



# The Chinquapin

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Spring 2025

The Official Publication Of The Royal Oak Nature Society

## Nature Society Membership

There are three membership levels.

**Supporting Membership** starts at \$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** starts at \$50 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 also get 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.

If you want to become a Supporting or Patron member and pay by check, please fill out a membership form located on page 5. If you want to pay electronically, please go to our [membership page](#).

**General Membership** is free. You get Nature Society schedule updates e-mailed to you at least once a month. To become a General member, [Email](#) us with a request to become a General Member along with your name and postal address.

## Work Crews Who Have Helped to Develop the Arboretum

by Robert Muller

In 2008, an Eagle Scout project with 20 of the Eagle Scout's candidate's friends, began cutting down a forest of invasive buckthorns. This was the beginning of the Arboretum. Nature Society members volunteered to begin planting in an area where the buckthorn forest once was. That area was turned into a prairie. Small groups of society members continued this work for a number of years. We also had six more Eagle projects, supplying the power for big tasks. It was amazing what a large group of people could accomplish in a day. Without Eagle Scout projects, we would never have developed both the Nature Parks and the Arboretum, to their present glory.

We occasionally asked members for help in the arboretum, but this was not enough. A couple of women begin gardening work on the butterfly garden and native plantings along the trails on Tuesdays. At the same time, we began acquiring trees and shrubs for the collection. It quickly became obvious that the sunny trails in the arboretum, unlike the shaded trails in the nature parks, required constant maintenance or plants would take them over. In 2018, with the city's help, we began looking for a grant for hard surface trails. Expecting hard surface trails would happen in a year or two, a few men started digging out

buckthorn and other invasive to prepare the arboretum for these improved trails. The Tuesday group has grown with the addition of Vanessa Schultz, taking charge of further developing the butterfly and memorial gardens and building our rain garden. Vanessa also searches for native wildflowers to add to our collection. Kevin Norris and Ken Caldwell are the hearts of the Tuesday work crew. They are tasked with trimming, clearing downed trees, planting trees and shrubs and building cages to protect them from deer destroy.

In 2023, the city received the Erb foundation grant for developing the Arboretum. Among the items we were tasked with was the planting of 100 trees in honor of Fred A. Erb who would have been 100 years old that year. Along with the Erb grant,



Bob Muller and 2 helpers working in the Arboretum

another came through for the hard surface trails. Work on the trails began the spring of 2024. Much of our time this summer was spent making

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## Our Gardens at the Fred A. Erb Arboretum

by Vanessa Schultz, Chief Garden Arboretum Ecoscaper

Some visitors to our Fred A. Erb Arboretum may have noticed that we have a few informal garden beds especially right by the parking lot. There are basically six informal garden areas at the Arb.

The first is the Memorial Garden that was planted in honor of a society member's Mother-in-law, it also happens to be the garden closest to many of the memorial trees planted West of the Oak Savanna. In this garden bed are many large clumps of Big & Little Bluestem grasses, Swamp Milkweed, Butterfly Weed, Nodding Onion, Liatris, Mountain Mint, Beards Tongue, Missouri Primrose, Avens, Blue Flag Iris, Giant Hyssop, Black Eyed Susan and Prickly-Pear Cactus.

Our second garden is the Butterfly/Pollinator Garden which is planted with both host & nectar plants which supports not only caterpillars of various butterflies & moths utilize but is important to our native bees too. In addition to the many of the same plants in the garden above we also have Bee Balm, Common Milkweed, Canadian Anemone, Columbine, Tall Coreopsis, Rosin Weed, Golden Alexanders, Purple Coneflower, Wing Stem, Rattlesnake Master, Swamp Hibiscus, Blue Lobelia, various varieties of Goldenrod and perennial Sunflowers. Additionally non-native herbs and annual flowers are sprinkled in the garden for their longer bloom time which helps our butterflies migrate.

Our third garden is the Rain Garden at the Northeast corner of the Community Center. The purpose of a rain garden is that it lies below the level of its surroundings, and is designed to absorb rainwater or melting snow that runs off the roof of the building. Certain plants are used in and around a rain garden to help slow down, filter water and allow the bases of nearby trees to not be flooded for extended periods of time. Planted in this garden are Royal Fern, Mountain Mint, Swamp Hibiscus, Blue Vervain, Spiderwort, Blue Flag Iris, Button Bush, Joe Pye Weed, Cup Plant, Spicebush, Boneset, Ironweed, Swamp Milkweed, Riddle's Goldenrod, Swamp Aster, Pussywillow, Prairie Blazing Star, Marsh Blazing Star, Rattlesnake Master, White turtlehead,

Cardinal Flower, Marsh Marigold, Yellow Coneflower and Columbine.

Our fourth garden is the fungi or mushroom garden. We don't normally plant living plants here but logs do get moved over from other spots in the Arb when we notice fungi growth. Occasionally we do have to weed this garden because certain plants like to take advantage of the open space.

Our fifth garden is the Conifer Garden that is planted with various native & non-native Conifer trees and shrubs. If you are not sure what a Conifer is, they are mostly evergreen trees and shrubs having usually needle-shaped or scalelike leaves and including forms (such as pines) with true cones and others (such as yews) with an arillate fruit. The purpose of this garden is to educate the public to the differences between native & non-native. We are continuing to add new Conifers to this area each year.

Our sixth garden is on the edge of the oak savanna next to the sidewalk along Lexington. The purpose of this was to create another butterfly/pollinator garden as a buffer or transition space from the suburban hard surface of the sidewalk and the semi unplanned wildness of the savanna. This garden is not completed but we plan to finish it this coming season.

In the Spring of 2023 and 2024 I was able to get help from some amazing individual volunteers and larger volunteer groups who helped with basic maintenance and planting new plants. My favorite volunteer group both years was having 8th grade students from Royal Oak Middle School help out for the morning on their yearly day of service. They helped pulling out invasive garlic mustard, picking up trash, spreading leaf mulch and of course tree planting.

Now that the hard surface trails are almost completely done, I have started making a list of areas to focus on including planning how to fill a new small flower bed off the parking lot. I'm super excited and impatient to get started in April!

### Erb Arboretum Garden Timeline

- 2011:** Rain Garden was created in the spring
- 2012:** In the summer, Girl Scouts started the original **Butterfly Garden**
- 2014:** Memorial Garden was created
- 2016:** Mushroom Garden was created in late summer
- 2021:** New **Butterfly Garden** was built alongside the Lexington sidewalk during the summer. Also that summer, all of the plants were removed from the **Rain Garden** because it became overgrown with too many unwanted plants. They were replaced with new plants.
- 2022:** Began developing the **Conifer Garden**.
- 2023:** In June, the **Lexington Butterfly Garden** was expanded by removing some plants & adding pollinators.

The photo (right) is of the black swallowtail actually nectaring (feeding) on orange butterfly weed in the memorial garden.



## 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.

*(Continued from page 1)*

sure little damage was done to our plantings when large heavy equipment began making these trails. It would be impossible to have no damage done, but Ready Dig, the company doing the work, did the impossible. No damage was done and when finished, we will have the look of a real botanical garden.

Obtaining 100 plus trees, native shrubs and wildflowers and planting them was a task larger than our small group of Tuesday workers could handle. In October 2023, we put out a request for volunteers for two hours on a Saturday to help plant trees. Over a dozen volunteers showed up and in less than two hours 13 trees were planted with cages installed. Last year we decided to put out a monthly request for a Saturday work crew for the arboretum. They planted more trees and installed

cages, dug out the remaining buckthorns, cleared brush from areas we are beginning to develop, and spread wood chips to smother another ground cover invasive. This Saturday group would accomplish in a couple hours what the Tuesday group would have taken most of the summer to do. In late fall we even had them do work clearing the last of the buckthorn out of an area in Tenhave Woods. By this coming summer we plan on this group doing projects on not only the Arboretum but Tenhave Woods and Cummingston Park.

For most of the 25 years of the Nature Society's existence, all the work has been done by a few of us and the 42 Eagle Scout projects we have had. A new age of the general community joining our work at protecting and developing the two nature parks and the Arboretum has dawned.

### Filling the Birdfeeders During the 2024/25 Winter Season

We want to thank Ken Caldwell for keeping the Royal Oak Arboretum and Tenhave Woods birdfeeders filled during the 2024/25 winter season. The Arboretum feeder is located at the intersection of the Biemel & Gasiorowski

trails. The Tenhave birdfeeder is located next to Dragonfly Pond. Ken has also been volunteering his time working alongside Bob Muller to help maintain the arboretum from April to November.

### Fence Patrol for 2025

Fence Patrol for 2025 begins the week of March 30<sup>th</sup> and ends the week of November 16<sup>th</sup>. The Nature Society needs help keeping an eye on the Tenhave Woods fence line. Maintaining the fence helps to keep deer out of the park and in turn, protects the native plants in the woods. Falling branches, wind, and humans sometimes knock

down the top wires and cause holes in the fence. We like to have someone walk the fence line once a week during this period to ensure that it is well maintained. For sign-up and more information, please click on the following link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C054EABAA229-54196963-tenhave>

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

A special thank you from the Nature Society goes out to our following 2024/25 Patron members for their generous financial contribution to us: **Ann Bueche & Wojtek Szumowski; Don & Kathy Gavin; Barbara Grinke; Christine Hartwig; Cole & Priscilla Hawkins; Jaynemarie Hubanks; Elaine Jirkins; Bonnie Michalak; Thad & Alicia Podmokly; Tom Regan, Jim & Laura Rogers; Robert Schneider; Kristin, Derek, Jackson, & Ty Smith and Charles Svalya.**

## 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

**Beginning of Spring Nature Walk:** Sunday, **March 23<sup>rd</sup>** at **Tenhaye Woods** beginning at **2:00 pm**. We will be looking at and talking about what we are beginning to see at the beginning of Spring.

**Spring Wildflower Walks:** They are all being held at **Tenhaye Woods** beginning at **2:00 pm**. The first two are Saturday, **April 19<sup>th</sup>** and Saturday, **April 26<sup>th</sup>**. The last one is being held on Sunday, **May 4<sup>th</sup>**. We will be looking for Red & White Trillium, blue & yellow violets, Bloodroot, Jack-in-the-Pulpit, Trout Lily, Wild Geranium, Spice Bush, Spring Beauty, Wood Poppy, Jack-in-the-Pulpit, & Wood Anemone and more.

**Mushroom Walks:** They both begin on a Saturday at **10:00 am**. They will take place on **April 26<sup>th</sup>** at **Cummingston Park** and **May 24<sup>th</sup>** at **Tenhaye Woods**. 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.



### Save the Date

The Nature Society will be holding their **17<sup>th</sup> Annual Fundraiser** on Thursday, **April 24**, 2025, at the Royal Oak Farmers Market from 7 to 10 pm. Keep up to date with our fundraiser news by periodically checking our Fundraiser [website](#) page, Facebook page, and through our Nature Society member email blasts.

### 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 Tenthaye, 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>

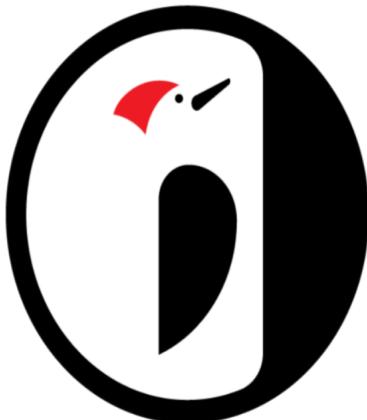


Please check out our Instagram page:

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



Instagram



**Tree First**  
ARBORICULTURE

[www.treefirst.org](http://www.treefirst.org)  
[info@treefirst.org](mailto: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, Communications & Interim Treasurer: Ted Vickers

Recording Secretary: Alyssa Beavers

Education & Fundraiser: Open

Stewardship- Tenhave Woods & Fred A. Erb Arboretum:

Jack Novak & Jeremiah Sandler

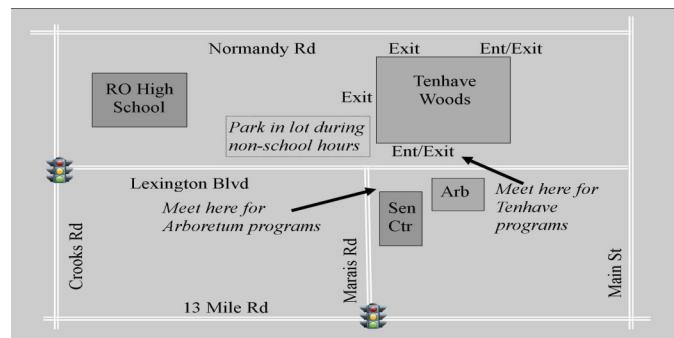
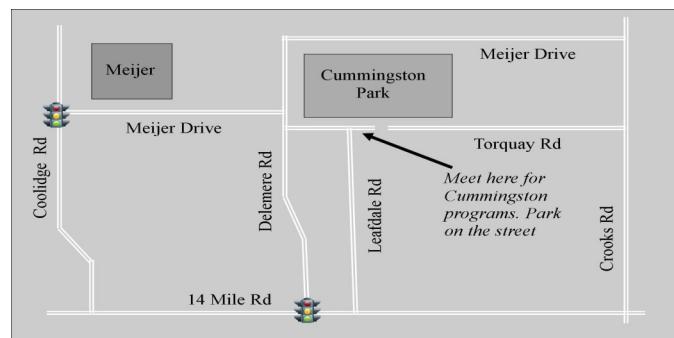
Stewardship-Cummingston: Mary Fredricks

At-large- Robert Schneider , Nancy Vickers & Helen Cost

Scout Representative: Richard Stoll

## Cummingston Park, Tenhave Woods, and the Arboretum

Traffic Light

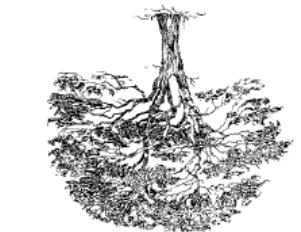


To locate and print out Tenhave Woods & Cummingston Park trail maps, please go to our web site (listed below under our tree logo), link on to "Park Locations" and then "Map for park trail locations"

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The Royal Oak Nature Society is a non-profit education 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 the Woodsen 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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