



The Chinquapin

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Fall 2017

The Official Publication Of The Royal Oak Nature Society

NATURE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTICE

Membership for the 2017/18 season begins now and ends in August, 2018 To see if you owe membership dues for the 2017/18 season, please check either your street address label found on the last page or the e-mail subject line.

There are four membership levels. General Membership is free and with it, you get Nature Society schedule updates e-mailed to you at least once a month. Associate Membership cost \$5 per year and gets you the above benefit along with four newsletters, "The Chinquapin", e-mailed to you quarterly. If you want, we can mail a hard copy to you instead. **With e-mail, the print quality of the newsletter is better and the photos are in color.** Supporting Membership is \$10 and up per year and gets you all of the above benefits plus being listed a supporting member in our newsletter. Patron Membership is \$50 and up per year and gets you all of the above benefits, listed as a patron member in our newsletter, an invitation to our pre-Dream Cruise picnic at Gunn Dyer Park and two free tickets to our annual fundraiser. If you want to be an Associate, Sup-

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Royal Oak Wild Side

by Bob Muller

When I was a boy, I lived near Campbell and 11 Mile Road. The only wild animals we had in the city back then were Fox Squirrels. There were still pockets of nature left as we were still on the northern edge of the suburbs. I could catch frogs and crawfish at Campbell and Gardenia or climb the fence in the back of Oakview Cemetery and into the woods to catch Redback Salamanders. But, the only mammals around were Fox Squirrels. Today, we are further away from the northern edge of the suburbs. We now have many species of mammals living here that should be living in the wilds. Due to increased human population, the mammals have had to move back into town as we have eliminated their local wild

habitat. Raccoons, possums, rabbits skunks and ground hogs have been common around here for a number of years. In the past decade, White Tail Deer have been frequently seen. Red Fox and coyotes are found throughout the city but stay hidden from our eyes. Southern Flying Squirrels are very common but being the size of your fist and jumping between trees twenty feet up at night, few of us ever notice them. Grey Squirrels (the black ones) slowly spread from the Points along Lake St. Clair to Royal Oak over a decade ago. They have displaced the larger Fox Squirrels, but I still see a Fox Squirrel occasionally. When I was a boy we did not have Chipmunks in

(Continued on page 2)

President's Report

by Don Drife

April 1st: Tiny olive-gray birds with a gold crown, white eyebrows, and small white wing-bars are flitting through the arboretum. They are Golden-crowned Kinglets, one of the first spring migrants. A few of them spiral, headfirst, up a box elder tree, checking every nook, niche, and crevice for food. They resemble Brown Creepers. It is nice that they have a place to rest and feed on their trip north.

The Royal Oak Arboretum is a special place for me. On every visit I find something interesting to study or photograph. However, not everyone is interested in preserving this space.

Several newly planted trees disappeared from the arboretum. These were planted as part of an Eagle Scout project, carefully caged, and labeled. They apparently were pulled up and we could not find them. I feel sorry for the young man who put so much energy into this project only to have a portion destroyed a few weeks later. We

are beginning to question whether our goal of growing every native tree is obtainable.

April 8th: A butterfly with orange wings, banded with blue dots is sunning itself on the Leafdale Trail in Cummington Park. An orange ring, resembling an eye, decorates each forewing. With tattered wings showing bare spots lacking scales, this insect looks old. This shows me it overwintered as an adult. A gray lined pattern marks the outer wings and when they are closed, it blends into the leaf litter. The ragged edged wings aid the camouflage; they have no sharp line to catch your eye. Later I learn that this is a Milbert's Tortoiseshell.

A family photo shows my mother holding me under the Cummington Park sign almost sixty-years ago. At that time the park was home to thousands of trillium

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Spring 2017 Royal Oak Arboretum Stewardship Report

In April, the Nature Society and Japhet School separately spent some time in the arboretum cleaning up all of the debris that had ended up there during the winter. Japhet School of Clawson was able to earn green points for their Evergreen Status. This will be their 9th year that they are a Michigan Green School. Japhet has been doing arboretum cleanup for the past several years at the end of April and the Nature Society appreciates their effort.

In early May, some members of our Nature Society volunteer team (John Semchena, Julie Krumm, Bonnie Michalak & Doris Walters) tackled garlic mustard located in the eastern section of the arboretum. Eighteen bags of

the plant were pulled and removed from the park. This invasive plant will never be completely eliminated, but by attacking it every year, its presence will be minimized.

In mid May, Troop 1627 lead by Eagle Scout candidate James Richards, spent their time working in the Royal Oak Arboretum. About 25 scouts and their parents plus a few Nature Society members lined trails in our future mushroom garden (east side of the arboretum), and put up several trail signs at the intersections. They also planted 12 native trees throughout the park, put up protective cages around them and then watered them.

Spring 2017 Cummingston Park Stewardship Report

On Earth Day weekend, the Greater Royal Oak Democratic Club picked up trash throughout the park including along the outside of the fences. They also helped to clean out two drainage ditches inside the park..

During the first half of June, Mary Fredricks & John Semchena worked on refurbishing the Cummingston Park sign and the Cummingston Park rules sign, both located at the entrance . Old paint was removed from the signs and then were repainted.

Spring 2017 Tenhave Woods Stewardship Report

The phragmites in one area of Dragonfly Pond are dying, but they have begun to spread to other areas near the pond. We will need to start attacking these new areas. On the plus side this past spring, this years duck

population has added three new members and that there haven't been any more deer seen in Tenhave since the fall of 2015.

(Royal Oak Wild Side continued from page 1)

southern Royal Oak, but now they are common in some neighborhoods but missing from others. Except for the squirrels, most of these animals are out at night or early in the morning. So, we generally don't see them, but when we do, it is not a surprise. These creatures have all become urban animals acting very differently from their country relatives, often showing little concern that we are near them. They all know they can run faster than we do.

There still are surprises. I saw a Least Weasel in the Arboretum in June. The Least Weasel, *Musela nivalis*, are the worlds smallest carnivore. They prey on mice but also birds, amphibians and insects. Their body shape is

like a long mouse averaging about seven inches. In the north, their fur turns pure white in winter with a small amount of back hairs at the end of their tail. In southern Michigan where there is not a total snow cover, they sometimes retain their summer coloration of red brown fur. I never thought we would see this animal in our nature parks.

I believe any time you walk though our Royal Oak forests, there will always be something new to discover. You simply have to look. 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.

(Royal Oak Wild Side continued from page 1)

porting or Patron member, please fill out a membership form (page 5) and mail it along with a check to the Royal Oak Nature Society. Please list other household members you want included as Nature Society members (no extra cost).

Through your donation (tax deductible), you will be help-

ing to cover the costs to produce our newsletter and will also be assisting in funding educational programs that we provide.

If you only want to be a General Member, please e-mail us the information asked for on our membership form (page 5) and send that information to: naturesociety@romi.gov

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

SPEAKER PROGRAMS

*Our monthly general meeting/speaker programs (October 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. 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 to follow.***

"Pollinator Garden" presentation is being held on **October 4th**. The Pollinator Garden is situated to the west of the Rouge Gateway Trail on the U of M Dearborn campus, just south of the Community Organic Garden. The garden is planted with dozens of native perennials that are used as nectar plants and/or larval hosts for pollinators, such as butterflies. It is also the site for two other features, a sensory pond and an insect hotel. David. Susko, Associate Professor of Biology at U of M Dearborn, will show you a step-by-step history of the design and construction of the garden, pond, and insect hotel. The purpose of all of these elements is to provide

aesthetically pleasing habitat for beneficial pollinators like garden insects and invertebrates.

"Green Fire, Aldo Leopold's Land Ethic For Our Time" award winning film is being shown on **November 15th**. This documentary highlights legendary environmentalist Aldo Leopold's extraordinary career, tracing how he shaped and influenced the modern environmental movement. Leopold remains relevant today, inspiring projects all over the country that connect people and land.

PLEASE NOTE! The November program is being held on the 3rd Wednesday of the month (15th)

Cummingston Meadow Restoration Update

by Mary Fredricks

Last fall we began a long term project to restore the meadow in Cummingston. Although Meadow Trail had been named for it, the meadow itself, as well as the bordering fence, had long since disappeared under wild grape vines. Burdock and other weeds made it difficult and unpleasant for walking, and very few desirable wildflowers were strong enough to grow there. It was decided that it was time to restore the meadow.

The first task was to re-establish a trail, which was done with volunteer help from the Friends of Fungi and Nature Society members. We tried to follow the old trail as much as possible. Then the overgrowth was selectively treated with chemicals by John DeLisle's company, Natural Community Services. On July 1st of this year, the project was moved forward substantially when Eagle Scout candidate Peter Swanney and Boy Scout Troop 1610, along with family, friends, and Nature Society members, removed dead vegetation from the meadow and fence, cut down and removed weed trees, and removed glass and other debris. Removal of invasives will continue this summer. Recently new birdhouses were installed as part of the Eagle Scout project, and the process of rerouting the trail away from the bird houses and a steep drop was begun. The next step may be the most difficult so far: waiting and watching as nature repairs itself.

As we move forward, the tasks of controlling invasives and defining and maintaining the trail will continue. We won't know for awhile what other interventions will be necessary or possible. In the meantime, we can all help by walking the trail often, to define and maintain it; by watching for and reporting positive changes, such as bird and wildflower sightings; and by volunteering when the need arises. With diligence and patience, we will be able to restore this important habit to Cummingston Nature Center.



Troop 1610 working on July 1st Eagle Scout project

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)

“An Evening at the Arboretum” will be held on Wednesday, **September 6th**, beginning at **7:30 pm**. Meet at the Royal Oak Senior/Community Center (3500 Marais) parking lot-north end. We will tour the arboretum, looking for different plants will be evident in late summer, and hopefully find some cool insects as well.

“Late Summer Walk in the Royal Oak Arboretum and Tenhave Woods” is being held on Sunday, **September 10th**, beginning at **2:00 pm**. Meet at the Royal Oak Senior/Community Center (3500 Marais) parking lot-north end. We will walk through the meadow in our developing arboretum to see what wildflowers are blooming and then walk over to Tenhave Woods to see what is going on there. .

“Fall Color” walks are being held at:

Tenhave Woods on Saturday, **October 14th**, beginning at **2:00 pm**

Cummingston Park on Saturday, **October 21st**, beginning at **2:00 pm**

Tenhave Woods on Sunday, **October 29th**, beginning at **2:00 pm**

This is the most beautiful time of the year to take a look at our nature study areas.

“Geological Features” is being held at **Tenhave Woods** on Sunday, **November 19th**, beginning at **2:00 pm**. What did this area look like thousands and millions of years ago? Why is Royal Oak so flat, or is it?

Royal Oak Nature Society Friends of Fungi Fall Schedule

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. Mary Fredricks heads this group.

Mushroom Walk is being held on Saturday, **September 23rd**, at **Tenhave Woods** beginning at **10:00 am**.

Mushroom Walk is being held on Saturday, **October 28th**, at **Cummingston Park** beginning at **10:00 am**.

The **Friends of Fungi Mycology Club** will meet on Wednesday, **November 8th**, at the **Royal Oak Senior Center** (3500 Marais) beginning at **7:00 pm**. Chris Wright, research mycologist at MSU and a director of Midwest American Mycological Information, will be talking about the medicinal uses of mushrooms. There is no preregistration or cost for this program. Everyone is welcome.

(President's Report continued from page 1)

before flooding changed the flora. Today, Cummingston sometimes is treated as the neglected stepchild of our two nature areas. It has more species of nesting birds than Tenhave, different forest types, a fascinating fungus assemblage, and more native forest insects. The area around Cummingston was developed much later than Tenhave. Damage to her ecosystem due to fragmentation is not as pronounced as at Tenhave. The term "fragmented natural area" refers to one that is surrounded by development. After an ecosystem is fragmented it exists as an isolated island. There is little chance of new genetic material reaching it and non-mobile species cannot re-colonize if they are wiped out. I encourage you to explore Cummingston and see some of the changes.

An Eagle Scout project created a new trail in the west end and another Eagle project cleared the ancient meadow. Check out this charming area.

These observations are just a few from my field notes. When I walk our nature areas I often observe something new. An unfamiliar insect, a different animal behavior, a new fungus, or some form of a developing plant. Come on our nature walks but also explore the parks on your own. Keep a journal. Write down descriptions of what you see. You don't need to know the name of the bird, insect, or plant you are watching. I often identify organisms long after I watch them. It is different when you are in the park alone or with just a few people than when you are part of a group.

Problems in the Parks

If you are near or in Tenhave Woods, Cummington Park or the Royal Oak Arboretum and see or hear suspicious or unlawful behavior, please help by calling the Royal Oak Police Department's non-emergency number, 248-246-

3500 and inform them of the problem. We would also appreciate it if you could also let the Nature Society know about the problem by contacting us at 248-246-3380 or by e-mail at naturesociety@romi.gov.

Master Plan

The Nature Society spent last winter updating their Master Plan. The first one was created in 2001. It was updated in 2002, 2009, 2013 and 2017. Currently, our biggest focus is on the removal of invasive species from

Cummington, Tenhave and the Royal Oak Arboretum. To view our newest master plan, please go to: <https://www.romi.gov/DocumentCenter/View/17883>

Flowers in Dense Heads

Arboretum Guide: A *Guide to the Wildflowers of the Royal Oak Arboretum* is now available. This forty page print-on-demand book features over one hundred of the most conspicuous plant species found in the "arb." They are illustrated with more than three hundred color photographs. The book costs \$40.00 and will be available at the summer Arboretum walks and the fall speaker programs.

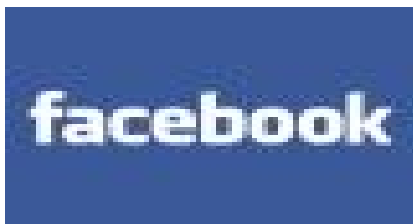


False Sunflower or Oxeye resembles one of the Sunflowers (see pg. 32). It has opposite leaves with short petioles, the disk flowers have styles, and the ray flowers have rounded tips.

Excerpt from the Arboretum Guide

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:
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1600 N. Campbell Rd.
Royal Oak, MI 48067

Names (household members): _____

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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

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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)

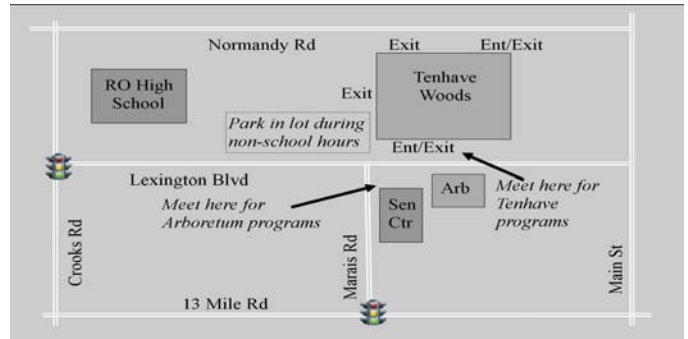
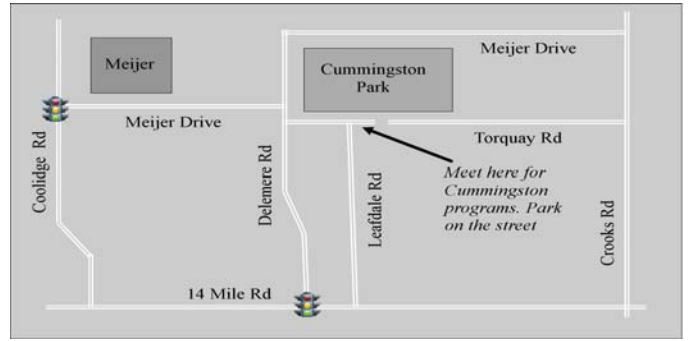
Stewardship-Tenhave: John Semchena (248-549-1362)

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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