



# The Chinquapin

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## What We Are Doing About Invasive Plants

By Dena Serrato

A weed growing in a home landscape is often described as any plant that is growing where we don't want it to. Invasive plants that grow in natural areas are also uninvited guests, but the difference is that they go well beyond being unattractive and bothersome. They are capable of actually destroying native plant communities and wildlife habitats! The National Invasive Species Management Plan defines an invasive plant as "a species that is non-native to the ecosystem under consideration and whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health." Keep in mind that only a small fraction of the hundreds of non-native plants that have evolved elsewhere and been brought to Michigan are invasive. A great resource for learning about the non-native invasive plants in Michigan is a new field guide published by MSU Extension. You can find it online at <http://web4.msue.msu.edu/mnfi/education/fieldguide.cfm>.

Invasive plants have the ability to spread from one location to new locations a long distance away. Many do this by producing seeds or berries that birds consume and deposit elsewhere. Sometimes water or wind will carry their seeds. Some have underground stems that can travel quickly across large expanses. Invasive plants have a number of characteristics that gives them an advantage over native plants, such as long growing seasons (so they can generate and store more energy), dense canopies that shade out the plants below them, prolific seed production, and the release of toxic chemicals that stunt or kill neighboring plants or beneficial soil organisms. They are truly the bullies of the wildlife playground.

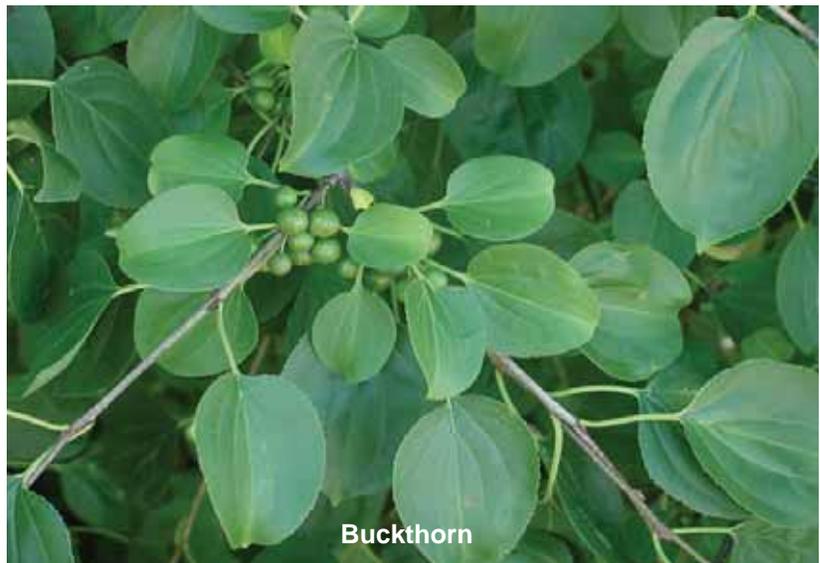
Invasive plants do not just hurt wildlife, they do serious harm to humans by causing negative economic impact to industries such as agriculture, forestry, landscaping, recreation and tourism. They reduce the biodiversity of our natural areas, which in turn reduces the beauty and richness of nature that humans value and need so very much these days.

The Royal Oak Nature Society continues to identify, monitor and remove these nasty invaders from our nature parks so we can minimize their harmful effects.

One of our success stories is how the Nature Society has tamed the garlic mustard

population in Tenhave Woods over the last 10 years. If you walked through the park during May in the early 2000's, you would see garlic mustard's small white flowers just about everywhere you looked. It was shading out much of our beautiful spring wildflowers and preventing native trees seedlings from getting established. Although it seemed like an impossible task, starting in 2002 we organized annual volunteer workdays to pull and bag the garlic mustard before it went to seed in early June. The Boy Scouts, students from Royal Oak High, and community volunteers all pitched in to help. It is truly amazing how much can be accomplished by such a grass roots effort! Within 6 years, only small patches remained. We now only have to monitor the park and remove new plants once or twice each spring.

The invasive trees and shrubs that grow in our nature parks are much more difficult to control. Some of our worst invaders are woody plants that homeowners and the city have planted in the landscapes adjacent to the parks. The plants seed-in from the surrounding neighborhoods on the wind or on the bodies of wildlife. In addition, irresponsible people dump their yard waste in the parks. The far worst woody weed is buckthorn, followed by Asian bush honeysuckles, euonymus cultivars, multiflora rose, barberry, privet, English ivy and Norway maple. We have held many "buckthorn buster"



**Buckthorn**

(Continued on page 2)

## Fall 2011 Nature Society Projects

**Cummingston Eagle Scout Project:** This project was lead by Eagle Scout candidate, Will Patterson, from Berkley Troop 1085. On September 10, his group relined, raked & cleared overhanging brush from the Gentian trail between Leafdale Trail and the gate at the east fence, the Eagle Scout Trail and the Chinquapin Trail between the Eagle Scout Trail and the intersection with the western end of the Arkona Trail. Excess dirt leftover from the pond project a couple years back was added to parts of the Arkona trail. A brush pile was built to help block off a section of Leafdale that we have been trying to abandon.

**Tenhave Woods Eagle Scout Project:** This project which was held on October 1, was lead by Bryan Wiley, Eagle Scout candidate, from Troop 1629 (Addams Elementary). Sand was added to trails that had a clay base added to them a few years back. When the clay was originally added, the spring thaw made the those trails very mucky. The sand will make the trails easier to walk on in the spring. Trails included parts of the Pond & Fern trails.



Adding sand to the Pond Trail

**Arboretum Eagle Scout Project:** This project which took place on November 12, was lead by Ryan Davis, Eagle Scout candidate from Troop 1085 (Berkley). The main goal was to add wood chips to the arboretum's trails. The chips help to define the trails and prevent plants from growing in them. In areas where there is usually standing water in the spring, 6 to 8 inches of wood chips were added.

**Cummingston Crawfish Pond Project:** In the fall of 2008, Perry Gentner brought in his excavating equipment & created Crawfish Pond for us at the north end of Leafdale Trail. In November of this year, we brought Perry back to expand the size of the pond. The purpose of doing this is to increase the breeding ground for amphibians and to extend the pond to the north in order to attempt to eliminate the phragmites that has taken over the area between the pond & the fence along Meijer Drive. Phragmites does not like to grow in deeper water. We won't know until spring if we dug it deep enough or not. If necessary, we may have to come back in again sometime and remove another foot or so from the bottom of the pond's north end.



Cummingston's Crawfish Pond

*(Continued from page 1)*

workdays over the years with some success, but there is much left to do. The Worden Park East Arboretum was totally consumed with buckthorn before we started removing it a few years ago. It is tough work because buckthorn is too difficult to pull out, so we employ the "cut and treat" method. The first step is to cut the plants off close to the ground, followed by applying brush killer to the cut stumps. Then all of the brush has to be carried to the curb and stacked. The city then runs the brush through a wood chipper and hauls it away.

Often, shortly after we remove one type of invasive plant, new ones will emerge from the seed bank. After we cleared an area of buckthorn in Worden Park, a very

aggressive weed called Canada thistle appeared, presenting a new challenge and requiring a new control strategy. We found that using a method called the 'hand of death' works best. A person will first put on a rubber glove, followed by a cotton glove. He then wets his gloved hand with weed killer and touches each thistle plant, a very tedious but effective method. We continuously experiment with various control methods with the goal of minimizing herbicide use and always keep the safety of our volunteers a top priority.

I am a professional landscape designer and I visit neighborhoods throughout southeastern Oakland County throughout the growing season. I can say first hand that

*(Continued on page 3)*

## SPEAKER PROGRAMS

Our monthly general meeting/speaker programs are held at the **Royal Oak Middle School** (formerly Dondero High School) from September to May. In June, they are held at the Senior/Community Center. The middle school is located at 709 N. Washington, between 11 Mile Road & Catalpa (11 ½ Mile). The meeting/program at the middle school will be held in the auditorium or "Gathering Place", both of which can be reached via the school's southeast entrance. At our monthly Wednesday meetings, 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.

**"Flora and Fauna of Michigan"** is being held on **March 7<sup>th</sup>**. Join Pat & Ray Coleman, professional photographers & Nature Society members, as they show us a wide variety of the plants, flowers, mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles and insects of Michigan as an eye appealing experience. They will also point out some unusual or strange facts about some of them.

**Maine: Puffins, Plants, and Whales"** is being held on **April 4<sup>th</sup>**. Join Nancy Tar for a visit to Maine where she will show you the Atlantic Puffin Reclamation Project started by Steven Kress 35 years ago. Along the way we'll see Acadia National Park, pelagic birds, plants, lobsters, and Finback Whales. Nancy has been involved in Audubon for 30 years and is past president of both Michigan Audubon and Oakland Audubon.

**"You go photographing where? Michigan's Jack Pine Plains"** is being held on **May 2<sup>nd</sup>**. In the center of the northern Lower Peninsula lies a high, sandy plateau. Much of the soil there contains almost no organic matter and drains very quickly. Away from the moderating effects of the Great Lakes, temperatures can fluctuate 50 degrees from day to night in the summer and reach 40 degrees below in winter. Michigan's Jack Pine plains contain some unique flora and fauna adapted to survive under these harsh conditions. Join Don and Joyce Drife for an up-close look at a part of Michigan most people just drive through.

**"Nature Society Year in Review"** is being held on **June 6<sup>th</sup>**. This year, our June program will be held again at the Royal Oak Senior/Community Center (3500 Marais) instead of at the middle school. We will talk and have a slide show on what has been going on with the Nature Society, Cummington Park, Tenhave Woods and our new arboretum in Worden Park East.

(Continued from page 2)

buckthorn and other woody weeds are a huge problem in our neighborhoods. Many backyard woodlots and

wildlife corridors that were at one time attractive assets to our communities are now choked with these invasive weeds. Some new plants are showing up as well. In the past few years I have seen a weed named Japanese knotweed popping up in my client's yards. Some people call it "city bamboo" due to its tall upright habit and jointed stems. It grows scary-fast and is daunting to eradicate. As homeowners we can help control invasives in a number of ways. I encourage everyone to learn more about invasives and to remove them from our properties.

We would greatly appreciate your help with our efforts to remove invasives from our nature parks. Sure, it's hard work, but there is a great feeling of satisfaction when we take an active part in restoring our lovely and important natural areas. If you are interested in helping us out, please contact John DeLilse at 248-672-7611 or e-mail him at [johndgoesyad247@wowway.com](mailto:johndgoesyad247@wowway.com).



Asian bush honeysuckle

# NATURE WALKS

**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 Hoots and Full Moon Walk, park & meet at the Marais/ Lexington 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.*

Our **6<sup>th</sup> Annual Open House** is being held on **Saturday, May 5<sup>th</sup>**. Check out all of the programs & walks listed below. Please join us for a entertaining & educational day. First walk begins at 9 am..

“**Owl Hoots**” will begin at **7:30 pm** and are being held at **Tenhave Woods** on Friday, **March 2<sup>nd</sup>** and again on Wednesday, **March 21<sup>st</sup>**. We will attempt to lure in or have screech & great horned owls answer tape recordings of their calls.

“**Spring Walk**” is being held on Sunday, **March 18<sup>th</sup>**, **2:00 pm** at **Tenhave Woods**. 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 7<sup>th</sup>** at **10:00 am**

Saturday, **May 5<sup>th</sup>** at **11:30 am** & again from **1- 3 pm**

Sunday, **May 20<sup>th</sup>** 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.



**Pond Life Program**

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

Saturday, **April 7<sup>th</sup>** at **12 noon**

Sunday, **April 15<sup>th</sup>** at **2:00 pm**

Saturday, **April 28<sup>th</sup>** at **10:00 am**

Saturday, **May 5<sup>th</sup>** 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 5<sup>th</sup>** 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.

**1:15 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: Nature Photography** with professional photographers, Pat & Ray Coleman,

**1:30 pm: Tree Walk**-- Tenhave Woods has 43 species of trees. Come and learn about some of the common tree species of southeastern Michigan.

“**Late Spring Nature Walk**” is being held on Saturday, **June 9<sup>th</sup>**, **10:00 am** at **Tenhave Woods**. Join us and see what is happening in the woods. during the late spring and beginning of summer.

## A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR PATRON MEMBERS

A special thank you from the Nature Society goes out to our following 2011/12 Patron members for their generous financial contribution to us:

**Donna Doyscher**

**Nora Iverson & John Talbot**

**Jean Sarnacki**

**Bonnie Michalak**

**Richard & Pat Stoll**

**Richard Taylor**

**Barbara Grinke**

**Frank, Ann, Conor & Devan Edwards**

**Mary, Dennis, Regis Kleiss**

**Ilene Lanfear**

**Katherine & Larry Howell**

# Royal Oak Nature Society's 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Fundraiser

**WHEN:** Friday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012

**WHERE:** Royal Oak Elks Club (2401 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street at Stephenson Hwy, Royal Oak)

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

**FOOD & DRINKS:** Light refreshments & a cash bar

**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, from any Nature Society board member or sending a check in by mail.

**MAILING CHECKS:**

- Write check out for \$10/person
- Payable to the "Royal Oak Nature Society" with "Fundraiser Tickets" written on memo line
- Mail check to the Royal Oak Nature Society, 1600 N. Campbell, Royal Oak, MI 48067
- Ticket(s) will be waiting for you at the door

**PURPOSE OF THE FUNDRAISER:** To raise money for improvement projects in Tenhave Woods, Cummington Park, and the Arboretum in Worden Park East

Our fundraising committee is currently trying to find businesses/groups who might be interested in becoming a table sponsor for our April fundraiser. You would have your business/group name displayed on one of the tables and would be able to put your advertising material out in the center of it. Your business/group name would be prominently shown on signage, in our program guide and in our fall newsletter. As a table sponsor, you would get two free tickets to the fundraiser. Cost is \$100 for a table. We are also in need of items that we can use for our silent auction. If you know of anyone who might be interested in either of these, please contact us at 248-246-3380 & leave a message or e-mail us at [naturesociety@ci.royal-oak.mi.us](mailto:naturesociety@ci.royal-oak.mi.us).

This event is a great way to show your support for the Nature Society. You get to bid on over 140 items while enjoying great food and drinks along with getting to chat with your friends and other Nature Society supporters in a relaxed atmosphere. So, this is an cordial invitation to join us on April 20<sup>th</sup>. Hope to see you then!

Please support us by checking out our Facebook page & becoming a fan of the Royal Oak Nature Society.

<http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Royal-Oak-Nature-Society/228095233882566>



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## Royal Oak Nature Society Membership Form

Please make check payable 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 (household members): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

1 year Household Membership  
(September-August)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> General (free)         | Receive newsletter                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associate (\$5)        | by:                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting (\$10 & up) | <input type="checkbox"/> Regular mail OR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron (\$50 & up)     | <input type="checkbox"/> E-mail          |

### 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 & Cummington 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 Cummington Park, Tenhave Woods and the Arboretum.

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

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Don Drife (248-528-0479)

Vice President & Arboretum Stewardship: John DeLisle (248-672-7611)

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

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

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

Communication: Ted Vickers (248-549-5366)

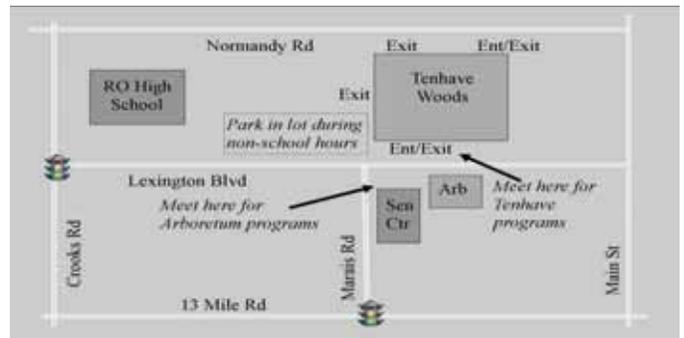
Education: Chris Ethridge (248 229-9335)

Program: Bob Muller (248-398-0195)

Newsletter: Ted Vickers

Engineer: Richard Stoll

## Cummington Park, Tenhave Woods, and the Arboretum



To locate and print out Tenhave Woods & Cummington 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 Cummington 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. In addition, we are in the process of creating an arboretum in Worden Park East. We also offer a wide range of natural history educational programs.*

The Royal Oak Nature Society  
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www.ci.royal-oak.mi.us/nature



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