



The Chinquapin

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Spring 2021

The Official Publication Of The Royal Oak Nature Society

Friends of Fungi Report– 2020

by Mary Fredricks

I have been actively interested in mushrooms and other fungi since I purchased an good camera in 2010 and started looking about in the woods for things to photograph. That led to my involvement with the Nature Society and the formation of the Society's mushroom club, Friends of Fungi (FOF). I can say, without a doubt, that 2020 has been the strangest year I've encountered in the last ten years, and that is just from a fungal point of view. I don't need to point out all the other unusual things that have occurred this year. You know about those.

2020 began sadly with the death of Chris Wright on January 29th. He was a mycologist, teacher, and businessman, and a favorite speaker at the indoor meetings of the FOF. He was enthusiastic about fungi and always happy to pass on his knowledge and passion. He is missed.

The weather was a major issue. Many of our most common and reliable fungi simply didn't like the weather and so barely put in an appearance. When I did find them, however, they were spectacular: styptic panis clustered on the end of a stick, a clump of bleeding mycena containing about 50 individual mushrooms (an impressive sight on the side of a log), a chicken of the woods ten to twelve inches across. Maybe they thought the end of the world was near, and they better make the most of their sporing opportunities while they could.

Many of the other fungi I spotted were some I knew about but had never seen (e.g., false morel) or ones I had never seen and haven't yet identified. The growing season was both frustrating and rewarding.

And then there was the pandemic. Maybe it was lucky that 2020 was the year with very few fungi spread over large areas (both of our woods), since we couldn't hold walks. What it did provide was an opportunity to try new things. With the help of Kurt Petersen, I was able to do a virtual walk, which you can find on You Tube along with other videos produced by other Society members. (Go to the YouTube website and search for Royal Oak Nature Society.) Kurt and I plan is to do more walks this spring and summer. Hopefully there will be more fungi.

In November I was introduced to spalting when a tree was cut down and was found to be spalting. Several sections were cut from it, and one section was given to me. Spalting is the staining of wood due to fungal activity. Spalted wood is prized by woodworkers because it lends itself to decorative effects. The photos that I sent to the FOF created a lot of interest, so I am working on a webinar on the subject. The plan at the moment is to post it on the Society's YouTube channel.

That brought the year to an end. Undoubtedly there will be more things to discover and share about the amazing world of fungi during the coming year.

Royal Oak Firefly Forest School

Firefly Forest School provides meaningful and immersive nature-based learning experiences for the children. They believe that childhood is a time of exploration, discovery, curiosity, and wonder, and that there is no better classroom than the natural world. Their classroom is in Tenhave Woods.

The Nature Society wants to take the time to thank the school for using Tenhave as a classroom. We believe that it is special place for children to enjoy and to learn more about nature.

Art work shown (right) is a thank you to the Nature Society from the children of Firefly Forest School for our stewardship of Tenhave Woods.



Birding at Tenhave Woods- May 2020

by Joanne Beher

My husband and I really enjoy walking the trails at Tenhave Woods, especially during the spring migration of birds. So many different birds stop to visit our wonderful park on their way to their final destinations. Dragonfly Pond is the perfect place to sit back and relax and take it all in.

Our resident Mallard Ducks are so beautiful with their iridescent colors of blue and green. It's so much fun to watch them bobbing their heads underwater to nibble on the vegetation on the bottom of the pond. Look for both the colorful male and his lovely brown patterned mate in early spring in the water collected under the tree on the grass just outside of the park entrance on Lexington Blvd. If you don't spot them there, keep an eye out for them in the pond, that's where they usually hang out. They're used to people and often will come close to the water's edge to give you an even better look at their pretty colored feathers. Another early bird to look for is the Red-winged Blackbird. Jet black with a red and yellow shoulder wing patch that looks almost like velvet! They have a very distinctively loud call, so when we hear it, we start looking around to find them.

Having binoculars certainly helps get a good close-up 'bird's eye' view, but they aren't required to enjoy the many birds you'll find in the park. Often when spotting a new bird that we're not sure of its name, we'll say out loud the different features that we see, like white throat, black eye stripe, on the ground or in the underbrush. That kind of sticks the details in our minds and when we get home we'll look in our field guides and try to find out the bird's identity. There are many field guides and lots of apps for your phone not to mention many web sites that you can use to find out tons of information about any bird you may spot.

There are many warblers that stop by on their way to their summer homes. The Yellow-Rumped Warbler can often be seen in late April and are fun to watch. I can't keep up with the official naming of all the birds- but this one used to be known as a Myrtle Warbler. Look for the bright yellow patch on the birds lower back, just above its tail (its rump) and look for another bright yellow spot just under the top of their wings. Warblers move around a lot so don't expect to identify them the first time you spot them. Be patient and you might get a second look. We recently spotted the Black and White Warbler. These birds, appropriately named, are black and white with a stripy look to them. They are quite handsome and one of my favorite warblers.

The Golden-Crowned Kinglet is a smaller bird that flits from branch to branch, seemingly in constant motion. The Ruby-Crowned Kinglet is very similar to the Golden-Crown and comes to the park shortly after the gold ones. Often, they overlap, and you can spot them both on the same day. They are both very tiny and have a stripe of

color on their heads to match their names. You need to watch them closely and sometimes they will puff up their feathers on the top of their head and show you their colored feather tufts. The ruby-crown has a white eye ring and the golden-crowned has black and white stripes on their faces but since they move so fast it's often hard to tell them apart.

Of course, you can also see many of the same birds you'll find in your own back yard. The bright red Cardinal and it's duller red mate, the bold and loud Blue Jay, and cute little Chickadees. The Nuthatches are lovely and fast. They are a smart blue gray with a white breast and they like to hang out on tree trunks looking for insects.

Lots of woodpeckers call the park home and many just pass through, so some days you may spot a bunch of them. We have Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers, stunning black and white backed birds that look similar except the Downy is small (Dinky) and the Hairy is larger (think Huge to remember which is which-but they're not really that much bigger). The males have red on the top of their heads. You may also spot the Red-bellied Woodpecker with most of his head all red with just a little bit of red on their belly that you usually can't even see. Look for all the woodpeckers on the tree trunks looking for bugs.

Don't forget to look up! Red-tailed Hawks soar overhead and sometimes are even being chased by Crows. Sometimes Canada Geese will fly over the park too. And often this time of year more ducks will pass overhead, sometimes stopping by the pond for a rest. We saw five Mallards fly in the other day and join our resident ones for a bit.

Our park is lucky enough to also have Wood Ducks, the male is strikingly colorful and boldly patterned and the female has a white ring around its eye that is very distinctive. They are much more solitary and are often hard to spot as they stay on the far edges of the vernal pond in the back of the park. If you go that way be sure to keep an eye out, they are very beautiful birds.

So many types of birds live and visit our park, too many to list here, but a few other notables include the Tufted Titmouse, Yellow-shafted (Northern) Flicker, Hermit Thrush, Bluebirds, and of course the dependable American Robin.

There are so many different types of birds and it's not unusual for us to spot ten to fifteen different species of birds each time we visit the park in the spring. We are so fortunate to have Quickstad Park right here in our 'backyard' to explore and enjoy.

**ALL SPEAKER PROGRAMS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO EVERYONE.
PREREGISTRATION IS NOT REQUIRED**

SPEAKER PROGRAMS

We normally have our monthly general meeting/speaker programs from October to April at the at the Mahany/Meiningen Senior Community Center (3500 Marais). We present speaker programs that 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.

Because of COVID 19, we currently do not have any speaker programs scheduled for the spring. If we decide to do any, we will post it on our website, our Facebook page and send a notice to all of our members.

“Thank You” Heart

The Nature Society has been working for over 10 years turning the area next to the Senior Center into an arboretum. During that time, we have been in the process of removing invasive species and planting native plants and trees there.

So, it was a nice surprise to find a thank you notice last summer tagged to one of the arboretum's trees. We really appreciate the acknowledgment of the work we have done and it is our plan to continue to keep working on turning it into a first-class arboretum.



A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR PATRON MEMBERS

A special thank you from the Nature Society goes out to our following 2020/21 Patron members for their generous financial contribution to us:

**Jenna Brombach
Elaine Frydrych
Don & Kathy Gavin
Barbara Grinke
Chris Hartwig**

**Cole & Priscilla Hawkins
Nigel & Anita Heap
Sandy MacPherson
Alice & Arthur Marotti
Jeanette Roger**

**Yvonne Schilla
Nancy Shead
Jean Watson**

ROYAL OAK NATURE SOCIETY FRIENDS OF FUNGI

***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. Mary Fredricks & Karen Blenc head this group. There is no cost to belong and preregistration is not required. The group normally meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, November, January, February and March at the Mahany/Meiningen Senior Community Center (3500 Marais).*

Because of COVID 19, we are currently NOT planning on having our March meeting/program. If we decide to do it, we will post it on our website, our Facebook page and send a notice to all of our members.

**ALL NATURE WALKS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO EVERYONE.
PREREGISTRATION IS NOT REQUIRED**

NATURE WALKS

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. There is no preregistration or cost for any of our public 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.

CUMMINGSTON PARK: Park is just east of Meijers. Park and meet at Leafdale & Torquay

TENHAVE WOODS: Park is just east of the High School. Park in Marais/Lexington lot and meet at the Lexington entrance (300 feet east of parking lot). For the Owl Hoot walks, park and meet at the Marais/Lexington lot.

ROYAL OAK ARBORETUM: Park and meet on the north side of the Senior/Community Center (3500 Marais).

Because of COVID 19, we currently do not have any nature walks programs scheduled for the spring. If we decide to do any, we will post it on our website, our Facebook page and send a notice to all of our members.

Nature Society's 36th Eagle Scout Project

by Bob Muller

Our nature parks and the Royal Oak Arboretum would not exist as they look today without the 36 Eagle Scout Projects that have been done for the Nature Society. The most recent was this past December when Sebastian Nolte from Troop 1610 led the effort to add sand to trails that traditionally every year become difficult or impossible to walk because of high water. The interesting thing about this project is that it was the third project to add sand to trails to correct this problem and that all three projects were done by boys from the same Scout troop.

In 2008, Ed Goetz lead an Eagle Scout project to add sand to the trail from the Lexington gate to Dragonfly Pond. This is easily seen as the trail is about eight inches higher than the land along its edges. In 2009, Steve Kaurala headed an Eagle Scout project to add sand to parts of the Fern, Sassafras and Pond Trails. These two projects helped to increase the length of our usable trails throughout the year.

But the remainder of the Pond Trail to where it meets the Goodwin Trail was still very muddy in the spring. Also, the Goodwin Trail from the intersection of the Pond Trail to the west turnstile regularly went under water. So this past December, 30 yards of sand supplied by the city were moved to these two areas. About half was delivered with a bobcat and the other half with scouts and

wheelbarrows. After the sand was brought in, Sebastian's volunteers spread and smoothed down the sand with shovels and rakes (below photo).

The project began at 8 am and ran well past noon. Of our 36 Eagle Scout projects, this was the first that was done in the rain and rain in December is never a comfortable time to be working on an outdoor project.

The Nature Society wants to thank Sebastian for leading this project and to all of his volunteers.



Eagle Scout project volunteers smoothing down the sand on one of the trails

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 & "like" the Royal Oak Nature Society.

Page: <http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Royal-Oak-Nature-Society/228095233882566>



Please check out our Instagram page:

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



Tree First
ARBORICULTURE

www.treefirst.org
info@treefirst.org

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 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 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: Karen Blenc

Vice President & Communication: Ted Vickers

Treasurer & Ways & Means: Helen Cost

Recording Secretary: Nancy Vickers

Education: Open

Program: Bob Muller

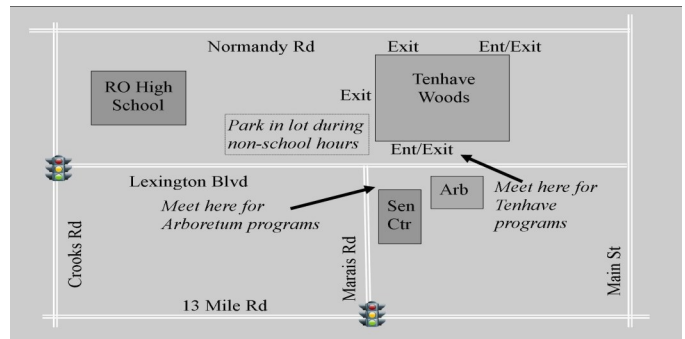
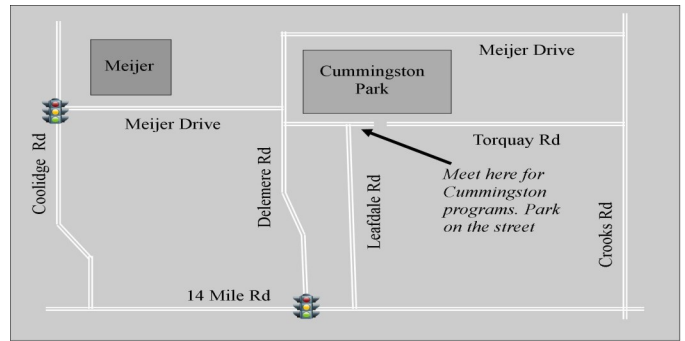
Stewardship-Tenhave & Royal Oak Arboretum: John Semchena

Stewardship-Cummingston: Mary Fredricks

At Large: Michelle Watson & Christine Utter

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.

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