



# The Chinquapin

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Spring 2015

The Official Publication Of The Royal Oak Nature Society

## What Makes Our Two Nature Parks and Arboretum Unique

by Don Drife

Along the trail to Dragonfly Pond, in Tenhave Woods, I see a juvenile Red-tailed Hawk perched on a dead stub. I wonder if this second-year bird is tired from migrating north today because it permits me to come close, maybe fifteen feet away. I stay on the trail watching the hawk watching me. Suddenly it jumps to the ground and digs through the leaves, first with its right talon, then with its left. Flying back to the stub, it clutches an American Toad. Slowly the hawk tears it apart and eats it; taking ten minutes to consume a three inch toad. Jumping again to the ground the hawk repeats the process. I continue to the pond leaving the bird in peace.

I stand in the woods at Cummington Park, looking at a patch of pink covering the ground. Spring Beauty, two inches tall, with a pair of narrow leaves resting on the ground, flashes its white flowers that are streaked with dark pink veins. A shadow is cast across them from the Spring Cress which towers above them, reaching a height of five inches. Its pale pink, four-petaled flowers appear delicate and sway gently in the soft breeze. A few Trout-lily flowers add yellow highlights to the scene. Few, if any, planted gardens are so wonderfully designed.

Rosinweed is one of many species planted in our arboretum. Its hairy stems with coarse gray-green resin dotted leaves hold the yellow daisy-like flower heads higher than my head, where they are backlit against blue sky. As I set my tripod into position, I notice a Praying Mantis sitting motionless at the end of a stem. Clasping the stem with its four rear legs; only its head and forearms protrude through the ray-flowers, patiently waiting for a pollinator meal. Another mantis among the leaves has caught a large ant. Stepping back I discover a third one on a Prairie Coneflower. Three more inhabit the Cup-plant patch and I count 27 mantises before I leave the Arb. Thus begins the "Summer of the Mantis."

Later in the week I show the mantises to a group of photographers. Mantises are everywhere. Once people get a correct "search image" the big insects become easy to find. One even poses on a camera.

In the fall, a young boy, with an extra credit slip from the Royal Oak Middle School attends an evening Arboretum walk. He is afraid to even touch any vegetation that overhangs the trail. I bend down a Tall Sunflower to

show off the flowers and a Praying Mantis jumps onto my arm. Mantises are harmless to humans but just seeing the four inch insect scares him. He quickly leaves but returns a few weeks later for another walk. Although still overly cautious, he begins to ask questions. Knowledge slowly replaces fear.

What makes our parks unique? I could answer that with pure facts. Over 300 species of flowering plants including: Richweed, Red and White Trillium, Yellow Trout-lily, Dwarf Ginseng, Hog-peanut, Dutchman's Breeches, and Water Plantain. White-tailed Deer have not yet over browsed the wildflowers in Tenhave Woods as they have in many other nature preserves in southern Michigan.

More than 130 species of birds have been sighted in the park including: Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Orange-crowned Warbler, Eastern Screech-owl, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Cedar Waxwing, and Eastern Kingbird. Many birds use these areas as a resting stop on their migration route.

Three forest types occur in our nature parks: Mesic southern forest, Southern hardwood forest, and Wet-mesic Flatwoods. The latter forest type is rare in Michigan, known from only six other sites. Our small area of approximately two acres is significant because less than 240 acres of this habitat is known from the state.

Our ponds are home to a large number of animal species. Predaceous Diving Beetles, Water Scorpions, Giant Water Bugs, Phantom Midges, Spring Peepers, Western Chorus Frogs, Finger-nail Clams, and Fishing Spiders. Pond studies are a popular children's program. Some of these kids experience Nature for the first time and do it in the city where they live.

What makes our parks unique? They are unique not only because of what they are but also because of where they are. They are unique islands of Nature, unclear-cut woods encased in an urban landscape. Our woods are unique educational reserves where many people are exposed to Nature, some for the first time.

A kindergartner came, with his mother, to an owl hoot one frigid night. I shall always remember his squeal of pure joy when a flashlight beam illuminated an Eastern

*(Continued on page 2)*

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Screech-owl fluttering a few feet over his head. A Brownie troop took turns peering through a spotting scope, watching a Cooper's Hawk eat a House Sparrow. They accepted Nature's way learning that without hawks we would soon have too many sparrows. A father brought his daughter to a spring wildflower walk so she could earn extra credit for school. He was amazed at the diversity of wildflowers and they have returned several times without extra credit sheets to sign.

I often walk quietly through one of our preserves and just decompress. And yes, I do try to identify every plant and animal that I see. Standing, surrounded by woods or along a trail at the edge of a flower filled field is

therapeutic. These areas are located 15 minutes from my house, and I can just "run over" to a park when I have an hour to spare. I'm thankful that through the foresight of our city planners these areas are preserved. However, they are fragile gems requiring monitoring and maintenance if they are to survive. Nature needs our help, her balance is skewed. Monitoring and maintenance require work. Join us. Learn about our parks and then educate others. Lead a nature walk, help clear a trail, mend a fence or weed the Arboretum. We need more volunteers so we can continue the educational programs we have and assure that these parks survive for and are cherished by future generations.

**The following are some of the things the Nature Society could use your help with:**

- Walking the trails in Tenhave, Cummington & the Arboretum and reporting on any trees that have fallen onto the trails
- Periodically patrolling along the Tenhave fence perimeter to see if there are any fence breaches. This is necessary so the fences can be repaired in order to keep deer out of the park. Keeping deer out is crucial to saving Tenhave's wildflowers (nearly 10,000) from being destroyed.
- Maintaining our arboretum
- Keeping our Tenhave bird feeder full during the winter
- Removing invasive species from our nature parks
- Helping us out at our Annual Fundraiser that takes place every April
- Getting businesses to donate items that can be used for our Annual Fundraiser silent auction
- Parking duty at Gunn Dyer Park on the day of the Woodward Dream Cruise. The Nature Society gets a portion of the entrance fee from the city.



**Join our Royal Oak Nature Society Trails Committee:** The Nature Society is seeking individuals willing to work on maintenance of the trail system at Tenhave Woods and Cummington Park. Work includes:

- Moving logs and branches of fallen trees off of trails
- Cutting back on overgrowth along the trails
- Lining trails with logs

For additional information on other opportunities, please check our website under "Volunteer Opportunities".

**Volunteering is a great opportunity for you to make a commitment to something you believe in, to have an impact on your community and to work with other people who also feel strongly as you do about keeping these nature areas viable for years to come. Please contact us by phone or e-mail (see page 6 underneath the tree logo) and we are sure that we can find something for you to do that will give satisfaction to you and the Nature Society.**

**Friends Of Fungi: Looking Back On 2014**

by Mary Fredricks

2014 started well for the Friends of Fungi (FOF). We looked at guidebooks and keys (identification aids) during our January indoor meeting and slime molds during our February meeting. Then our March meeting was cancelled due to bad weather. That turned out to be an

omen. The long winter took a toll on the fungi. On our April walk in Tenhave Woods, we saw only two fresh fungi, **Common Split Gill** and **Black Witch's Butter**.

*(Continued on page 3)*

## SPEAKER PROGRAMS

*Our monthly general meeting/speaker programs (September to May) is held at the **Royal Oak Middle School** which is located at 709 N. Washington. We meet in the auditorium or the "Gathering Place", both of which can be reached via the school's southeast entrance. Our June program is held at the Senior/Community Center located at 3500 Marais. 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 **7:30 pm**, with the speaker program following several minutes later.*

"**Michigan Spring Wildflowers**" speaker program is being held on **March 4<sup>th</sup>**. Many of Michigan's unique Wildflowers are around us in bogs, swamps, fields and forests. Caryle Spence, a member of the Michigan Botanical Club, has traveled from Isle Royal to the Ohio border and in many different habitats. This program will begin in early spring then extend to late spring. Caryle has a passion for nature which includes flowers and critters. She loves trying to get the photographic images of the shortest and smallest wildflowers. Of course this means a lot of belly shots. This slide program is a collection of 30 odd years in the making.

"**Trekking in the Tetons**" speaker program is being held on **April 1<sup>st</sup>**. Grand Teton National Park, located in northwestern Wyoming, has some of the most stunning scenery in the country. Join Park Ranger Stephanie

Schneider to learn more about the area's interesting geology, and hear tales of her hiking (mis)adventures!

"**Red Run**" is being held on **May 6<sup>th</sup>**. Learn about the river that used to flow through Royal Oak and what lived in it from Bob Muller, Royal Oak Nature Society naturalist. Between the late 1920's and the mid 1960's, the river was buried underground. Royal Oak still had one creek with fish in it during the 1960's. The Red Run is now a ghost river, but if you know what to look for you can still see signs of it throughout Royal Oak. Along with Red Run, ghost's of old farm woodlots and ridges left by the glaciers will be touched on. After this talk, your eyes will become a time machine as you will be able to see into the past almost wherever you look in Royal Oak.

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They are great fungi, among my favorites, but the scarcity didn't bode well for the fungal growing season.

Eventually, there were plenty of fungi to see in both Tenhave and Cummingston Park, but the winter had changed the population. The greater number of fallen trees also seemed to affect the habitat, especially in Tenhave. The result was that we weren't seeing fungi I expected to see or were seeing them in different places in the woods and in smaller numbers. Also, we were seeing things in both woods that I haven't seen there before, including the **Tree Volvariella** on a newly fallen tree in Tenhave and **Fetid False Coral** in the middle of a path in Cummingston. Other surprising finds were a **Miniscule Mycena** on an oak leaf in Tenhave and **Elegant Boletes** in Cummingston.

Another first for us was a walk at night in Cummingston. We were hoping to see spore dispersal,

which often happens at night, and also luminescent fungi. The weather was fairly cool and that may have accounted for our lack of success. It was still fun to be out in the woods at night. This year we may try it earlier in the season. This is an event open only to FOF and Royal Oak Nature Society members and their friends. For FOF information, please contact me at [maryfredricks.aim@gmail.com](mailto:maryfredricks.aim@gmail.com).

We finished the year with an indoor meeting in November. Pat and Roy Coleman helped me talk about the challenges and joys of photographing fungi.

Photos of the fungi mentioned in this article can be found on our website.

For information about our upcoming March meeting/program, see below and page 4 for our spring fungi walk schedule.

"**Choice Mushrooms and Their Lookalikes**" fungi program is being held at the **Royal Oak Senior Center** (3500 Marais) on Wednesday, **March 11<sup>th</sup>**, beginning at

**7:00 pm**. This program is being presented by Phil Tedeschi, president of the Michigan Mushroom Hunters Club.

## NATURE WALKS

**CUMMINGSTON PARK:** Park is just east of Meijers. Park and meet at Leafdale & Torquay

**TENHAVE WOODS:** Park is just east of Royal Oak High School. Park in Marais/Lexington lot and meet at the Lexington entrance (300 feet east of parking lot). For the Owl Hoots & Full Moon walks, park and meet at the Marais/Lexington lot.

**ARBORETUM:** Park and meet on the north side of the Royal Oak Senior/Community Center (3500 Marais)

Please join us for our **9<sup>th</sup> Annual Open House** being held on Saturday, **May 2<sup>nd</sup>**. Programs & walks are listed below.

"**Owl Hoot**" is being held at **Tenhave Woods** on Friday, **March 13<sup>th</sup>**, beginning at **7:30 pm**. We will walk into Tenhave and attempt to lure in or have screech & great horned owls answer tape recordings of their calls.

"**Can We See Spring Yet**" nature walk is being held at **Tenhave Woods** on Saturday, **March 21<sup>st</sup>**, beginning at **10:00 am**.

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

Saturday, **May 2<sup>nd</sup>** from **1:00- 3:00 pm**

Saturday, **May 9<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.

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

Saturday, **April 11<sup>th</sup>** at **2:00 pm**

Saturday, **April 18<sup>th</sup>** at **2:00 pm**

Saturday, **May 2<sup>nd</sup>** at **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, Wild Geranium and others.

"**Mushroom Walks**" The Royal Oak Nature Society Friends of Fungi, is holding mushroom walks on the following days in Tenhave Woods and Cummingston Park. The walks usually take place on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month. Mary Fredricks, a member and botanist/mycologist of the Royal Oak Nature Society, will lead the walks.

**April 25<sup>th</sup>** at **Cummingston** at **10:00 am**

**May 2<sup>nd</sup>** at **Tenhave Woods** at **1:30 pm**

**May 23<sup>rd</sup>** at **Tenhave Woods** at **10:00 am**

Other walks being held during our **9<sup>th</sup> Annual Open House** on **May 2<sup>nd</sup>** at **Tenhave Woods** are:

**1:00 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.

**2:00 pm: "Bird Walk"** Join Don Drife for a look at the resident birds in Tenhave and some that are just passing through.

### A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR PATRON MEMBERS

A special thank you from the Nature Society goes out to our following 2014/15 Patron members for their generous financial contribution to us: **Mark, Mary, Maddie, Molly Dingman; Barbara Grinke; Cole & Priscilla Hawkins; Bonnie Michalak; Richard & Pat Stoll; Jean Watson**

### In Remembrance of Ann Holcomb

In November, 2014, the Nature Society lost one of our valued members. We knew her as Ann Holcomb, but her full name was Margaret Ann Holcomb. She was born November 9, 1934 and passed away on November 27, 2014. Ann was an active member of the Royal Oak Nature Society from the beginning (2001). She served on our original Communication Committee which was tasked with the responsibility for letting the community know who we were when we were just starting out. She assisted with getting our early newsletters out to the public. She volunteered to "man" our phone line. She recorded messages on the phone line advising callers of upcoming events and passed along information left on the message line to the appropriate Board members to best assist the

callers. Ann was one of the volunteers who could always be depended upon if we needed extra help with a project. She took a shift at our Dream Cruise parking project every year. She was always ready to do whatever was needed at our Annual Fundraiser. Her contributions to the Nature Society will be greatly missed. As a friend, we will miss her even more. She was a loving "mom" to many animals over the years. We always enjoyed hearing about the pups, many of whom she brought to dog shows to exhibit. She was also an active volunteer at The Detroit Zoo and for other animal related groups. Ann Holcomb will be remembered by her friends for so many reasons.

## Royal Oak Nature Society's 10<sup>th</sup> Annual/Soiree Fundraiser

**WHEN:** Friday, April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015

**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 and live auction, 50/50 raffle, announcement of Young Poets Contest winner 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 Royal Oak Arboretum in Worden Park East

The Nature Society could use your help. We need people to supply and bring in food on the night of the fundraiser. To cover our expenses, we are trying to find businesses/groups who might be interested in becoming a table sponsor for our April fundraiser. They would have their business/group name displayed on one of the tables and would be able to put their advertising material out in the center of it. The business/group name would be prominently shown on signage, in our program guide and in our fall newsletter. As a table sponsor, the business would get two free tickets to the fundraiser. Cost is \$100 for a table. If you know of anyone who might be interested in helping us out in any of these ways, please contact us at 248-246-3380 & leave a message or e-mail us at [naturesociety@romi.gov](mailto:naturesociety@romi.gov).

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 you to join us on April 24<sup>th</sup>. Hope to see you then!

Please check out our Facebook page & "like" the Royal Oak Nature Society.

Page: <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 and the Arboretum.

**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.

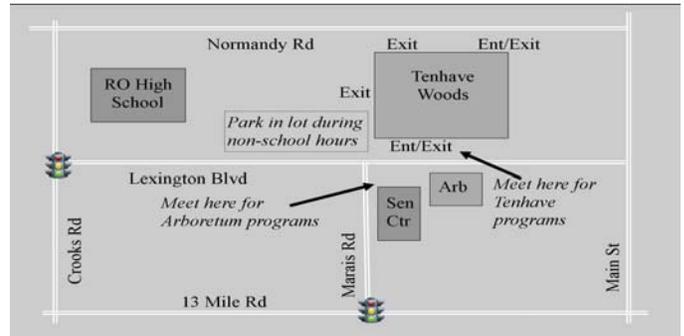
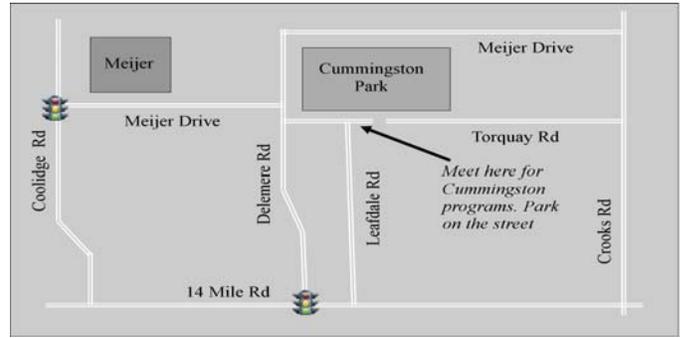
**Programming:** Is responsible for setting up the speaker programs, workshops and all of the nature programs within Cummington Park, Tenhave Woods and the Arboretum.

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

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Don Drife (248-528-0479)  
 Vice President & Communication: Ted Vickers (248-549-5366)  
 Treasurer & Ways & Means: Helen Cost (248-549-9423)  
 Recording Secretary: Nancy Vickers (248-549-5366)  
 Education: Chris Ethridge (248 229-9335)  
 Program: Bob Muller (248-398-0195)  
 At Large: Dena Serrato (248-542-2820)  
 Troop/Pack 1627 Representative & Engineer: Richard Stoll (248-398-2437)

## 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  
 1600 N. Campbell  
 Royal Oak, MI 48067  
 248-246-3380  
 nature@society@romi.gov  
 www.romi.gov/nature



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Photos of fungi mentioned in the “Friends of Fungi: Looking Back On 2014” article that can be found in the Spring 2015 Nature Society newsletter



Common Split Gill (cap)  
*Schizophyllum commune*



Common Split Gill (spore surface)  
*Schizophyllum commune*



Black Witch's Butter  
*Exidia glandulosa*



Tree Volvariella, Silky Volvariella  
(reflected in mirror)



Fetid False Coral  
*Telephora palmata*



Miniscule Mycena  
*Mycena capillaris*



Elegant Bolete  
*Austroboletus gracilis*