



The Chinquapin /'chi[ng]-ki-' pin/

*The Official Publication of
The Royal Oak Nature Society*

A volunteer group working to protect and promote Royal Oak's nature preserves, while enjoying and sharing environmental education with the community

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Ash Trees Under Attack

By Dena Serrato, Master Woodland Manager



One of our favorite and most widely used shade trees, the ash, is in jeopardy here in Southeast Michigan. People have taken the ash for granted as a durable and beautiful tree for use in home and public landscapes for many years. We admire its yellow and maroon autumnal hues and utilize its dense strong wood for firewood, baseball bats, oars, tool handles and furniture. In nature, the paddle shaped seeds of the native ash provide food for small mammals and many species of butterflies use ash as a host plant to raise their caterpillars.

Recently, a small green beetle called the emerald ash borer has been attacking and killing many ash trees in the metro Detroit area. It probably came into Michigan from Asia on wood packing material used for shipping cargo. Its larvae feed on the inner bark and conductive tissues of the tree, producing tunnels that eventually girdle and kill the trees. This is the first time this beetle has been identified in North America and can be found in Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Livingston, Washtenaw, and Monroe counties in Michigan, and Essex County in Canada. Western Wayne County has been especially affected, with many



streets almost bare of trees where ash had been planted extensively. Our resident naturalist, Bob Muller, reports that several ash trees just inside the entrance to Cummington Park, one of Royal Oak's nature parks, appear to now be under attack. The Royal Oak Department of Public Works is assessing the extent of infestation to the trees located on city property and is in the process of developing an action plan to treat the trees.

As homeowners, there are a number of actions we can take to care for the ash trees on our own property. The first thing to do is to identify the trees that you own to determine if one or more of them are ash. You can look at a tree identification book or on the Internet to find out what ash trees look like, or hire a professional to review your site. Look for compound leaves 7-12" long. Each leaf has 5-7 leaflets arranged in an opposite fashion on the stem.

Once you decide that you have an ash, start looking for signs of infestation.



Symptoms to look for are: small D-shaped holes in the bark created when the adult beetle exits the tree, woodpecker activity, vertical splits in the bark, dead branches, thin or yellowing foliage, and dense sprouting of new growth at the base of the trunk and branches. Seemingly healthy trees may already be infested, so early detection is very important.



If you believe your tree is infested, the next step is to decide whether to treat the tree or to remove it. The Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) recommends that trees that exhibit 35-50% dieback should be removed and destroyed. Trees that show 10-35% dieback may respond to chemical treatments and improved cultural practices such as supplemental watering, mulching, and proper fertilization. Homeowners can attempt to treat smaller trees with insecticides that are available at local nurseries, but it would be wise to have a commercial pesticide applicator treat larger and more valuable trees.

If your tree dies, or you decide to remove it, it is extremely important to dispose of the wood properly. Chipping, burning and burying the wood are all options. The MDA has issued a quarantine to prevent all parts of ash trees, including logs and firewood, and all ash nursery stock from leaving the six counties in Michigan where emerald ash borer has been found. Ash wood that has been chipped into pieces 1" or smaller can be removed because the insect cannot survive on wood that small.

If you do have to remove one or more ash trees from your property, diversity is the word to remember when deciding what to use as replacements. Our urban and suburban landscapes are planted with a very narrow selection of deciduous and evergreen trees and shrubs. The more diverse a landscape is, one that includes a large variety of plant species, the better able it is to fight off attack from insects and disease. Homeowners can view the task of replacing their ash trees as an opportunity to choose both native and non-invasive non-native species of trees and shrubs to plant as replacements. Choosing the appropriate tree for your site takes some research and informed decision-making. Analyze your site for soil type, drainage, sun and wind exposure, and proximity to your house and utility lines. Think about what is important to you, i.e. spring and summer flowers, autumn foliage, winter interest, edible fruits, habitat for wildlife, etc. Then research in books and on the Internet what varieties of trees will do best in your given situation.

Planting with diversity in mind will not only help us have healthier urban forests; it will help the environment in general. In reference to this subject, Bob Muller comments, "More and more, the world's biodiversity is coming under attack as we transport organisms from continent to continent. It seems that in doing this we lessen the species diversity everywhere... The problem with the ashes is just an echo of the continuing pressures on North American biodiversity."

Even though the emerald ash borer problem has the potential to have a devastating effect on the ash population in Michigan, we can take positive actions now to make our environment healthier for the future. If you would like more information on the emerald ash borer, refer to the Michigan State University website: www.msue.msu.edu/reg_sel/roberts/ash/index.html.

Photo credit: http://www.michigan.gov/mda/0,1607,7-125-2961_2968_18323---,00.html



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Bird Feeder in Tenhave Woods

After several months absences the Tenhave bird feeder has returned to the park. The feeder was built at Kimball High School and placed in the park in the mid 1970's, but it had seen better days. The Nature Society has Richard Stoll to thank for the repairs and redesign of the loading shoot. Richard and his son Andrew reinstalled the feeder November 9th. Wild Birds unlimited of Royal Oak donated the 50 pounds of seed needed to fill the feeder. So after about twenty years of non-use, the bird feeder is back in action. This will be a great place to sit and observe our native birds on a winter day. Why not take a walk and see what we are attracting, and let us know what you see.



Boy Scout Trail Projects

Tenhave Woods Trail Project
Organized by: Andrew Mast
Troop 1629



Cummingston Park Trail Project
Organized by: Jimmy Hutton
Troop 1610



Nature Night at Salter Center

November 14th proved to be a very successful evening for our Nature Night at the Salter Center. Boys & Girls Club members along with kids in Royal Oak Recreation programs learned to identify bird calls with Kristine Hammond, worked with Nancy Vickers on nature crafts, learned about tree ring growth from the Boy Scouts, and observed a display of nature items from Matt Hackett, Madison Heights Nature Center's naturalist. During the evening, the kids were filling out raffle tickets for Oakland County & Michigan State Park day passes and Cranbrook Science Center Museum tickets. We wrapped up the evening by having one of the Boy Scouts draw the winning raffle tickets.

Because everything went so well, we have been invited back this spring to do another Nature Night at the Salter Center. We are also hoping to do a Nature Night at Starr Elementary this coming spring. If anyone wants to help us with any of our upcoming nature programs, please give Kristine Hammond a call. It was a lot of fun for everyone and we promise that if you join us, you too will have a good time!

Get in Touch with Us!

We now have a phone number and address at the City! Our phone number lists upcoming events and allows you to leave us messages. And of course, you can still contact us via the Web.

We would appreciate it if you would let us know if there has been any change in your street address, e-mail address or phone number.

Phone: 248-246-3380

Address: 1600 N. Campbell Rd, RO, MI 48067

Email: naturesociety@ci.royal-oak.mi.us

If you have an e-mail address and haven't given it to us, we would be grateful if you would pass it along, as it makes it easier for us to contact you with new information.



Newsletter Staff:

Editor – Heather J. Muller
Editor – Gretchen Greenwood
Distribution – Ted Vickers

General Meeting with Speaker Programs

7:00 p.m. – Royal Oak Senior Center

Date	Speaker (s)	Topic	Description
January 8	Nancy Tar	New Zealand A to Z	Nancy Tar will discuss and show slides of the interesting birds, plants and forests of New Zealand. Nancy is a past president of both the Oakland and Michigan Audubon Societies.
February 5	D.J. Kurkowski	Michigan Big Tree Hunt	D.J. will be talking to us about a program he is involved in that locates champion trees in Michigan. D.J. is an assistant Forrester for the Detroit Recreation Department.
February 26	Elizabeth McKenney	Landscaping with Native Plants	Come and find out about the activities of the Detroit chapter of the Wild Ones plus see how to use Native Plants to create ecologically functioning landscapes around homes and communities. Elizabeth is the president of the Detroit chapter of the Wild Ones.

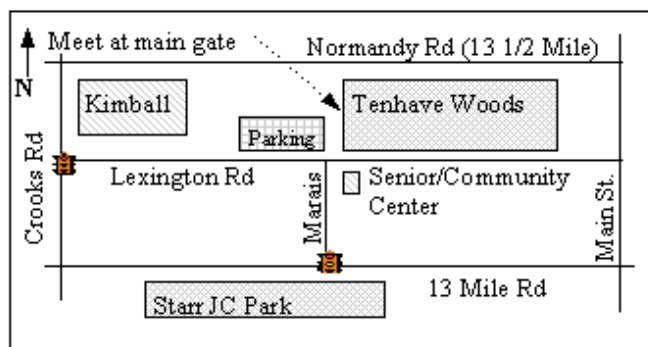
Nature Walk Programs

Meet at the park

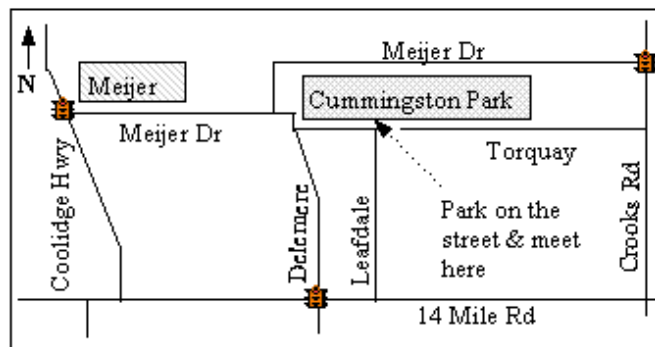
Date	Day	Time	Location	Theme
January 11	Saturday	10:00 a.m.	Cummingston Park	Winter Trees
February 8	Saturday	10:00 a.m.	Tenhave Woods	Resident Birds
March 1	Saturday	10:00 a.m.	Cummingston Park	Woody Plants

Our Parks

Tenhave Woods at Quickstad Park



Cummingston Park



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