



# The Chinquapin

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Spring 2017

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## The Royal Oak Nature Society and Eagle Scout Projects: A Partnership

by Bob Muller

In March of 2001, the Royal Oak Nature Society had its first nature walk in Tenhave Woods. Before that, there hadn't been any nature programs in either Tenhave Woods or Cummington Park since the early 1980's. In the early 2000's we began surveying both Tenhave and Cummington. The old trails were overgrown and in many places blocked by fallen trees. We were looking for places where we could build new trails that would go past things that would be interesting to talk about during our nature walks.

There were only about five or six members of the Nature Society that could supply the labor for any repairs and the building of trails. As I had a background in Boy Scouting and at that time was a local Scout Master, I began contacting local Scout Troops for Eagle Scout candidates. An Eagle Scout candidate is required to do a project for a church or community that shows his management skills. Basically, the project must use a number of people that he can manage and be something of lasting value. In 2002, we had our first Eagle Scout project. It involved the building a new trail in Tenhave Woods. We named it the Sassafras Trail. So instead of a few of us trying to clear and line this trail, a group of boys under the management of another boy accomplished this in a day. In December of 2016, the Nature Society's 30<sup>th</sup> Eagle Scout project was completed. It involved the building of two new trails on the west side of Cummington Park. Over the years, boys from scout troops in Royal Oak, Troy, Berkley and Center-Line have been involved with these projects.

The condition of both parks and our Arboretum would not be where they are today without these Eagle Scout

projects. There wouldn't have been any way that the Nature Society could have done all of this work. Today, the City of Royal Oak has great nature parks with the public using them daily. These 30 projects have helped build and widen many of our trails. Crawfish Pond in Cummington Park was built as part of an Eagle Scout project. In two of these projects, over 200 cubic yards of sand was added to trails in Tenhave Woods so that they would not be underwater in the spring. The trail markers and trail maps were added at Tenhave. There were numerous projects in the Arboretum where an invasive plant, Buckthorn, was cleared and trails were built. Tree identification tags were added to trees in Cummington, Tenhave and the Arboretum. Wood Duck houses and Bluebird houses were added. Benches were built and installed in the parks and the large park signs were rebuilt. An entrance gateway at Cummington was added. The deer fence extensions and stringing of the wire in Tenhave Woods were part of an Eagle Scout project. A list of the 30 Eagle Scout projects is on our website. Click [here](#) to see the list.

Along with these Eagle Scout projects, we have had a Cub Scout Pack build and install bat houses in Tenhave and the Girl Scouts building a Butterfly Garden at the west edge of the arboretum, next to the Senior Center parking lot.

The Royal Oak Nature Society oversees the direction these three parks and provides nature walks and our speakers programs. Without the help of the youth of this area we would not have these fantastic parks today.

## New Trails in Cummington Park

by Mary Fredricks

Good things are happening in Cummington! This past fall, several new trails were created which will make moving around the woods easier. This will benefit both casual visitors and the leaders of walks and owl hoots. The trails also access areas where interesting trees, plants, and fungi have been found, making it unnecessary to go off trail to see them.

The first trail to go in is located on the east side of the park, east of the fence. It is a north-south trail between

Shagbark Hickory and Arkona Beach trails, crossing the Chinquapin Trail (reference the Cummington trail map on the next page). John Semchena and I roughed in the trail in mid October. Volunteer Bonnie Czander joined us a couple days later to continue the work. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in November, members of the Royal Oak Democratic Club helped us with lining the trails. They also helped with cleaning out the drainage ditch alongside

*(Continued on page 2)*

**NOTE: The April speaker program is being held on the 2nd Wednesday (April 12<sup>th</sup>) of the month. See page 3 for more details.**

## Katherine Howell, Nature Society member, reminisces about Bob Gasiorowski

It was with sadness that I read the article in the Fall 2016 Chinquapin by Donald Drife and Robert Muller announcing the passing of Bob Gasiorowski. My life and Bob's crossed in two memorable ways. For thirteen years, I was a substitute teacher for the Royal Oak Public Schools. I was always delighted whenever I was called to Kimball High School to substitute for Bob. His classroom was a veritable nature preserve, filled with pots of exotic plants and a bevy of tanks and cages that housed dozens of water and land creatures. I always looked forward to my planning period, when I could explore his collections, unencumbered by the duties of teaching his students.

When my son Brian was 8 years old, I was his Cub Scout Den Mother. On a Saturday morning, I arranged to take my young charges on a nature hike through Quickstad Park, led by Bob Gasiorowski. As we walked down a path, we stopped by a bush. Bob took a hold of one of the leaves growing on the bush, broke it in half, and gently pulled the two sections apart. The almost invisible juices of the leaf stretched a good inch or more and the detached bottom section of the leaf appeared to floating in air!

Our hike ended in a clearing in the woods, across which Bob had earlier placed a special net to catch birds passing through the glade. Before our arrival, Bob had gently removed the birds from the net and placed them individually in brown paper grocery bags where, as he

explained, they would be safe and calmed by the diffused light coming through the bag. One at a time, Bob took out each bird, gently held it in his hands and told us its name and life story before releasing it to the woods. When he took out the last bird, he held it on its back in one hand. He gently rubbed the bird's belly and the bird appeared to go to sleep. Bob opened his fingers and the bird did not take flight! We were in awe! He explained that this phenomenon was due to a special wiring in the bird's nervous system and the "spell" would be broken if you touched the bird's feet. From a group of begging volunteers, Bob asked my son to step forward and touch the bird's feet. To the squealing delight of eight young boys, the bird took off in a flutter and returned to the depths of Quickstad Park.

As Don and Robert wrote in their article, "Bob shared his infectious passion for all facets of the natural world... Naturalists of Bob's caliber are rare... Bob taught us to diligently observe nature... He taught us to put Nature into the hands of children, ... share with them the wonder. Bob was happiest when he was teaching and especially loved to teach young children. He once said, 'If a child sees a bird through binoculars, then he probably will not look at one through a BB gun sight.'" Indeed, my now 45 year old son is an avid bird photographer.

I am honored to have known Bob Gasiorowski.

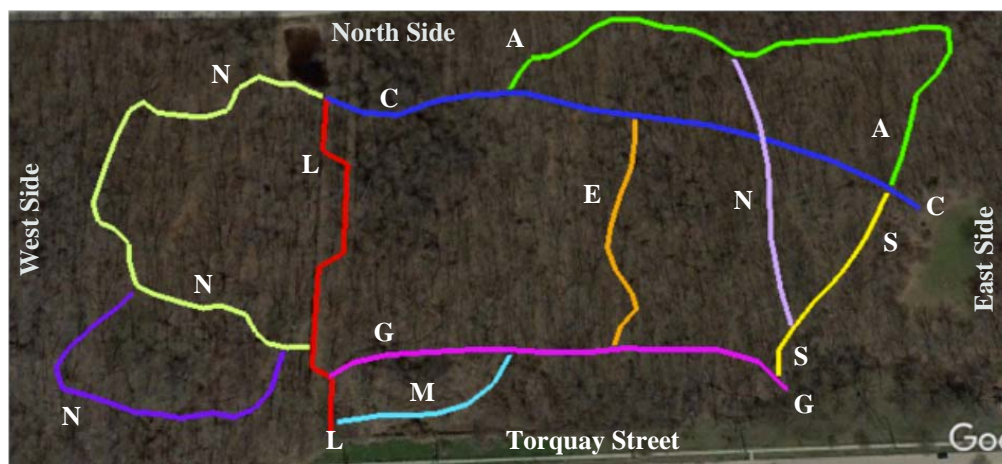
*(Continued from page 1)*

Leafdale Trail (affectionately known by some as Cummingston Creek) and picking up trash that day. This spring, small stumps will be removed from the trail, and any necessary adjustments for flooding will be made.

The two new trails west of Leafdale Trail were created in one day in early December as an Eagle Scout project by Troop 1610. Friends and family members also

participated with the project. Royal Oak Nature Society members increased the number of workers to 30. Eagle Scout candidate James Jabboori headed the project. Such projects run in the family as brother Michael earned his Eagle Scout designation in 2014. Parents Gibran and Christina Jabboori are proud of them both. Names for all of the new trails are currently being considered, and will be added to the new trail map once they are chosen.

### Cummingston Park Trail Map



A: Arkona Beach Trail  
C: Chinquapin Trail  
E: Eagle Scout Trail

G: Gentian Trail  
L: Leafdale Trail  
M: Meadow Trail

N: Newly created trail  
S: Shagbark Hickory Trail

**ALL SPEAKER PROGRAMS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO EVERYONE  
PRE-REGISTRATION IS NOT REQUIRED**

## **SPEAKER PROGRAMS**

*Our monthly general meeting/speaker programs (October to May) are held on Wednesday's at the **Royal Oak Middle School (ROMS)** at 709 N. Washington. We meet in either the auditorium or the "Gathering Place", both of which can be reached via the school's southeast entrance. The general meeting begins at **7:30 pm**, with the speaker program commencing several minutes later. The program is usually a slide show that focuses 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. In June and September, we hold a short general meeting beginning at 7:30 pm at the Royal Oak Senior Center (3500 Marais). Afterwards, we walk out into the arboretum behind the Senior Center and talk about what is going on there.*

**"A Naturalist's Look at the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail"** speaker program is being held on **March 1<sup>st</sup>** at **ROMS**. Join Faye Stoner with the Washtenaw County Parks and Ron Gamble with the Huron Clinton Metro Parks, on a week-long November trip to southern Texas, where they visited several parks and preserves. This trip was for the birds; but Texas butterflies, plants, mammals and more got their attention as well. From Padre Island to Bentsen State Park, some of their favorites included Green Jays, White Peacocks (a butterfly), an armadillo and a mystery mammal! This program was originally scheduled for October 2016.

**"Fantastic Fungi in Michigan: You don't have to go to the rain forest to see amazing mushrooms"** speaker program is being held on **April 12<sup>th</sup>** at **ROMS**. Although photographers travel to distant places to find and photograph mushrooms, interesting, beautiful and rare mushrooms can be seen right here in Michigan. Join Mary Fredricks, Nature Society mycologist, and learn about mushrooms tiny enough to grow on oak leaves, beautiful

mushrooms that are among the most poisonous known, mushrooms that are easy to overlook during the day but glow at night, and more, all growing right here in Michigan.

**"Of Cockroaches and Trees: The Outlook for Ash in Southeastern Michigan in the Aftermath of Emerald Ash Borer"** speaker program is being held on **May 3<sup>rd</sup>** at **ROMS**. Join Dr. Dan Kashian, Associate Professor at Wayne State University, for a look at Emerald ash borer 15 years after its introduction and devastation of the ash tree in our forests and yards. Emerald ash borer (EAB) has killed millions of trees near its introduction point in southeastern Michigan, and many have predicted the elimination of ash from the landscape. Almost 15 years after the introduction of EAB, however, we still find ash in the "aftermath" forests, as surviving trees and sprouts, both of which are producing an abundance of seed and new ash seedlings. With EAB still present at low populations in the area, is ash resilient enough to survive this devastating invasive species?

**Royal Oak Nature Society Friends of Fungi** is a group that promotes the understanding of, and an appreciation for, fungi in general and those fungi found in Tenhave, Cummingston, and other local urban woods. This group is open to anyone who wants to learn more about fungi which also includes mushrooms. During the winter, the group meets one Wednesday a month (November, January, February & March) at the **Royal Oak Senior Center** (3500 Marais) beginning at **7:00 pm**. Everyone is welcome. There is no cost or pre-registration. There is usually a specific topic that is being talked about at each of these meetings. Mary Fredricks heads this group. Check out the Nature Society's website for more information.

The Friends of Fungi Mycology Club will meet on **March 8<sup>th</sup>** (see time & place above). Program is to be announced. Check out our website periodically to see if program details have been posted.



This is a mycelia mat that Mary Fredricks saw in Tenhave Woods after some heavy rains.



## NATURE WALKS

**CUMMINGSTON PARK:** Park is just east of Meijer. 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 and Full Moon walks, park and meet at the Marais/Lexington lot.

**ARBORETUM:** Park is just behind the Senior Center (3500 Marais). Park and meet on the north side of the Senior Center.

For our nature walks, wearing boots is recommended in the winter and spring months. Using insect repellent and dressing appropriately is advised from late spring to the end of summer. You can go to our website to find a [parks location map](#).

"Owl Hoot" is being held at **Tenhave Woods** on Friday, **March 10<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.

"Very Early Spring" nature walk is being held at **Tenhave Woods** on Saturday, **March 25<sup>th</sup>**, beginning at **2:00 pm**.

"Spring Wildflower" nature walks are being held at **Tenhave Woods** on:

Sunday, **April 9<sup>th</sup>** beginning **2:00 pm**

Saturday, **April 22<sup>nd</sup>** beginning **2:00 pm**

Saturday, **April 29<sup>th</sup>** beginning **2:00 pm**

We will be looking for Red & White Trillium, blue & yellow violets, Jack-in-the-Pulpit, Bloodroot, Trout Lily, Wild Geranium, Spice Bush, Spring Beauty, Wood Poppy, Jack-in-the-Pulpit, & Wood Anemone and more.

"Mushroom Walks" are scheduled for Saturdays beginning at **10:00 am** on:

**April 22<sup>nd</sup>** at **Cummingston Park**

**May 27<sup>th</sup>** at **Tenhave Woods**

Mary Fredricks, a member and botanist/mycologist of the Royal Oak Nature Society, will lead the walk. Anyone with an interest in learning more about mushrooms and other fungi of the urban woods is welcome.

"Pond Life" program is being held on Saturday, **May 13<sup>th</sup>**, beginning at **2:00 pm** at **Tenhave Woods**. From the Lexington entrance, follow the signs to the pond. We will be sampling the vernal pond for what is living in it. We will have viewing trays 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.

### A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR PATRON MEMBERS

A special thank you from the Nature Society goes out to our following 2016/17 Patron members for their generous financial contribution to us:

**Barbara Grinke**

**Katherine & Larry Howell**

**Bonnie Michalak**

**Richard & Pat Stoll**

**Jean Watson**

**Bonnie Burnett**

**Don & Kathy Gavin**

**Jacqueline Choate &**

**Chris Johnson**



### Fall 2016 Tenhave Woods and Arboretum Stewardship Report

As we mentioned in the Fall 2016 Chinquapin newsletter, November 2011 was the last time woodchips were added to the arboretum trails. The woodchips main purpose is to suppress weed growth. By 2016, the woodchips were degraded and ready to be replaced. At the end of this past September, 10 volunteers spent a couple of hours spreading 20 yards of woodchips along the trails that were mostly west of the sidewalk located just behind the Senior Center. A month later, a Boy Scout Troop 1727 service project took 20 yards of woodchips and spread them along the trails east of that sidewalk. Around 20 scouts and family members gave a helping hand with this project. Since the Troop was in need of six service hours of community service, they also spent some additional time helping to reline an arboretum trail. After that, they went over to Tenhave Woods to do some trail relining on the Sassafras and Scout Trails.



Volunteers spreading woodchips

## Royal Oak Nature Society's 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Soiree/Fundraiser

**WHEN:** Friday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017

**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, and an awards ceremony.

**TICKET COST:** \$10

**WHERE TO PURCHASE TICKETS:** Speaker programs, nature walks, from any Nature Society board member or sending a check in by mail. If you purchase tickets in advance, you will get the first chance at winning a door prize.

**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 which is located behind the Royal Oak Senior Center (3500 Marais).

The Nature Society could use your help. We need volunteers to supply and bring in food on the night of the fundraiser. To cover our expenses, we are trying to find businesses/groups that might be interested in becoming a sponsor. They would be able to put their advertising material out on our "Sponsor" table just inside the hall entrance. The business/group name would be prominently shown on signage, in our program guide and in our upcoming fall newsletter. As a sponsor, the business/group would get two free tickets to the fundraiser. Cost is \$100. Also, we are also looking for donations from businesses that can be used as auction

items. If you know of anyone who might be interested in helping us out in any of these ways, please have them contact us at 248-246-3380 and 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 interesting items while enjoying great food and drinks along with getting to chat with your friends and other Nature Society supporters. So, this is an cordial invitation for you to join us on April 28<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.

**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 (248-892-3380)

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)

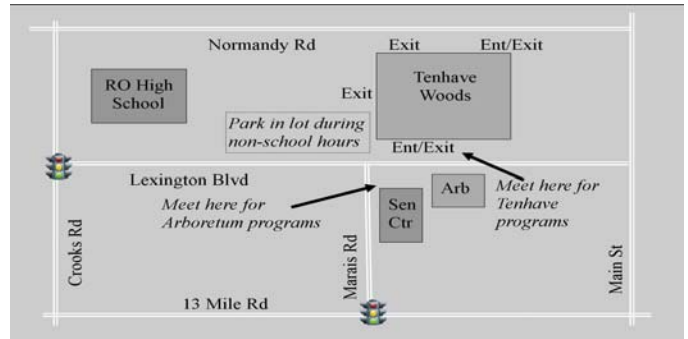
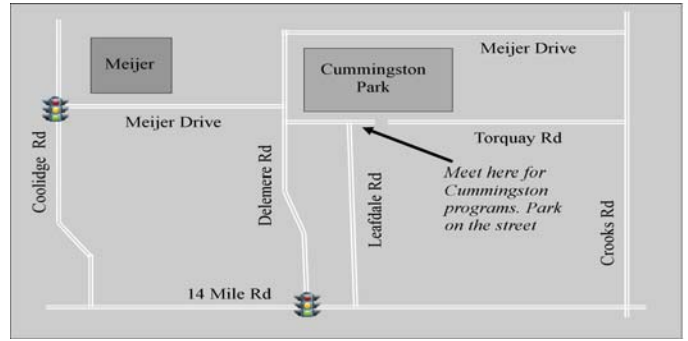
Stewardship-Tenhave: John Semchena (248-549-1362)

Stewardship-Cummington: Mary Fredricks (248-280-1042)

Scout Representative: Richard Stoll (248-398-2437)

At Large: Dena Serrato (248-542-2820)

## 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 developing an arboretum in Worden Park East. We also offer a wide range of natural history educational programs for children and adults.*

The Royal Oak Nature Society  
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natureociety@romi.gov  
www.romi.gov/nature

