



# The Chinquapin

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Winter 2016-17

The Official Publication Of The Royal Oak Nature Society

## FINAL NATURE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTICE

To continue receiving our newsletter “The Chinquapin” (beginning with the Spring 2017 edition), you need to be a paid-up Associate, Supporting or Patron 2016/17 Nature Society member.

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 quality of the photos is better and they are in color.** Supporting Membership is \$10 & up per year and gets you all of the above benefits plus being listed a supporting member in our newsletter. Patron Membership is \$50 & 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 one free ticket to our annual fundraiser. If you want to be an Associate,

(Continued on page 2)

## Renaming of Worden Park East

by Bob Muller

The Nature Society began work on the area behind the Community Center 10 years ago. We have slowly been eliminating the invasive buckthorn that infested the area, trying to turn the area into an Arboretum, a botanical garden with a major collection of trees. A while back, we noticed the city putting up new park signs. Since we have felt that we should get official designation for the arboretum because of all the work we have done in it, we approached the city this past spring to find out how we could get Worden Park

East renamed the Royal Oak Arboretum. The first step was going to the Parks and Recreation Advisory board for their approval. With that being completed, our request then went to the Park Naming Board, where we received unanimous approval for the name change. The last step was a request to the City Council for the name change. They approved the new name this past summer. Sometime next summer, a new sign will go up in the park with the name “Royal Oak Arboretum.”

## Cummingston Park Meadow Restoration

by Mary Fredricks

Last year, Meadow Trail in Cummingston was reopened after years of being made impassable by a large stand of burdock mixed with other weeds. Today the trail remains open and is frequently used by visitors to the park.

Around the time the trail was reopened, I began to hear about the meadow that originally gave the trail its name. It was rich in diversity and drew many people to the park. Unfortunately, when the apartment buildings were built across the street, the construction company was allowed to dump dirt, concrete and other debris there. The meadow disappeared under it. Nature's opportunists, such as burdock, honeysuckle, and wild grape, moved in. With the trail successfully reopened, it seemed like the right time to address the problem of the meadow.

The idea of restoring the meadow was discussed with the president of the Nature Society, Don Drife, and Nature Society naturalist, Bob Muller. I then drew up a proposal to submit to the board. The proposal contained the following points, along with suggestions for proceeding: We know that there was a meadow there in the past. Trying to undo some of the

damage caused by people would be in keeping with the Society's mandate. Having a meadow would increase the educational value of the woods by adding another ecosystem. It would increase the pleasure of walking on Meadow Trail and potentially increase the number of people walking in the woods. It might also make maintaining Meadow Trail easier since some of the plants now encroaching on the trail would no longer be there. If the restoration included removing wild grapevine (a native) from the fence in that area, it would increase the safety of people using the park and decrease the number of people who might be meeting in or sleeping in the woods at night by making the area visible from outside the fence.

The proposal was submitted to the board. It was accepted and approved in August. The work has begun with the removal of many of the encroaching plants. It is now easy to see what a large task is ahead of us. But Mother Nature has a way of rewarding those who are on her side, and one day we will once again enjoy a flourishing Cummingston Meadow.

## Searching the Sky for Bats

On a comfortable early August evening around dusk, a group of about 20 collected at the Senior Center and walked over to the area just outside the Tenhave Lexington entrance. Once there, they began looking up in the sky searching for bats. Amanda Felk, Nature Society member and very knowledgeable about bats, brought her echolocator (used to find bat radar signals) along. She pointed it towards the sky, and soon discovered a large group of them flying around, looking



for and catching insects. With the echolocator, Amanda was able to distinguish 3 different types of bats that were in the air. They included the Big Brown, Silvered Hair and Red Bats. After things quieted down, everyone went into Tenhave and walked over to Dragonfly Pond where they continued to find bat activity. As it got closer to 10 pm, the bats pretty much disappeared and the group called it an evening. Hopefully, we will get a chance in the future to do this again.

## Park Patrol Update

During the late spring, summer and early fall, our Park Patrol (see Spring 2016 newsletter) had patrol members walking the Tenhave fence line, every week or two, looking for fence breaches and helping to clean up trash along the fence path. Only a few minor problems were reported and they were quickly taken care of. During this upcoming winter, we will have a few people checking the fence line and trails for problems. When next spring comes around, we will start up "Park Patrol" full time once again. This activity is a necessary in order to make sure that the park's valuable wildflowers are not destroyed by deer. The last time we found any deer in

the park was about a year ago and the reason for that we think was because someone broke a lock on the Lexington gate and opened it.

We want to take the time to thank the following for volunteering their time to help patrol Tenhave Woods: Bonnie Michalak, John Herrgott, Don Erwin, Doris Walters, Priscilla and Cole Hawkins and their grandchildren, and Christine Utter, Michelle Watson, and Kim Sneary and their children.

Please contact us if you think you might want to join our Park Patrol team beginning next spring.

## Shumard's Oak Confirmed in our Nature Parks

by Donald Drife

Last Fall, our citizen scientist group found a Shumard's oak (*Quercus shumardii*) in Tenhave Woods. It is on the north end of the woods near the east turnstile. From a branch on the ground we could see the large acorns, deeply lobed leaves, and medium size, non-hairy buds. Bob Muller noticed that this tree bloomed earlier than other oaks in the woods. A week later we discovered a Shumard's Oak in Cummingston.

Despite earlier reports, the first Michigan specimens were collected in the 1980s. Shumard's Oak is similar to several other oak species. Bob Muller and I visited the University of Michigan Herbarium and spent part of a day studying pressed oak specimens that had been identified

by experts. This was how we determined our oak was an authentic Shumard's Oak. Our tree and many others in southeastern Michigan were alive long before there were reports of this species from the state.

Shumard's Oak is listed by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory as "Special Concern." These are the first Oakland County specimens, and the species is recorded from only six counties in the state. All records are from Southeastern Michigan. Special Concern species have no added legal protection.

We thank the participants who came out to walk the woods and looked for fallen twigs.

(Continued from page 1)

Supporting or Patron member, please fill out a membership form (page 5) and mail it along with a check to the 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 helping 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) & send that information to: [naturesociety@romi.gov](mailto:naturesociety@romi.gov).

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

## SPEAKER PROGRAMS

At our monthly meetings, October to May, we host speaker programs at the **Royal Oak Middle School (ROMS)** located at 709 N. Washington. Enter at the school's southeast entrance and follow the Nature Society signs. Usually, the programs are slide shows focusing on various natural history topics. If you watch nature programs on PBS or the Discovery channel, this is better, as you can meet afterwards and ask the speakers questions. At our monthly meetings in September and June, we meet inside the **Senior Center** (3500 Marais) for an update on what is going on at the Royal Oak Arboretum (behind the Senior Center) and with other Nature Society activities. Afterwards, we head outside and do a tour of the arboretum. All of our Monthly Meeting/Speaker programs (September thru June) are held on Wednesdays and begin at 7:30 pm.

**"Invasive Species and the Battle For the Future of the Great Lakes"** speaker program is being held on **December 7<sup>th</sup>** at the **ROMS**. There are more than 180 exotic species in the Great Lakes. Some have had little or no impact so far. But a handful of others are conducting an all-out assault on the Great Lakes and are winning the battle. Join author Bill Rapai for a program on who these creatures are, how they got here, the damage they are doing, and what we can do to control them and stop their spread.

**"Ghost River of Royal Oak"** speaker program is being held on **January 4<sup>th</sup>** at the **ROMS**. Join Royal Oak Nature Society naturalist Bob Muller and explore Red Run then and now. Almost a century ago Red Run and its tributaries through Royal Oak, began to be covered over as part of our sewer system. For 15 years we have been investigating where the river ran, what can still be seen on

the surface and what is hidden from sight. We present this program every two years and new information keeps coming to light. Since the last program we have found photos of the covering of the Little Run in the 1920s and discovered that in the spring Red Run connected part of the Clinton River to the Rouge River. Come and learn about our latest findings.

**"Life 50 Miles from Tomorrow"** speaker program is being held on **February 1<sup>st</sup>** at the **ROMS**. National Park Ranger Stephanie Schneider took time off from Yellowstone to spend the summer of 2015 in the Arctic village of Kotzebue. Kotzebue is a small Inupiaq community 50 miles from the international dateline, and 30 miles above the Arctic Circle. Join Stephanie to learn about the animals, plants and people that call the tundra home.

**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 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.

On **January 11<sup>th</sup>** and **February 8<sup>th</sup>**, Friends of Fungi meetings are scheduled to be held. See above for location & time. For topic information, periodically check out the Nature Society's website.

The photo on the right was taken in Cummingston this past May. It is a large dryad's saddle (*Polyporus squamosus*). Dryad's saddle is abundant in both the spring and fall.



## 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)

"Mammals of Tenhave" is being held at **Tenhave Woods** on **Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup>**, beginning at **2:00 pm**. Park at the Lexington & Marais lot & meet at the Lexington entrance. Come and learn about the mammals that live in Tenhave Woods. We will look for signs of these mammals and have skulls and skins with us to help describe them and how they live.

"Bark at Tenhave Woods" is being held at **Tenhave** on **Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup>**, beginning at **2:00 pm**. Park at the Lexington & Marais lot & meet at the Lexington entrance. Learn the differences of bark on different species of trees and the changes in the looks of the bark as the tree ages. Why are some barks smooth and others deeply furrowed? Which patterns in the furrows help in to identify the tree species and more?

"Owl Hoot" is being held at **Cummingston Park** on **Friday, December 16<sup>th</sup>**, beginning at **7:30 pm**. Park and meet at Leafdale & Torquay. We will walk into Cummingston and attempt to lure in or have screech & great horned owls answer tape recordings of their calls.

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

"Winter Birds" is being held at **Tenhave Woods** on **Saturday, January 14<sup>th</sup>**, beginning at **2:00 pm**. Park at the Lexington & Marais lot & meet at the Lexington entrance..

"Owl Hoot" is being held at **Cummingston Park** on **Friday, February 10<sup>th</sup>**, beginning at **7:30 pm**. Park and meet at Leafdale & Torquay. We will walk into Cummingston and attempt to lure in or have screech & great horned owls answer tape recordings of their calls.

"The Forest in Winter" is being held at **Tenhave Woods** on **Saturday, February 11<sup>th</sup>**, beginning at **2:00 pm**. Park at the Lexington & Marais lot & meet at the Lexington entrance..

## Royal Oak Arboretum Gardening Accomplishments for 2016

A group of dedicated volunteers worked at the Royal Oak Arboretum this past season from May until the middle of September. Each Tuesday, we met at 8:30 am and we gardened for several hours. First, we tidied up both the Memorial and Butterfly Gardens. A nice load of wood chips from the city helped keep the weeds down. Our next goal was to "Free a Tree". We looked around the arboretum for trees that were surrounded by too much vegetation. We, then, tried to give them more breathing room. Lastly, we removed many small, dead trees and branches so that the trails looked more inviting. Our volunteers were: John Semchena, Gail Valentine, Doris Walters, Melanie Connors, Debbie Ferguson, and Karen Pettke.



Royal Oak Arboretum gardeners hard at work one Tuesday morning

## 2016 Dream Cruise Wrap Up

Prior to this year, we had four great years of weather in a row for the Woodward Dream Cruise. But this year, the bad weather finally caught up with us. Dream Cruise day was hot and humid and there was the threat of rain hanging over our heads throughout the afternoon. With rain lurking around, we did not do nearly as well with the number of parked cars as we have during the past several years.

The Nature Society wants to thank the following people for volunteering their time at this year's Dream Cruise: **Carol Bradshaw, Pam & Mike Brady, Helen & Christian Cost, James Dallas, Don Drife, Debbie Ferguson, John Herrgott, Mitzi Hoffman, Jack Kerby, Mary Fredricks, Bonnie Michalak, Bob Muller, Brendan Nolan, Karen Pettke, John Semchena, Vanessa Shultz , Richard**



**& Pat Stoll and Ted Vickers.**

Also, a big thanks goes out again to **Greg Rassel** and his crew for getting the park ready for us.

Once a year, this becomes an easy way for the Nature Society to bring in some extra money. The City of Royal Oak sets everything up and all we have to do is collect the \$10 entry fee and direct people to available parking spots.

Hopefully, when Dream Cruise comes along next year, you might consider joining our volunteer parking crew for a few hours.

Photo (left) has Bonnie Michalak collecting money on Dream Cruise Day (2016) from a driver parking his car at Gunn Dyer Park.

## NATURE SOCIETY'S 12<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

Our next annual fundraiser is scheduled for Friday, **April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017** at the Royal Oak Elk's Club. Please **SAVE THE DATE** and get more details in our next newsletter

(Spring 2017) and also from our website beginning in early 2017.

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)

- General (free)
- Associate (\$5)
- Supporting (\$10 & up)
- Patron (\$50 & up)

- Receive newsletter by:
  - Regular mail OR
  - 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, Cummingston 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 Cummingston 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)

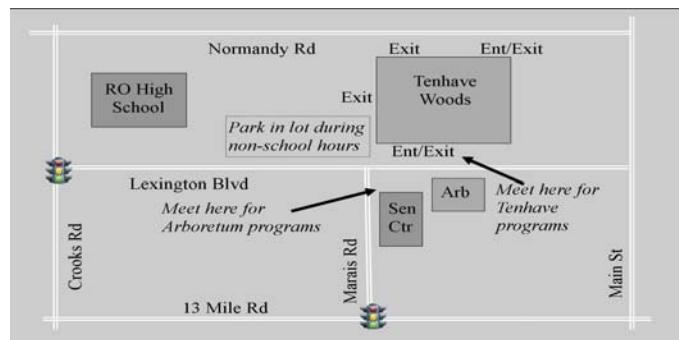
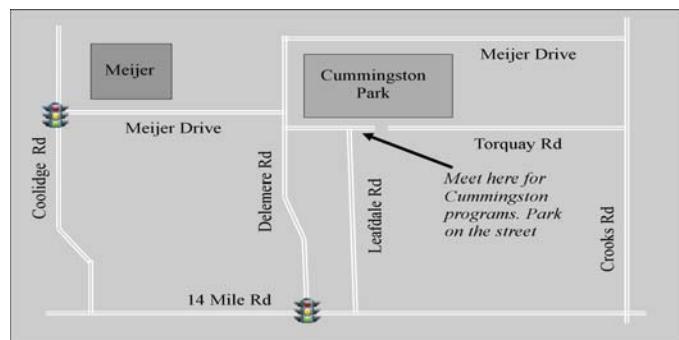
Stewardship-Cummingston: Mary Fredricks (248-280-1042)

Troop 1627: Richard Stoll (248-398-2437)

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

## Cummingston Park, Tenhave Woods, and the Arboretum

Traffic Light



To locate and print out Tenhave Woods & Cummingston 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 non-profit education and stewardship group working within the city of Royal Oak's two nature parks, Tenhave Woods and Cummingston 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 Warden Park East. We also offer a wide range of natural history educational programs for children and adults.

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