trail. About 17 paces north of the bird feeder (on your right), you will see a 1 ½ foot diameter tree about one foot off of the right side of the trail. This is a **Swamp White Oak [14]**. As you pass the Swamp Trail on your left, notice that you are walking slightly up hill. The tree species are changing as you leave the swamp forest and move to higher, drier ground. You will begin to pass by several **American Beech [15]** trees on both sides of the trail. They are the smooth, grey bark trees that unfortunately people have carved their names into. If you are here in the winter, the trees hold their tan colored, paper thin leaves throughout most of the winter. The leaf buds that are visible during most of the year are very long, maybe 5-8 times longer than wide. As the trail begins to turn to the right and heads up towards the Sandbar Trail, look for a two foot diameter Sugar Maple on your right and standing just about five feet off of the trail. Continuing on, you will find on your right, the park's largest Black Cherry located amongst the Beech trees.

At the tee with the Sandbar Trail, there stands a large

Red Oak [16]. It is one of the largest trees in the park. It is probably a centennial tree.

Take a left and head up the Sandbar Trail. On your left, the first tree is an American Beech followed by a **Butternut [17]**. It is located just before you come to the Fern Trail. This area all the way south to Jaycee Park was at one time known as Butternut Woods. If you look around the base of the tree you can often find the elongated nuts.

Turn left and go down the Fern Trail. At the first sharp bend, you will pass a Silver Maple [18] on your right. As you walk further along this trail, many of the small, less than two feet tall, opposite branched saplings with pointed buds are Sugar Maples. Many of the alternate leaved saplings are American Beech. Both trees are waiting for an opening in the forest canopy to get sunlight so they can shoot up and grow. Some of these saplings are over 15 years old.

After walking a ways, you will see on the right hand side about twenty feet off the trail, a two foot diameter American Beech [19]. Just about 20 feet after the Beech tree, the trail takes a sharp bend to the right. At that point, look to the left side (west) of the trail. About 60 feet away just behind a small diameter tree that bends almost at a right angle, you can see a two foot diameter **Chinquapin Oak [20]**.

When you come to the Scout Trail, look to your left and you will see a **Blue-beech [21]** about ten feet away. The blue-grey bark is tight to the trunk with several muscular ridges. If you touch the tree it feels strong. Other names for this tree are Ironwood, Musclewood, and American Hornbeam. It is a very slow growing tree. This tree could be over 100 years old. This species likes to grow where it is a little wet but its roots cannot live in standing water. It grows on the edge of the swamp forest and indicates that we are changing habitats.

Turn right at the tee with the Scout Trail. You are again walking among many American Beech trees. As you reach the Sandbar Trail, the tree ahead of you is a Sugar Maple [22]. The tree splits into two separate trunks about six feet off of the ground.

Turn right at the Sandbar Trail. On the left, after about 30 paces is a Black Cherry with its dark burnt potato-chip bark. About eight more paces and about 25 feet off of the trail to your right, you will see a **Basswood [23]** tree. Looking at the base of the tree, it bends to the left and then arches over the trail. The part that is arching over the trail has several rows of holes parallel to the ground. They were made by a woodpecker named the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. It feeds on the sap of trees and is only seen during migration in the spring and fall. In Michigan, it nests farther to the

(Continued on page 4)

SPEAKER PROGRAMS

Our monthly general meeting/speaker programs are now held at the **Royal Oak Middle School** (formerly Donders High School). The school is located at 709 N. Washington, between 11 Mile Road & Catalpa (11 ½ Mile). The meeting/program will be held in the "Gathering Place" or auditorium, both of which can be reached via the school's south-east entrance. Reference our Fall 2008 issue (can be found on our website) for a map showing the location of the school & entrance. At our monthly Wednesday meetings from September to June, we present speaker programs that are usually slide shows focusing on various natural history topics. If you watch nature programs on PBS or the Discovery Channel, this is better because you can meet with the speakers afterwards and ask questions. The general meeting begins around **7:25 pm**, with the speaker program following several minutes later.

"Crawfish Pond, Cummington Parks New Vernal Pond" is being presented on **June 3rd**. In mid October of 2008, we excavated a new vernal pond in Cummington Park. The area was a small cattail marsh before Meijer's drive was built. Before the excavation, it was a swamp forest of silver maples, dead elms and dead ash trees. While we were still digging, a damselfly landed and laid her eggs in the pond that was only a puddle. The manmade pond has now gone through the winter and most of the spring. Come and join Bob Muller, Nature Society Naturalist, on a voyage of discovery and see what changes have occurred. Has the seed base held the seeds of wet land plants from decades ago? What

beside our pioneer damselfly has discovered the pond? Will amphibians find their way to it? We haven't seen any in the park for many years.

"Skulls & Bones" is being held on **September 2nd**. What can skulls that we find in the woods teach us about their owners? How can we find out what kind of animal they belonged to? What can we learn about how they made a living while they were alive? The clues to these questions can be found in the teeth. Be a forensic detective and come join Bob Muller, Nature Society Naturalist, to see what we can find.

NATURE WALKS

CUMMINGSTON PARK: Park & meet at Leafdale & Torquay
TENHAVE WOODS: Park in lot at Marais & Lexington Blvd. and meet at Lexington Entrance (300 feet east of parking lot).

Wearing boots while in the parks is recommended in the winter & spring months. Using insect repellent and dressing appropriately is advised from late spring to the end of summer.

"Late Spring Nature Walk" is being held on **June 16th** (Tuesday) beginning **7:00 pm** at **Tenhave Woods**. Find out what is happening in the woods in late Spring and beginning of Summer.

"Pond in the Summer" is being held on **July 14th** (Tuesday) beginning **7:00 pm** at **Tenhave Woods**. The water level should be lower, enabling us to get a better look at the wetland plant and aquatic life. Plus, we should also be able to see the dragonflies for which the pond was named for.

"Mid Summer Nature Walk" is being held on **August 4th** (Tuesday) beginning **7:00 pm** at **Tenhave Woods**. We will be checking out the mid-summer woodland.

"Fern Walk" is being held on **August 12th** (Wednesday) beginning at **7:00 pm** and there will be a second one on **September 13th** (Sunday) beginning at **2:00 pm**. Both walks are at **Tenhave Woods**.

Join Royal Oak Nature Society botanist, Don Drife, to look at some of the common fern species of Southeast Michigan. Tenhave Woods has 13 species including: Broad Beech, New York, Lady, Silvery Glade Fern, Evergreen Wood Fern, and Christmas Fern.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS & NEW MEMBERS

The Royal Oak Nature Society would like to thank the following individuals/families for either recently becoming new members or renewing

Kimberly Belton
Jackie & Kelly Daniels
Paul Desjardins
Kim Fitzgerald
Ann Forsaith
Robert Gasiorowski
Diane Gurzick
Kristine Hill
Dan & Heidi Keifer
Dennis & Mary Kleiss
Kerrie McMillen
Janice Reichel
Virginia Safronoff
Saro Family
Nancy Schermerhorn
Sue, Bob & Stephanie Schneider
Gary Smith
Charles Svalya

LOOKING FOR DREAM CRUISE VOLUNTEERS

Dream Cruise is only a few months away. It is time to step forward and volunteer to help us with parking for a couple of hours at Gunn Dyer Park on Saturday, August 15, 2009. We start around 8 am and stay until about 7 pm. The last couple of years have been extremely busy in the early afternoon. So, we could use all of the help that we can get.

If you have some free time on the 15th and would like to give us a helping hand, please give Ted Vickers a call at 248-549-5366 or e-mail him at nature-society@ci.royal-oak.mi.us. You'll be glad you did.

(Continued from A Walking Tour in Tenhave from page 2)
north. The tree has alternate, heart shaped, toothed leaves.

About 20 paces after the trail bends to the right (40 foot fallen tree on the right), you will pass by a 2 ½ foot diameter Sugar Maple about a foot off of the trail. Traveling on, you will see more Sugar Maples, Beeches & trees in the White Oak group. As we reach a point where the Sandbar Trail meets the north end of the Sassafras Trail [24], we conclude our first Tenhave Woods tree tour.

We walked past 21 different species of

trees on this tour. Tenhave Woods and the area just outside of the Woods, contain over 40 species of trees. In a future article, we will finish walking the rest of the Sandbar Trail and hike the Sassafras Trail, talking about the different tree species that we pass by.

On a nice sunny day, come to Tenhave Woods, bring this article with you and take a stroll along these trails. By doing this, you will begin to see for yourself, the large diversity of trees that can be found in Tenhave. Enjoy your walk.

Nature Nights 2009

Both Nature Nights in 2009 were held during the very cold month of January. The first one was originally scheduled at Royal Oak's Upton Elementary for Friday, January 16th, but super cold weather closed the school that day. Upton's Nature Night was re-scheduled for the following Thursday (22nd) and it went off without a hitch. This was our second go around at Upton as we had also did one there back in March of 2006. Both times, there was a great turnout. One week later (Thursday, January 29th), we took our program to Royal Oak's Keller Elementary for the first time. The total for both nature nights was our highest family turnout ever for one season! The total number was 370, which included the children and their family members.

The Nature Society wants to thank Lisa Hailer from Upton Elementary and Allison

Gardella from Keller Elementary in coordinating their respective Nature Nights with us. Without their help, we would not have been able to put these programs on this year.

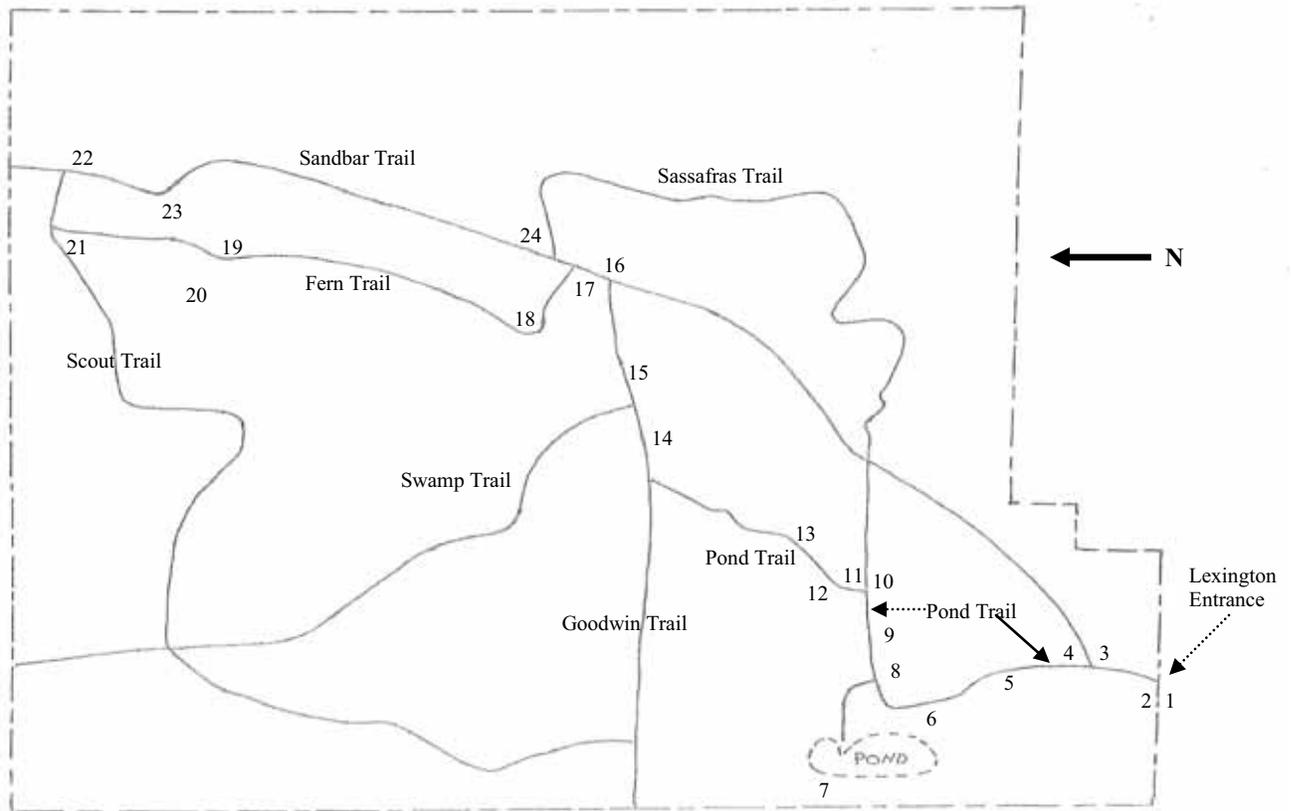
A special thanks goes out to all of our 2009 exhibitors: Nancy Vickers-Crafts; Bob Muller-Tree Rings & Skulls/Skins; Dena Serrato-Seed Planting; Jimmy Kipps-Insects; Kristine Hammond-Birds; Daniel Brier-Little Creatures; Leo Long-North American Native Fish; Edi & Sue Sonntag-Reptiles, Matt Hackett from Madison Heights Nature Center-Mammals, Rebecca Johnson from the Detroit Zoo-Amphibians; Jennifer Gabrys-Owl Pellets and Don Drife-Tree Rings & Owl Pellets and all of their helpers.

If you know of someone who has a nature collection or display and might be interested participating in an upcoming Nature Night, please have them contact us.



Nature Night at Upton Elementary

Tenhave Woods Walking Tour Map



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Royal Oak Nature Society Membership Form

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MEMO: Membership

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Royal Oak Nature Society
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Royal Oak, MI 48067

Names (individual/family members): _____

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City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

1 year membership rates (September-August)

Individual: \$5 Family/Supporting: \$10 & up

Donations are tax deductible

NATURE SOCIETY TEAMS

Please contact us if you would like to become actively involved with one or more of our teams:

Stewardship: Maintains a trail system and enhances the overall park experience at Tenhave Woods & Cummingston Park.

Communications: Publicizes organizational activities to the general membership and public through various mediums and performs any other forms of communications required by the board.

Education: Provides outreach and liaison to outside individuals, groups and schools to promote environmental education.

Fundraising: Is responsible for the fund-raising efforts of the Nature Society, which includes the coordinating and organizing of the Annual Spring Fundraiser & other fund-raiser programs approved by the board.

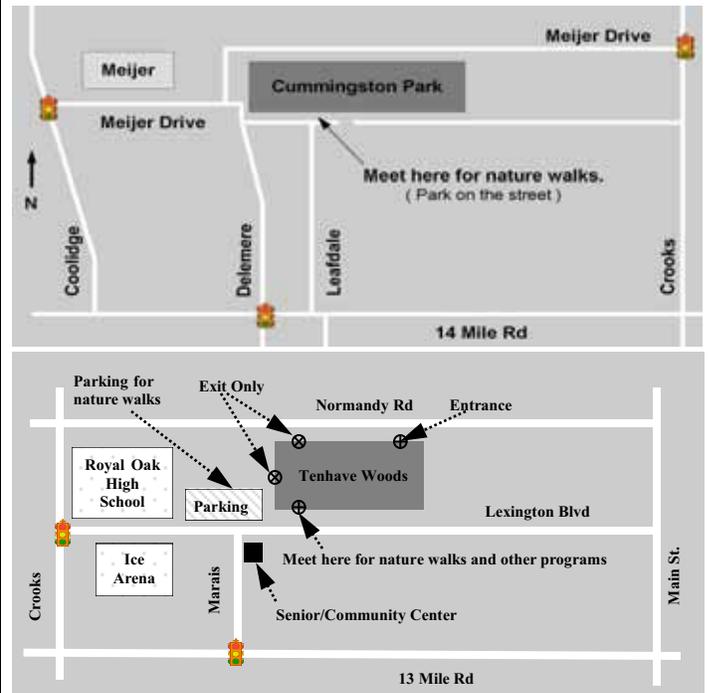
Programming: Is responsible for setting up the speaker programs, workshops and all of the nature programs within Cummingston Park and Tenhave Woods.

Ways & Means: Investigates means of grant solicitation and then follows through accordingly.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- President: Tim Turner (248-320-4819)
- Vice President: John DeLisle (248-585-9002)
- Treasurer: Jeanne Sarnacki (248-246-3380)
- Stewardship: Cummingston: Don Drife (248-528-0479) & Tenhave Woods: Dena Serrato (248-542-2820)
- Communication: Ted Vickers (248-549-5366)
- Education: Ted Vickers (acting)
- Fundraiser: Open
- Ways & Means: Helen Cost (248-549-9423)
- Newsletter: Ted Vickers Engineer: Richard Stoll

Our Nature Parks & Senior/Community Center



To locate and print out Tenhave Woods & Cummingston Park trail maps, please go to our web site (listed below under our tree logo), link on to "Park Locations" and then "Map for park trail locations"

The Royal Oak Nature Society is a nonprofit education and stewardship group working within the city of Royal Oak's two nature parks, Tenhave Woods and Cummingston Park. Our mission is to foster awareness and usage of these two natural areas. We accomplish this by providing stewardship for the continuing improvement and maintenance of them plus we offer a wide range of natural history educational programs.

The Royal Oak Nature Society
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