



THE Chinquapin

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FALL 2005

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ROYAL OAK NATURE SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

*Current Membership
Season*

Sept 2005 to Aug 2006

Royal Oak Nature Society membership dues for the current season are now payable. Please fill out a membership form (page 5) and mail it along with a check to the Nature Society or give the form and check/cash to a Nature Society board member.

A membership entitles you to have our newsletter, "*The Chinquapin*", mailed to you four times a year. The mailing begins with the fall issue and ends with the summer one. 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.

Nature Society's Communications Committee

One of the Communications Committee's main responsibilities is to provide publicity about organizational activities to the general membership and the public. Nature organizations and Nature Society members receive the event schedule & other information through our newsletter, "*The Chinquapin*". The general public gets information about our events from the newspapers, Royal Oak's Insight magazine, web sites and distributed flyers. Lists of places where the Nature Society's event schedule (flyer) is available and sources that disseminate publicity information for us, can be found on page 2.

Our newsletter is currently put together by Ann Williams & Ted Vickers. Ann does the layout/graphic design work and Ted does the editing. Article ideas usually come from the Communications Committee and Nature Society board members, but anyone is welcome to pass on suggestions. We have a good core of writers, but could always use additional help. Anyone who enjoys writing about nature is welcome to write for us. Heath Press, located in Royal Oak, does the printing of our newsletter. They do a great job at a reasonable cost.

Communications also maintains a scrapbook that features the Nature Society and Royal Oak's two nature parks, Tenhave Woods &

Cummingston Park. Included are news articles about the parks and us, past issues of our newsletter, a Nature Society overview, lists of past speaker programs and group walks, a photo section and other information. If you are interested in thumbing through the scrapbook, it is usually available at one of our speaker programs.

For the last couple of years, the Society gained some extra exposure by taking part in some local events. In 2004, a display depicting the Nature Society was set up by Kristine Hammond at Royal Oak's Department of Public Service Open House and Recycling Jamboree held at Kimball High School. The display includes park location & trail maps, photos of events & both nature parks and a list of Nature Society activities. For the last two years at Royal Oak in Bloom, Ted & Nancy Vickers have set up a table with over 60 people stopping by each time, asking questions about the Nature Society and picking up information about us. And last spring, Ted Vickers set up the display at the Sierra Club's first Earth Day Festival at the Troy Elks Club. In the future, the Nature Society will be looking for other events that will showcase us along with Tenhave Woods & Cummingston Park.

A recorded message with our upcoming nature walk, speaker program schedule and other

continued on page 2

information can be heard by calling 248-246-3380. The voice you hear is Ann Holcomb's. Messages can be left at the end of the recorded message.

Another great place to get Nature Society information is on our web site. By going to www.ci.royal-oak.mi.us/nature, you will find speaker program & nature walk schedules, contact information, volunteer opportunities, the Nature Society's master plan & bylaws, flora & bird list, park location & trail maps, newsletter archives plus a link to our photo album.

In addition to the above, Communications maintains the Nature Society's membership list, recruits and coordinates volunteers for service and special events, and is responsible for writing thank-

DESEMINATES PUBLICITY INFO

*Daily Tribune & Macomb Daily
Detroit News SE Oakland Section
Detroit Free Press SE Oakland Section
Mirror
Oakland Press
Royal Oak Insight Magazine
Royal Oak Government web site
Royal Oak Nature Society web site
Royal Oak Garden Club
Clinton River Watershed Council
Master Gardeners of Oakland County
Oakland Land Conservancy
Southeast Michigan Botanical Club
Urban Ideas web site
Wild Ones*

you letters to our guest speakers.

Currently, there are three of us on the Communications Committee. If you would like to get involved with the Committee, make comments about the

FLYER DISTRIBUTION

*Royal Oak Library & City Hall
Royal Oak Recreation Department
Royal Oak DPS &
Royal Oak Ice Arena
Clawson Library & City Hall
Troy Library
Berkley Library
Huntington Woods City Hall
Ferndale Library
Hazel Park Library
Madison Heights Nature Center
Madison Heights Library
Detroit & Oakland Audubon Societies*

newsletter, pass on newsletter ideas or suggest new publicity sources, please contact Ted Vickers at 248-549-5366 or tg1121@sbcglobal.net. We would really like to hear from you.

Hawk Watching BY ANN WILLIAMS

Keep an eye and ear out for these beautiful Accipitridae

My son and I recently witnessed a Red-tailed hawk swoop down on a squirrel, grab it with its talons, take off with it and land on a utility pole to enjoy its catch. We then visited the spot where the hawk pounced on the squirrel and it left us with a beautiful tail feather.

We've also seen two Cooper's hawks hopping around seemingly playful on a neighbor's front lawn taunting it's prey.

My trick for catching these beautiful scenes is to listen carefully to the Blue Jays and the Crows squawking. If you hear

their calls you may look up and see them chasing a hawk to get out of their territory.

From 1970-1990 the following hawks were spotted in Tenhave Woods: the Sharp-shinned, Cooper's,



A Cooper's Hawk lands in a birdbath near Tenhave Woods.

Red-tailed, Broad-winged, and Red-shouldered.

A species of hawk may be just passing through the area. This is an exciting moment for an avian researcher. For example when a rare Gyrfalcon was sighted at Ford headquarters for nearly three days in early January, birdwatchers from as far away as Kentucky came to view it. So, if you spot a new species to the area let us know so we may add to the list.

Please report an injured hawk to the Royal Oak Police Dept. by calling: 248-246-3500.

Hawk Facts

Vision Much better than humans! They can see spiders and beetles from afar. Hawks can see a mouse from a height of one mile.

How old do they live? Average life span in the wild is 20 years.

Predators Few, if any, natural predators, but they have enemies such as pollution, particularly from pesticides, and habitat destruction from developments.

Mythology In Greek myth, the goddess Circe was associated with hawks. A hawk was the messenger of Apollo.

Fall Speaker Programs

September 7th 🦋 Joe Derek, a Farmington Hills Naturalist, was one of our three speakers the year we first started our speaker program and talked to us again in 2002 on butterflies and hummingbirds. Joe is a National Wildlife Federation Backyard Habitat owner. Come and learn how to create a habitat in your yard no matter how big or small. From a balcony to a patio to a yard, you can make a place for some form of nature to call home.

October 5th 🦋 Wild Birds Unlimited is a business located on Woodward Avenue in Royal Oak, dedicated to bringing people and nature together, in the wild and their own backyards. LuAnn Linker, its owner, has been a supporter of our bird-feeding program in Cummington Park. LuAnn's presentation will focus on the local birds you are likely to attract to your yard and what you can do to help set up stopovers to help birds cope with rapidly disappearing habitat.

November 2nd 🦋 Pat and Ray Coleman, Professional Nature Photographers, have been strong supporters of our program from the beginning and have given us three great programs in the past. We are happy to welcome them back with a new program on flowers, butterflies, mushrooms and other kinds of flora and fauna from their tropical trips.

ALL SPEAKER PROGRAMS AND NATURE WALKS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO EVERYONE. PRE-REGISTRATION IS NOT REQUIRED.

General Meeting with Speaker Programs

Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. - Leo Mahany/Harold Meininger Senior/Community Center (3500 Marais)

Date	Program
Sept. 7th	<i>Backyard Habitat for Wildlife</i>
Oct. 5th	<i>Attracting and Feeding Our Local Birds</i>
Nov. 2nd	<i>Tropical Nature</i>

Nature Walk Programs Meet at the park

Date	Day	Time	Location
Sept. 25th	Sunday	2:00 p.m.	Tenhave Woods
Oct. 8th	Saturday	10:00 a.m.	Tenhave Woods
Oct. 23rd	Sunday	2:00 p.m.	Cummington Park
Oct. 30th	Sunday	2:00 p.m.	Tenhave Woods
Nov. 12th	Saturday	10:00 a.m.	Cummington Park

Nature Walk Programs

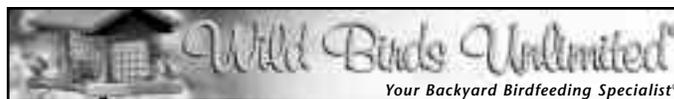
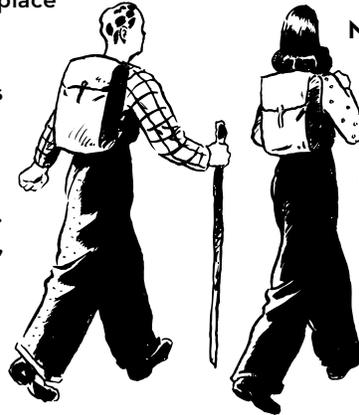
September 25th • *Mushrooms* lead by Dianne Pruden • We will survey the park and attempt to identify the mushrooms and fungus we encounter.

October 8th • *Beginnings of Fall* • See the changes that are starting to take place within the forest.

October 23rd • *Fall Color* • This is the most beautiful time to take a look at our nature study areas. We will have a small session on tree identification with handouts. If you wish at the end of the walk, you can try to use your new identification skills with the naturalist present to answer any question you may have.

October 30th • *Fall Color* • This is still the most beautiful time to take a look at our nature study areas. Along with looking at the fall color the naturalist will discuss the uses of these trees both in the past and at present.

November 12th • *Fall Color* • This is still a beautiful time to take a look at our nature study areas. Come out and catch the last of the color before the black and white of winter.



28558 Woodward Avenue
Royal Oak, MI 48067
Owners: LuAnn & Steve Linker
Phone: 248-548-2424
Fax: 248-548-0917
Email: wburoyaloak@aol.com

PARK PROBLEMS

If you are near or in one of our two nature parks and see or hear suspicious or unlawful behavior, please call the Royal Oak Police Department's non-emergency number, 248-246-3500 and inform them of the problem.

Naming the Tenhave Woods Trails BY BOB MULLER

Last fall Boy Scout Troop 1627 re-routed a section of trail and built a short new section. There will be slight adjustments to the trails, but the basic trail system in Tenhave Woods is complete. In the Summer 2005 *Chinquapin*, I gave explanations of the trail names in Cummingston Park. The following will do the same for Tenhave Woods.

The trail system in both parks was designed to allow people to pass the majority of the different botanical and geological features of the parks. This was done so that the parks could become better “classrooms” for teaching about the natural world. Several trails have been in the park for decades. Some of these trails made sense and we retained them, often with small modifications, to pass by things of interest. Some of the old trails, although efficient paths to cut through the woods, did not lend themselves to a quality nature experience and we are attempting to abandon them. Sometimes this is difficult, as those people that have been using them for decades, continue to use them. Next fall when we cut the invasive buckthorn, we will use it to create brush piles on these trails, hopefully diverting people to the new trails.

The east/west trail, as you enter the woods from the turnstile at the soccer field, has been named the Goodwin Trail. This is after Samuel Goodwin, the son of a Royal Oak original settler from the 1820s, who bought the ninety-eight acre farm border by Lexington, Normandy, Crooks Road and the east fence of

Tenhave Woods. What I have stated about Mr. Goodwin we believe to be true, but we are still researching to tie down the facts. It looks as if Mr. Goodwin cleared the land until reaching the hardwood swamp on the west side of Tenhave woods, leaving what remained for his wood lot. Tenhave Woods is not only a nature park, but is part of the earliest settlement history of our community.



Bob Muller walks along the Scout Trail during the re-building phase last fall.

This park has the only noticeable geological feature left unaltered in Royal Oak. One or more of the post-glacial lakes that became Lake Erie covered all of Royal Oak. Lake Warren’s beach runs through Kimball High School and the angled trail that basically runs north and south across the woods is an off shore sandbar of this lake. Therefore, it is named the Sandbar Trail.

From the turnstile in the northwest corner of Tenhave Woods, a trail leads into our hardwood swamp forest and runs to the Goodwin Trail, east of the bird feeder. It runs through the wettest part of the nature study area, and so was named the Swamp Trail. Small alterations were added to this trail to allow it to miss some of the wettest parts.

In a normal spring this trail will be unusable.

The trail that comes off the north side of the Goodwin Trail, just into the woods on the west side of the park and winds its way to the north end of the Sandbar Trail, was named the Scout Trail. It was named that because almost all of the work done in both parks establishing and re-building trails has been done by Royal Oak Boy Scout troops.

The trail coming off the south side of the Goodwin Trail is a combination of an old trail and a new short piece on the south side of the woods. This trail skirts the vernal pond, which we hope to revitalize this fall, thus making a perfect place to have pond study programs; and what else to name it, but the Pond Trail.

The Sassafras Trail’s north end joins the Sandbar Trail just north of the Butternut tree. It meanders past two of our mature Tulip trees, through a large grove of Sassafras trees (which it was named after) and past the large fallen red oaks. This portion of the trail is new as it crosses the Sandbar Trail, it was an existing trail and its south end meets the Pond Trail.

Hopefully, this gives a good explanation as to why the trails are named what they are. We have tried to tie the geological history, early settlement history, land features, flora and a “thank you” to the Scouts into our trail names. More important than the name, is to have people using the trails. Please get out and take a walk through Tenhave Woods, no matter what time of year. There is lots to see; we built these trails for you.

Royal Oak's Wild Side

BY BOB MULLER

Normally, I write about what is happening in the natural world of our nature study areas. But this summer, as with much of Royal Oak, major development is in progress. We have been studying the vernal pond at Tenhave and the flooding of Cummingston since the Royal Oak Nature Society began. Within the last few years, we have done a water table survey of both parks recording almost on a weekly basis the above and below-ground level of the water table. Last spring we also surveyed the above-ground flood levels of Cummingston and recorded the water levels in various parts of the park in relation to the sewer in the park and the road level of Torquay Ave. Three years ago we had the water chemistry (oxygen, ammonia, phosphates, etc.) surveyed and it was done again this past spring. The above research was being done because amphibians and dragonflies have disappeared from both parks and the flooding of Cummingston for the past 30 years has destroyed the wildflowers and impacted the trees.

The water in both parks was found to have low levels of dissolved oxygen, which makes it unsuitable for the amphibian's reproduction. The woman who surveyed the water in Tenhave Woods this past spring, commented that the vernal pond had the lowest dissolved oxygen level she has ever seen. This makes the pond unsuitable for any aquatic life that breathes with gills. One of the problems is that wooded, shaded ponds have these low oxygen levels due to a lack of green plants and lots of decomposing leaves. What we are left with is aquatic life that uses snorkels to breath atmospheric air. Our macro invertebrate surveys of the ponds show crane fly larva, retailed maggots (flower flies) and mosquitoes included in this group. The kinds of insects (dragonflies and damselflies) and amphibians that would eat mosquitoes are not present in our two nature parks.

This is not what Tenhave Woods and Cummingston Park were like in the 1970s. Back then they had a multitude of invertebrate life as well as several kinds of amphibians.

As the Royal Oak Nature Society's first major project, we intend to turn back the clock and revitalize the water in our two parks. The "Vernal Pond Project", will restore Tenhave Woods' vernal pond, create a new vernal pond at Cummingston and provide drainage for excess surface water inside Cummingston.

The first stage is a botanical survey to see if anything in the pond areas should be saved. Trees

would be then be removed in September and in October, equipment would be brought in to deepen the Tenhave Woods' vernal pond and also hopefully, creating a new vernal pond in Cummingston. By next spring, we should begin seeing positive results in one or both of our vernal ponds.

The vernal ponds will give us a great area for pond life study nature walks. We had a pond study this spring and it was well attended. It is hoped that as the amphibians come back, we will be able to allow children to collect tadpoles to take home and study. This project will take volunteers and money. If you can provide either or both please contact us (any Nature Society board member).

Cummingston Park surveys this past spring have shown that the sewer in the park is lower than the water but paths to it are blocked. Putting in appropriate drain paths will allow the wildflowers to return.

I believe any time you walk through Royal Oak's forests there will always be something new to discover, and if our ponds make a come back there will be much more. Escape the developed world, take a breath, feel the stress fade away and take a walk in the woods. Check out Royal Oak's wild side.

Want to Join The Royal Oak Nature Society?

Please make checks out to:

**CITY OF ROYAL OAK
MEMO: ROYAL OAK NATURE SOCIETY**

Mail completed form and donation check to:

**Royal Oak Nature Society
1708 Northwood Blvd.
Royal Oak, MI 48073**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

1-year membership rates: (Sept-Aug)

Individual/Family: \$5.00

Supporting: \$10 and up

Donations are tax deductible

NATURE SOCIETY TEAMS

Please contact us to become actively involved in one or more of our Teams.

Beautification: Tackles tasks as surveying the parks, defining & maintaining a trail system, park clean up & removing invasive species.

Communications: Provides publicity about organizational activities to the general membership & the public. It is also responsible for publishing this newsletter.

Education: Focuses its efforts on education outreach

programs that promote understanding and appreciation of the environment by involving children in our local parks and nature programs.

Program: Coordinates and schedules nature walks & nature oriented speaker programs, develop programs for outside organizations and catalog plants, trees & birds.

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

Board of Directors

President: **Tim Turner** 248-320-4819

Vice President: **John DeLisle** 248-585-9002

Treasurer: **Bob Guymer** 248-399-7042

Beautification & Restoration: **Jack Kerby** 248-879-8010

Communications: **Ted Vickers** 248-549-5366

Education: **Kristine Hammond** 248-577-5171

Program: **Bob Muller** 248-398-0195

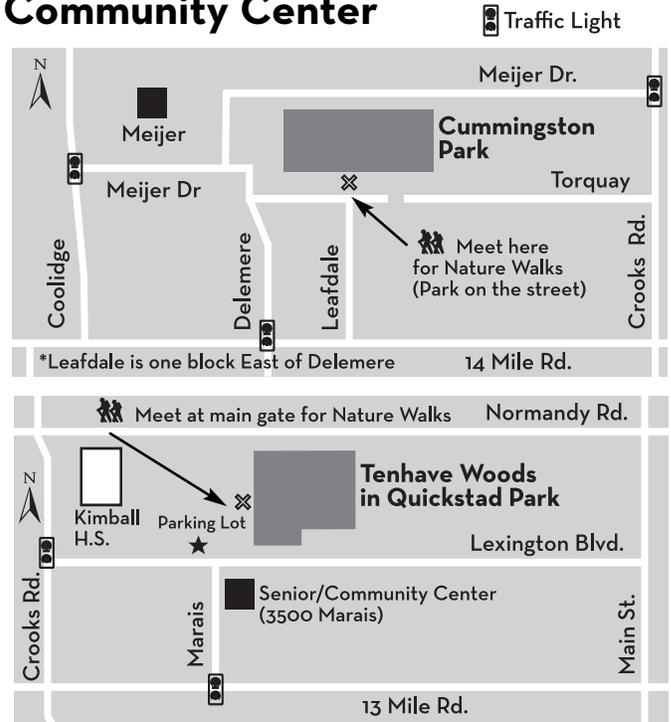
Ways & Means: **Helen Cost** 248-549-9423

Newsletter

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Ann Williams ann.m.williams@comcast.net

Our Nature Parks & Senior Community Center



To locate and print out Tenhave Woods & Cummingston Park trail maps, please go to our web site (bottom of p.5), link on to **Park Locations** and then **Map for park trail**

FIRST CLASS MAIL

The Royal Oak Nature Society
1600 N. CAMPBELL ROAD
ROYAL OAK MI 48067

