



The Chinquapin

/ˈchi[nq]-ki-ˈpin/

Spring 2010

The Official Publication Of The Royal Oak Nature Society

NATURE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

This membership season begins in September 2009 and ends in August 2010. There are four membership levels. General Membership is free and with it, you get Nature Society schedule updates e-mailed to you at least once a month. Associate Membership cost \$5 per year and gets you the above benefit along with four newsletters, "The Chinquapin", mailed to your household quarterly. Supporting Membership is \$10 & up per year and gets you all of the above benefits plus e-mailed Tenhave Woods & Cummingston park updates from our naturalist (Bob Muller) & our botanist (Don Drife). Patron Membership is \$50 & up per year and gets you all of the above benefits plus two private walks a year, listed as a patron in our Fundraiser Program & newsletter, invitation to our day before the Dream Cruise picnic at Gunn Dyer Park and one free

(Continued on page 2)

Eagle Scout Projects-Fall 2009

by Ted Vickers

The number of Eagle Scout projects declined from the eight we had in 2008 to only two in 2009. But, both of them should have a big impact on Tenhave Woods. One project added dirt to raise the height of some of the trails so hopefully they stay drier in the spring and the other one added signage to the park.

During the spring of 2009, wet weather made several sections of Tenhave trails impassible. The Pond Trail was rerouted in 2008 to an area we thought would not flood in the spring. We were wrong. In the spring of 2009, there was water everywhere near the Goodwin/Pond trail intersection. The Fern Trail was build in June of 2008, and it too had several spots that were impassable. And the east part of the park which supposedly never floods, did so in one section of the Sassafras Trail near one of the tulip trees.

Remedying these problem areas became the Eagle Scout project of Stephen Kaurala of Boy Scout Troop 1610 and a senior at Berkley High School. After about 27 hours of planning, he was ready to go.

On Saturday, October 17 around 9 am, Stephen's crew met at the Lexington entrance. Perry Gentner of Machine Works (also excavated Dragonfly & Crawfish Pond) supplied 130 yards of dirt & a bobcat. Stephen arranged to rent another bobcat to be used in moving the dirt. The rental money for the bobcat and gas came

from a bottle drive he spearheaded. With Perry operating his bobcat, Richard Stoll, a Nature Society volunteer driving the rented bobcat, and a work force of 23 adults and young people that Stephen recruited, the workday began. The bobcats were used to move the dirt to the three problem areas. Then the dirt was spread and smoothed down by Stephen's crew. Before the dirt was placed on the Sassafras Trail, the trail



Stephen Kaurala standing alongside the Sassafras Trail

near the tulip tree was first moved 20 feet to the east. By 5:30 pm, the Eagle Scout portion of this project was completed. The next day, Perry came back in and finished up using up the remainder of the 130 yards of dirt to fill and grade a few more places including the trail section between the Lexington entrance and the pond.

This project was important to Stephen because he wanted to make a change in at least one person's life. He said "If one person that is wheelchair-bound utilizes the trails, the project was well worth it."

Over the years, there have been many

(Continued on page 5)

PLEASE NOTE

Our June speaker program **will be held** at the **Senior/Community Center** & not at the Middle School. See p.3 for details.

Dragonfly Pond Extension

by Ted Vickers

For several years looking at the Dragonfly Pond in Tenhave Woods, it was thought that we should have made it larger. The area we originally excavated is rather small. Although the pond in early spring was about 100 by 300 feet, by late June the water levels had dropped enough to make it about 50 by 75 feet. This is the size of the pond as tadpoles turn into toads. By having more water, the tadpole population might be higher than in previous



Brian Cooley cutting down a tree

years. Improving the pond is also important because it is a major draw in getting people into the park.

The Nature Society Board decided to enlarge Dragonfly Pond last fall. The pond extension, will make it closer to the size it was in the 1920's. We determined that by simply taking about a foot or

more of the dirt in the area north of the original excavation, we could maintain a larger surface area later into the summer. It was also decided that dirt from this future excavation could be used to build up a large dry observation area on the edge of the pond attached to the

“island” (a pile of dirt left over from the original excavation).

The first step was to cut down and get rid of about 12 trees (mostly silver maple) that were in the area that we wanted to extend the pond into. So on November 7, 2009, Brian & Chris Cooley from Community Arborist, volunteered their time to come in and cut these trees down. It was an all day process as it took a lot of time to plan where the cuts in trees would be made. If they were cut in the wrong places, those trees could get hung up in the other trees that were still standing. On November 17, Perry Gentner from Machine Works, brought his equipment in and removed all the cut trees from the area. On the 20th, he and his son removed all of the stumps and then began with the excavation. Perry also moved our



Looking north at the completed Dragonfly Pond Project

(Continued on page 3)

(Membership continued from page 1)

ticket to our annual fundraiser.

If you want to be an Associate, Supporting or Patron member, please fill out a membership form (page 5) and mail it along with a check to the Nature Society. Please list other household members you want included as Nature Society members (no extra cost).

Through your donation, you will be helping to cover the costs to produce our newsletter and will also be assisting in funding educational programs that we provide. Donations are always tax deductible.

If you only want to be a Gen-

eral Member, please e-mail us the information asked for on our membership form (p.5) & send that information to: naturesociety@ci.royal-oak.mi.us.

Your membership whether General, Associate, Supporting or Patron, will help to strengthen this organization.

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.

**COMMUNITY
ARBORIST** INC.

-OWNER
OPERATED
-LICENSED
-INSURED

-- 248 --

752-6630

BRIAN COOLEY
ISA CERTIFIED ARBORIST
MI 0753-A

VISIT OUR WEB SITE

www.gottrees.com

PLANT HEALTH CARE PROGRAMS
MICROBIAL AND ORGANIC SOIL RECHARGE
INSECT & DISEASE CONTROL
TRIMMING & REMOVAL NEW PLANTINGS
STUMP GRINDING FIREWOOD

SPEAKER PROGRAMS

Our monthly general meeting/speaker programs are usually held at the **Royal Oak Middle School** (formerly Dondero High School). The school is located at 709 N. Washington, between 11 Mile Road & Catalpa (11 ½ Mile). **NOTE **** **The upcoming June meeting will be held at the Senior/Community Center at 3500 Marais** (north of 13 Mile Rd between Crooks & Main). At the Middle School, the meeting/program will be held in the "Gathering Place" or auditorium, both of which can be reached via the school's southeast 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.

"Orchids" is being held on **March 3rd**. The Orchid Family is the largest family of flowering plants. They occur on every continent except Antarctica. There are 55 species currently growing in Michigan. Don Drife, Nature Society botanist, grew up in an orchid hunting family and has been studying and photographing orchids in Michigan for many years. He took his first orchid picture 35 years ago and has spent time in the field studying natural history with people like Walter Nickel, Paul Thompson, and George Thomson. Don and his wife, Joyce, pursue orchids together. This program will highlight the diversity of orchid species that occur in Michigan. Come and join Don to learn what makes orchids unique among flowering plants and what habitats they can be found in.

"Beavers in the Burbs" is being held on **April 7th**. North America's largest rodent is alive and well and has been spotted in the Detroit area. The beaver was hunted almost to extinction in the 1800's, but has made an amazing comeback. Retired Sterling Heights naturalist Gordon Lonie spent two summers photographing a family of beavers in the Clinton River. Adults, yearlings and kits happily share the same den. They make their presence known by felling trees so they can feed on their leaves, twigs and bark. The best time to watch beavers is at night. All you need to enjoy the show is a lawn chair, a Coleman lantern and a few twigs for them to eat. Come and enjoy a rare close-up look at these fascinating creatures.

"Destination: Mexico- Monarch Butterflies On Their Winter Roosts" is being held on **May 5th**. Several times in late February, Diane Pruden, leader of our annual mushroom walks in Tenhave Woods, has traveled to the highlands of central Mexico to visit "our" Monarch Butterflies on their winter roosts. In August and September, these butterflies leave our area to go to these highlands. Diane will talk about their lives around here, their migration routes to Mexico and then their return. She will also talk about some cultural aspects of the areas surrounding the Monarch's winter roosts and discuss a project involving the annual tagging of the Monarchs. Join us in May to learn about their long and interesting journey to the mountains of Mexico and back.

"Nature Society Year in Review" is being held on **June 2nd**. This year our June program **will be held at the Royal Oak Senior/Community Center** (3500 Marais) instead of at the middle school. We will talk about what has been going on with the Nature Society, Cummingston Park, Tenhave Woods and our future arboretum in Worden Park East. A photo show will depict some of those activities. We will finish off the evening by talking about some things we are planning to do in the future.

Master Plan

Our original Master Plan (2002) has been revised. Please log on to our website & link on to "Reports" to check out the Nature Society's 2009 Master Plan v.3. Feel free to contact us about any comments you may have about it.

(Continued from page 2)

bird feeder that was located near the Pond/Goodwin trail intersection, to an area adjacent to the benches that are located just east of the pond. On the 21st, he and his son finished the excavation, built a new observation area with the excess dirt and also used some of that dirt to raise trail heights in the surrounding area.

The Nature Society wants to thank Brian & Chris Cooley along with Perry and his son in doing a great job in helping us to expand Dragonfly Pond. We are looking forward to the end of April when the American Toads' trilling whistle can be heard once again and once more in mid June when tadpoles turn into toads and begin their mass exodus from the pond. With a larger pond this year, we are hoping to have a bumper crop of new toads this year. If you get a chance, please come and see what Dragonfly Pond looks like now and again this coming spring.

NATURE WALKS

There is at least one walk per month with more per month added during the spring wildflower and fall color seasons. An emphasis is put on understanding the different forest types found in our parks. Further information is given on individual plant and animal species, also the geology and human history of the area. 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.

CUMMINGSTON PARK: Park & meet at Leafdale & Torquay

TENHAVE WOODS: Park in lot at Marais & Lexington Blvd. and meet at the Lexington entrance (300 feet east of parking lot). For the "Owl Hoot", park & meet at Marais/Lexington Blvd parking lot.

Our **4th Annual Open House** is being held on **Saturday, May 1st**. Check out all of the programs & walks listed below. Please join us for a entertaining & educational day. First walk begins at 9 am & last one starts at 3 pm.

"**Owl Hoot**" is being held at **Tenhave Woods** on Thursday, **March 18th** at **7:30 pm**. We will walk into Tenhave Woods and attempt to lure in or have screech & great horned owls answer tape recordings of their calls.

"**Spring Equinox Walk**" is being held at **Tenhave Woods** on Saturday, **March 20th** at **10:00 am**. We will be looking for the first signs of the reawakening of the Tenhave plant community.

"**Pond Life**" programs will take place at **Tenhave Woods's Dragonfly Pond** and will be held on :

Saturday, **April 10th** at **10:00 am**

Saturday, **May 1st** at **11:30 am** & again from **1- 3 pm**

Sunday, **May 16th** at **2:00 pm**

We will be sampling the vernal pond for what is living in it. There will be viewing trays available to examine what we find. For those interested small aquarium nets will be available for you to catch your own pond life and have us identify. Come and learn about the interesting aquatic wildlife of Dragonfly Pond.

"**Spring Wildflower Walks**" will take place at **Tenhave Woods** and be held on:

Saturday, **April 10th** at **12 noon**

Sunday, **April 18th** at **2:00 pm**

Saturday, **April 24th** at **10:00 am**

Saturday, **May 1st** at **10:00 am & 1:45 pm**

Some of the wildflowers we will be looking for are Spring Beauty, Trout Lily, Bloodroot, & Spicebush, Red & White

Trillium, blue & yellow violets, Spring Beauty, Wood Poppy, Jack-in-the-Pulpit, Wood Anemone and Wild Geranium.

Other programs and nature walks being held during our **Open House on May 1st** at **Tenhave Woods** are:

9:00 am: Bird Walk-- Join us for a look at the resident birds and some that are just passing through.

1 to 3 pm: Nature Photography with professional photographers, Pat & Ray Coleman,

1:15 pm: Animal Habitat For Young Children Walk- Kristine Hill, a high school science teacher, leads a walk that is designed to make children aware that all living things, no matter how big or small, require food, water, shelter and space to survive. Program is geared for children from 5 to 8 years old.

1:30 pm: Tree Walk- Tenhave Woods has 43 species of trees. Come and learn from Don Drife, Nature Society botanist, about some of the common tree species of southeastern Michigan.

3:00 pm: Nature Walk for the Physically Challenged- Join us for a short (500 feet) walk down the cement sidewalk behind the Senior Center. Many different trees, shrubs, and wildflowers are right along the pathway. With luck we will see a few migrating birds. The sidewalk is level and barrier free. It provides an easy way to see nature.

Royal Oak Nature Society's 5th Annual Fundraiser

WHEN: April 16th (Friday), 2010

WHERE: Royal Oak Elks Club (2401 E. 4th Street at Stephenson Hwy, Royal Oak)

TIME: 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

ACTIVITIES: Silent auction, 50/50 raffle, and an awards ceremony.

TICKET COST: \$10 advance; \$12 at the door

WHERE TO PURCHASE TICKETS: Speaker programs, nature walks, any Nature Society board member or just send a check by mail.

MAILING CHECKS:

- Write check out for \$10/person
- Payable to the "Royal Oak Nature Society"
- MEMO: Fundraiser Ticket(s)

- Mail check to:

Royal Oak Nature Society
1600 N. Campbell Rd.
Royal Oak, MI 48067

Ticket (s) will be waiting for you at the door

PURPOSE OF FUNDRAISER: To raise money for improvement projects in Tenhave Woods & Cummington Park, to build an arboretum in Worden Park East and for the building of an Environmental Education Center.

If you can help us with food or an item that we can use for our silent action, please be sure to contact us. Hope to see you on April 16th.

(Continued from page 1)

requests to mark the trails and put up trail maps for our two nature parks, Cummingston and Tenhave. Eric Manidok from Boy Scout Troop 1610 and a senior at Royal Oak High School, proposed a project for Tenhave Woods that would accomplish that for one of those parks. He would be placing trail maps at each park entrance and trail identification markers at each trail intersection.

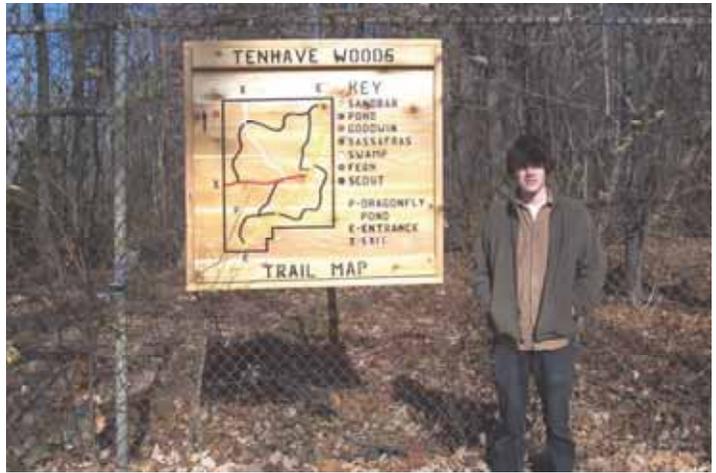
This project would require about 20 hours of planning plus two months of routing out and painting the 13 trail signs and 2 trail maps needed to complete this project. The wood, paint and brushes required for the project were paid for by money that was raised through a bottle collection drive. Each of the sign posts cost around \$20. Eric and Bill Knapp (father of one of the other scouts in Troop 1610) did the routing of the signs. Eric said "using Mr. Knapp's woodworking shop and all of his equipment was vital to constructing the signs and the making of the signs was the most difficult part of the project." In addition, Eric's mother, brother, sister and friends helped to paint them.

The workday for the installation was on Saturday, November 7. Eric's crew began gathering around 9:30 am with hole diggers, wheelbarrows, shovels, water, and cement supplied by the Nature Society. While the trail signs were being placed at the intersections, trail map signs were being hung on the fence near the two entrances. Around 1:30 pm, the project was called com-

plete. Several people walking through the park that day came up and commented on how nice the signs looked.

Over 50 people, 20 adults and 30 scouts, were involved with this project from the making of the signs to the actual installation of them. This project was Eric's from the beginning. Eric said, "He chose this project because it was original, and he wanted my Eagle Scout project to be a lasting physical reminder of effort and organization."

The Nature Society thanks everyone who assisted with these two projects and especially Perry Gentner who supplied the bobcat and the dirt for the first project and the two project leaders, Stephen Kaurala and Eric Manidok.



Eric Manidok standing in front of trail map

PERRY 248.379.8202

Machine Works Co.

DIRT & CONCRETE REMOVAL
COMPLETE RESIDENTIAL SITE DEVELOPMENT

EXCAVATING | TRENCHING | TRUCKING | GRADING

Heartfelt Thanks to Perry Gentner For Making Our Vernal Ponds Become a Reality

4934 Fernlee
Royal Oak, MI 48073

HEATH PRESS

DIGITAL PUBLISHING & PRINT SERVICES
www.heathpress.com

Phone: 248.288.5580
Fax: 248.288.1430
printdoctor@heathpress.com

Royal Oak Nature Society Membership Form

Please make check out to: **Royal Oak Nature Society**
MEMO: Membership

Mail completed form & check to:
Royal Oak Nature Society
1600 N. Campbell Rd.
Royal Oak, MI 48067

Names (individual/household members): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

1 Year Membership (September-August)

- General (free)
- Associate (\$5)
- Supporting (\$10 & up)
- Patron (\$50 & up)

NATURE SOCIETY TEAMS

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

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.

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

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Don Drife (248-528-0479)

Vice President & Cummingston Park Stewardship: John DeLisle (248-585-9002)

Treasurer & Ways & Means: Helen Cost (248-549-9423)

Recording Secretary: Nancy Vickers (248-549-5366)

Tenhave Woods Stewardship: Dena Serrato (248-542-2820)

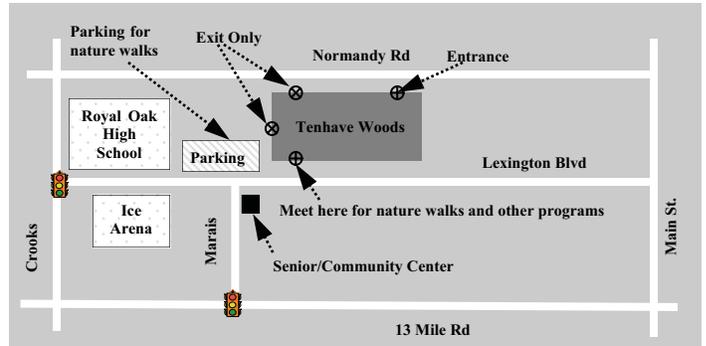
Communication & Education (acting): Ted Vickers (248-549-5366)

Program: Bob Muller (248-398-0195)

Newsletter: Ted Vickers

Engineer: Richard Stoll

Royal Oak Nature Parks



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
 1600 N. Campbell
 Royal Oak, MI 48067
 248-246-3380
 nature.society@ci.royal-oak.mi.us
 www.ci.royal-oak.mi.us/nature



FIRST CLASS MAIL