



The Chinquapin

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Fall 2024

The Official Publication Of The Royal Oak Nature Society

NATURE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTICE

Membership for the 2024/25 season begins now and ends at the end of August, 2025. Check to see if you owe membership dues for the 2024/25 season or not. If you receive a hard copy of the newsletter, check the address label to see if you need to renew. If you receive an electronic copy of the newsletter, check the email subject line to see if you need to renew.

Only a couple of our members currently have our \$5/year associate membership. Also, newsletter hard copies that go out by regular mail, now cost more than \$5 to make and distribute yearly. So, we have decided to do away with the associate membership. We hope that you will continue to support the Nature Society through your Supporting & Patron memberships.

General Membership is free. You get Nature Society schedule updates e-mailed to you at least once a month.

Supporting Membership is \$10 and up per year. You get Nature Society schedule updates e-mailed to you at least once a month plus our newsletter emailed or mailed to your household quarterly. You will also be listed in our newsletter as a Nature Society Supporting Member.

Patron Membership is \$50 and up per year. You get the

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The Fred A. Erb Arboretum: Where are we with our Native Tree Goal

by Robert Muller

In 2008, Don Drife (Nature Society botanist) and I were teaching a tree identification class in the community center. We found a Quaking Aspen behind the center, a common tree in Michigan, but not found in Cummingston or Tenhave Woods. This was the catalyst to develop the waste area behind the center into an arboretum, a botanical garden specializing in trees. Our thought was to plant a teaching collection with all of Michigan's native trees that are not found in our nature parks. First, we began cleaning up the area. People for years had been dumping dug up shrubs, broken concrete, and all kinds of other junk into the woods. It also was 90% European Buckthorn, an invasive that we are still working on getting out of the nature parks. Nolan Tillis, a Boy Scout from Troop 1627, did his Eagle Scout project cutting down buckthorn. He generated 12 city truckloads of woodchips. Within that clearing, we began developing a prairie, and planting native trees and shrubs. In the last 16 years seven Eagle Scout projects have occurred. Also, for the past eight years a crew has been working every Tuesday morning from April to December planting plants, weeding, watering, and digging buckthorn. So where are we now on our native tree goal?

First, we needed a list of Michigan Native trees. This may sound easy but there are many different lists. "Tree" is not a well-defined term. Trees are woody plants that usually have a single stem (trunk). The problem with this definition is that abnormally large shrubs might rarely have a single stem. We used the species covered in *Michigan Trees* by Barnes and Wagner as a base list. We added Grey Birch which was not known from Michigan when their book was written. We ignored the Hawthorn species because they are difficult to distinguish, and it is not easy to determine which is a tree. This gave us a want list of 87 trees native to the state. Many species we easily purchased, but many are simply not grown commercially. A few were collected from the wild on property where we had permission to collect. Some are rare enough that we spent years locating and gathering seed to grow our own. Cork Elm is one example. (See article by Don Drife in this issue.) Tree First, the arborists on our board, were able to get us cuttings from a planted Swamp Cottonwood which we rooted. We have all eleven Oak species found in Michigan. The search goes on for the nine missing species. They are:

Smooth Juneberry, *Amelanchier laevis*
Prairie Crab, *Apple, Malus ioensis*
Showy Mountain, Ash, *Sorbus decora*
Red Mulberry, *Morus rubra*
American Chestnut, *Castanea dentata*
Grey Birch, *Betula populifolia*
Mountain Maple, *Acer spicatum*
Striped Maple, *Acer pensylvanicum*
Blue Ash, *Fraxinus quadrangulata*

If anyone knows where we might be able to secure any of these nine species, or has property where we

could collect the tree or seeds, please let us know.

The Hunt for Missing Arboretum Trees

by Don Drife

One goal of the Fred A. Erb Arboretum is to obtain a sample of each native tree species in Michigan. Several of these species are not grown in the plant nursery trade. Bob Muller and I have spent time looking for seeds of several of these natives so we can attempt to grow them. We like to gather our own seeds, so we know it is a local tree type that we are growing. It is a time-consuming process, and we probably will never find some of the rarer species. We need to find the tree and then visit it when the seeds are ripe. Hopefully, it produced seeds, and some are within reach.

One species we chased was Cork Elm also called Rock Elm. It is an elm with corky ridges on the twigs and downward pointing branches. I photographed this species in 1974 at what is now Berberian Woods Nature Preserve in Southfield. Bob Muller and I visited the woods and found the trees. On April 6, 2021 the trees were blooming. The seeds are large, and rodents love them. We continued to visit almost every week until we found seeds on June 10. Most of the seeds were eaten so just the wings remained. We found a few seeds on the tree and a few that had fallen between logs. We currently have two two-foot-tall trees in the arboretum.

Another missing native was Blue Ash. It has a unique four-angled twig with four wings. We are near the northern limit for this species. It grows mostly south of Flint, Michigan. I know several locations for this species. Last February I took the Southeastern Chapter of the Michigan Botanical Society on a winter tree walk to one of these locations along the Clinton River. Near a three-inch-diameter Blue Ash tree I found a single seed. The walk participants then spent the next twenty minutes looking for more seed. They found about 20 seeds that look

viable. These are now planted, and we are waiting to see if they will grow. Blue Ash seeds germinate one or two years after they fall from the tree. The seeds we planted may not germinate until next year.

Blue Ash seeds resemble Black Ash seeds. The wings on Blue Ash seeds surround the seed cavity. Black Ash seed wings do not wrap around the top of the seeds.

The hunt for the missing trees is challenging and we may never reach our goal. We have seen nurseries that claimed to offer our trees but they were using the same common name for a different species or they did not have the same idea about what our species are.

We thank the Southeastern Chapter of the Michigan Botanical Society for their help in securing Blue Ash seeds.



Cork Elm Tree

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Supporting Membership benefits listed above, plus two free tickets to our annual fundraiser, and an invitation to our "Day Before the Dream Cruise Picnic" at Gunn Dyer Park. You will also be listed in our newsletter as a Nature Society Patron Member.

To be Supporting or Patron member:

1. If paying by check, please fill out a membership form (see p.5 for the form & instructions) and mail it along with a check to the Royal Oak Nature Society.
2. If paying with a credit/debit card or PayPal, please fill out this [MEMBERSHIP FORM](#) and follow the instructions. Type the word "membership" on the

payment form where it says, "Add special instructions to the seller."

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 (see p.5) and send that information to: naturesociety@romi.gov.

SPEAKER PROGRAMS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO EVERYONE

REGISTRATION IS NOT REQUIRED

*Our speaker programs are usually Power Point presentations 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. Our current speaker programs are being held at the **Royal Oak Historical Museum** (1411 W. Webster, just west of Crooks), and begin at **7:00 pm**. Currently, there are no speaker programs scheduled. Check our website periodically for newly scheduled programs.*

President's Report

We have not had a president's message in our newsletter for several years, I will attempt to correct that in this newsletter and those that follow. We have continued to offer nature walks in Tenhave Woods, Cummingston Park and the Fred A. Erb Arboretum, as we have for the past 25 years.

We did not have Owl Hoots last winter, which have been popular in the past. Owl Hoots are when we play recordings of owl calls and if lucky, lure an owl away from its nest to see who is in its territory. With luck, it lands near us, and we get a good look at the owl. The reason for not having them last winter is there is some data questioning whether even a single time doing this may cause the pair to fail at raising their chicks. We are waiting to see if this is true, but in the meantime, the protection of the plants and animals in our nature parks takes preference to the human uses. So, if more data come to light showing that owl hoots are not damaging, we may do them this winter.

We are moving forward with our work in the Fred A. Erb Arboretum and have this summer planted over 35

trees. We hope to get at least 10 more before this season is over.

Our crew of gardeners is working hard on the butterfly and rain garden and enlarging both. The photo on the right is our head gardener, Vanessa Schultz, working in the butterfly garden.

We have a work crew in the Arb every Tuesday morning from 8 am to 10 am, beginning in the spring and ending in the fall. We are also setting up monthly volunteer days on Saturdays from 10 am to noon. If any of you are interested in helping, please email us at naturesociety@romi.gov.



THE NATURE SOCIETY IS STILL LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS

We are looking for volunteers who want us to continue being a viable organization that does what it takes to protect, improve & maintain Tenhave Woods, Cummingston, and the Fred A. Erb Arboretum located next to the Senior/Community Center on Marais. A list of some things we could use your help with:

- writing Chinquapin newsletter articles
- helping us with park workday projects
- helping us with our annual fundraiser
- finding new program speakers
- being an arboretum gardener
- looking for grants
- nature walk leaders
- being the Education or Fundraiser director



Please contact us if you would like to help make a difference. E-mail us at naturesociety@romi.gov or call us at 248-246-3380 & leave a message. Hope to hear from you!

NATURE WALKS/PROGRAMS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO EVERYONE

REGISTRATION IS NOT REQUIRED

Normally, there is at least one naturalist lead walk per month with additional ones added during the spring wildflower and fall color seasons. An emphasis is put on understanding the different forest types found in our parks. Further information is given on individual plant and animal species, geology and human history of the area. 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. Park locations:

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. For nature walks & park programs, park in Marais/Lexington lot and meet at the Lexington entrance (300 feet east of parking lot).

FRED A. ERB ARBORETUM: Park and meet on the north side of the Senior/Community Center (3500 Marais).

An “**Arboretum Walk**” is being held on Sunday, **September 8th** beginning at **2:00 pm**.

“**Mushroom Walks**” are held on Saturdays and begin at **10:00 am**. They will be held at:

Cummingston Park on September 28th

Tenhave Woods on October 26th

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

“**Fall Color Walks**” begin at **2:00 pm**. They are being held at:

Cummingston Park on Sunday, October 20th

Tenhave Woods on Sunday, October 27th

Cummingston Park on Sunday, November 3rd

Tenhave Woods on Sunday, November 10th

This is the most beautiful time of the year to take a look at our two nature parks, Cummingston Park and Tenhave Woods.



ROYAL OAK NATURE SOCIETY FRIENDS OF FUNGI

Friends of Fungi (FOF) is a group that promotes the understanding of, and an appreciation for, fungi in general and especially those fungi found in Tenhave, Cummingston, and the Arboretum. Mary Fredricks, mycologist for the Nature Society, heads this group. At the present time, no in-person meetings are being held. However, the FOF sponsors fungi walks from April through October on the fourth Saturday of each month at 10 am. There is no cost for our walks and programs and registration is not required. Please see the Royal Oak Nature Society website or Facebook page for more information.

The Nature Society is on YouTube! Check out our first virtual Fungi Walk hosted by Mary Fredricks. See some of the fungi (and more) that was in Cummingston Woods in July 2020.

Just go to YouTube and search for "Royal Oak Nature Society" to find our channel. You can Subscribe to our channel and get notifications when new content is added. It is free!

You can also click here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTBfeN1EIWtF90P4tu6EpcQ>



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

<https://www.facebook.com/Royal-Oak-Nature-Society-228095233882566>



Please check out our Instagram page:

<https://www.instagram.com/royal.oak.nature.society/?hl=en>



www.treefirst.org
info@treefirst.org

Royal Oak Nature Society Membership Form

Please make check payable to:
Royal Oak Nature Society

Mail completed form & check to:
Royal Oak Nature Society
1600 N. Campbell Rd.
Royal Oak, MI 48067

Name(s) _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip Code _____ Phone _____

E-mail _____

1 year Household Membership (September-August)

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

Receive newsletter by:
☐ Regular mail OR
☐ E-mail

Payment amount \$ _____ Date _____

NATURE SOCIETY GROUPS

Please contact us if you would like to become actively involved with one or more of the following groups:

Stewardship: Maintains a trail system and enhances the overall park experience at Tenhave Woods, Cummingston Park and the Fred A. Erb 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 including publishing our quarterly newsletter.

Education: Provides outreach and liaison to outside individuals, groups and schools to promote environmental education.

Fundraising: Is responsible for our fund-raising efforts including our annual fundraiser normally held in April.

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 & Programs: Bob Muller

Vice President & Communication: Ted Vickers

Treasurer & Ways & Means: Helen Cost

Recording Secretary: Nancy Vickers

Education: Open

Fundraiser: Open

Stewardship- Tenhave Woods & Fred A. Erb Arboretum:

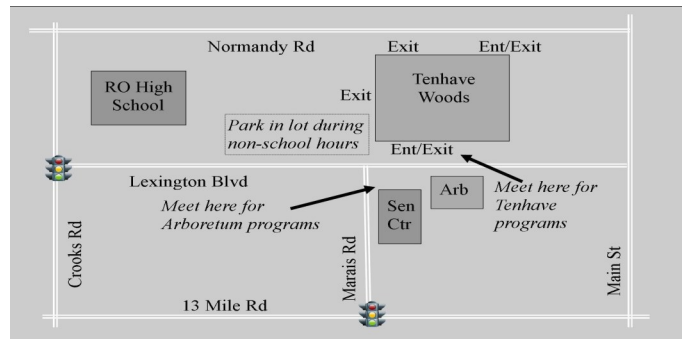
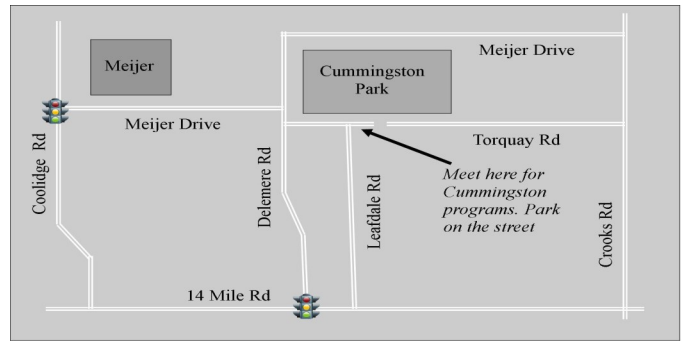
Jack Novak & Jeremiah Sandler

Stewardship-Cummingston: Mary Fredricks

At-large- Robert Schneider and Alyssa Beavers

Scout Representative: Richard Stoll

Cummingston Park, Tenhave Woods, and the Arboretum



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 nonprofit 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 Worden Park East. We also offer a wide range of natural history educational programs for children and adults.

The Royal Oak Nature Society
1600 N. Campbell
Royal Oak, MI 48067
248-246-3380
naturesociety@romi.gov
www.romi.gov/nature

