



# The Chinquapin

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Winter 2021/22

The Official Publication Of The Royal Oak Nature Society

## NATURE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTICE

**Membership for the 2021/22 season begins now and ends in August, 2022. To see if you owe membership dues for the 2021/22 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 as 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, Supporting or

*(Continued on page 4)*

## Royal Oak Arboretum: Beginning in 2008

by Bob Muller & Ted Vickers

In 2008, we came up with the idea to turn the area behind the Community Center into an Arboretum, a botanical garden specializing in a tree collection. The idea was to have every tree native to Michigan in either of our two nature parks or the Arboretum. Quickly this enlarged into also having examples of native plant communities other than forests. In 2008, this area was an invasive buckthorn forest with most of the native plants already eliminated, only native forest trees of at least 20 feet tall remained. The buckthorn had out competed the native trees and none of the native tree seeds were producing young trees. In 2008, the only trail in the Arboretum was a concrete path was put in behind the Senior Center in the fall of 2006.

**INVASIVE SPECIES REMOVAL:** The first cutting of the buckthorn was done in 2008 in the area now containing our prairie. It was done as part of a Troop 1627 Eagle Scout project. It took eight city trucks to haul away the chips produced from the project. The area looked nothing like it does today. It simply looked like an area that was clear cut for a construction project. Aside from the buckthorn, the area was used for a dump of broken cement, and yard waste, as well as poison ivy being the major ground cover. Buckthorn removal has been one of our projects almost every year since then. We have also had to focus on removing Honeysuckle, Garlic Mustard, Canadian Thistle and White Mulberry from the Arboretum. By 2020, we were starting to get a good handle keeping invasive plants under control.

**TRAILS:** Most of the trails now found in the arboretum were created in 2010 and 2011. Those trails were given names in 2017 and were marked with street signs at the intersections. Three of the trails were named after Ed Biemel, Joe

Fisher, and Ray Safronoff. They were the discoverers of thousand of wildflowers located in Cummingston Park in the 1950's. The fourth trail was named after Bob Gasiowski, who was instrumental in helping to save Tenhave Woods from being cut down. To keep the trails viable, woodchips were added to the paths about every two years up to 2017. Since then, we have been working hard to find a way to have the Arboretum's trails hard surfaced. If we accomplish this, the Arboretum will be handicapped accessible. We consider this an important goal. We have held several handicapped walks, but only along the single sidewalk going through area. The hard surface paths would make the entire area accessible to everyone.

**PLANTINGS:** In the spring of 2008, we purchased and planted some native plants with a grant that we received from the Wildflower Association of Michigan. We also took wildflowers from the middle of trails in Tenhave and planted them in the arboretum. In the summer of 2009, buckthorn cleared areas had Blue Lobelia and Cardinal Flower coming up from the seed base that had been laying dormant there. In 2010, 100 plants (30 species) were donated from volunteers and were planted in the arboretum. There were more plantings in 2011 and in early 2012, the Nature Society received a \$500 grant from Wildflower Association of Michigan. With that money, we purchased trees, shrubs, forbs, grasses, sedges, and rushes that were planted in our Native Tree Collection section and prairie areas. By 2016, we had a collection of all Michigan's native Oak species in either in Tenhave Woods or the Arboretum. We believe this is rather special since the name of our city is Royal Oak. Early in the development of our arboretum, trips were taken

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throughout Michigan to places where plant specimens were collected, and seeds gathered. These were added to our "nursery" (Bob's vegetable garden) to grow to a size that could be placed into the Arboretum.

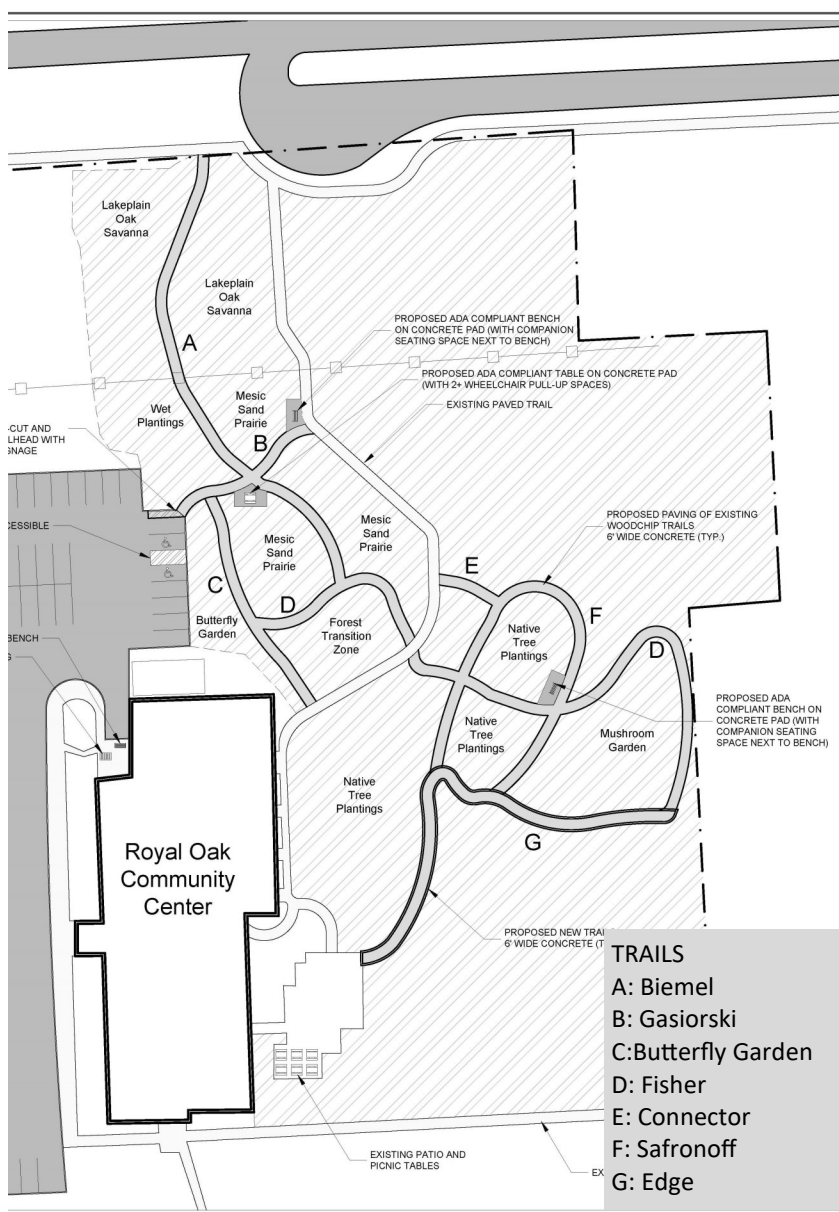
**OAK OPENING:** Oak openings are savannas, basically prairies with scattered oak trees maybe hundreds of feet apart. In the Arboretum, we began developing a Lake Plain Oak Opening a few years ago. It existed in Royal Oak when the settlers came to the area. Our Oak Opening is located between the power lines and Lexington. In 2019, we removed plants both native and invasive, that would have not been in a Lake Plain Oak Opening. Then we had a custom seed mix of the grasses and prairie plants that were found in these oak openings created. The following season, the seed mix began sprouting and wildflowers began to bloom.

**GARDENS:** In the Summer of 2012, a butterfly garden was created by a Girl Scout troop. In the spring of 2016, we began the development of a "Mushroom Garden." Logs of different tree species were added to the ground and over time we will see what kind of fungus attaches to each species. These logs will be marked as to what tree species they are.

When creating our arboretum/wildflower garden, we knew that it would be important to keep plants and flowers watered, especially when there wasn't any rain. In June 2010, a water spigot was installed by the city in the center of the Arboretum in order to keep plants and flowers watered when needed. In November 2011, a garden shed was added to the northeast corner of the Senior Center. It would hold everything we needed in order to maintain the Arboretum. In November 2015, a birdfeeder removed from Cummington Park was added to the arboretum prairie area. The feeder can be easily seen from the northeast end of the Senior Center parking lot. We have been filling it every winter since it was installed. In 2016, we began weekly gardening on Tuesdays mornings in the Arboretum. Since then, a small number of dedicated volunteers have helped us to maintain it.

Tree First has installed 1 QR sign on fence just outside the Tenhave Lexington Entrance and 4 QR signs along the Sandbar Trail (west side) up to just beyond the large oak in the center of the park. If you get a chance, please check them out. You will find out some interesting information about what can be found in the park.

The Nature Society wants to thank Tree First for their idea to put them in the park and the installation of them at their expense. If it seems to work and is well received, we will need to learn how to add to what they have done at Tenhave as well as doing them in Cummington and the Arboretum.



**Royal Oak Arboretum**

## 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 winter. If we decide to do any, we will post it on our website, our Facebook page and send a notice electronically to all of our members.

## Royal Oak Arboretum Gardening Accomplishments for 2021

This is the sixth year that we have we have had a Tuesday morning crew working in the arboretum during the spring, summer and fall months. This year's work crew included Bob Muller, John Semchena, Vanessa Schultz (chief ecoscaper), Kevin Norris, Ken Caldwell, and John Fedyk. Our thanks go out to them for their efforts to help make this area into a first-class arboretum/wildflower garden.

In July, all the plants were removed from our rain garden that was originally built in 2011. It had not been gardened for a long time and during that span, it became overgrown with many unwanted plants. Machinery was rented to dig it up and nine volunteers helped to remove the old plants. After that project was completed, Vanessa Schultz began the re-planting of our new rain garden.

Our Lake Plain Oak Opening which has been in development for the past several years, is now starting to look much better. Vanessa Schultz has continued to maintain the butterfly and memorial garden. A second butterfly garden was built at the north end of the arboretum alongside the east-west sidewalk. It will create a five-foot buffer between the sidewalk and the Oak Opening area. The buffer is necessary to

keep plant growth from the Oak Opening from intruding onto the north end sidewalk

Native shrubs have been added to the arboretum. They include Black Current, Nine Barks, Wafer Ash, Spice Bush, Button Bush and Purple Raspberry. New trees include a Sycamore, Swamp White Oak, and Osage Orange. Seeds for Cork Elm have been gathered and trees are being grown in our nursery.

Buckthorn removal is still an ongoing process, but we are getting close to containment.

One day in September, equipment was brought in clean up the mushroom garden area by removing invasive Periwinkle and English Ivy, and Myrtle.



## 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. The group in the past has met on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, November, January, February and March at the Royal Oak Senior Community Center (3500 Marais).

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



## NATURE WALKS

*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.*

Because of COVID, preregistration for walks is required. When walks are scheduled, we will post them on our website, our Facebook page and send a notice electronically to all of our members.

**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).

## Woodward Dream Cruise Parking

After a hiatus in 2020, the Woodward Dream Cruise was back on for 2021. The weather was dry and in the mid 80s, but COVID 19 had a big affect on Gunn Dyer parking lot attendance this year. The lot never got more than 1/3 full. Even still, we were able to make almost \$600. Hopefully, next year we will do better. We want to

thank Bob Muller, Wanda Warsinski, Karen Pettke, Sherri Holmes, John Hergott, Don Drife, Vanessa & Robby Schultz, Pam & Mike Brady, John Semchena, Bob Schneider, Bonnie Michalak, Richard and Pat Stoll for volunteering plus John Fedeale and his crew for getting the park ready for vehicle parking.

## Recollections from Nature Society member Bob Schneider

The Schneider family, Bob, Susan, and Stephanie, have been involved with the Royal Oak Nature Society from its earliest years. We first heard of the Society by reading in The Tribune of talks being given in the Dondero school auditorium. Attending a lecture and hearing the announcements, introduced us to the availability of conducted nature walks at the two nature parks. We began to attend these as well, and then the annual fundraiser.

My daughter Stephanie was already very interested in nature, but these events moved her more in that direction. In her college years she was volunteering at

the former Madison Heights Nature Center. After college, and after trying a few other job fields, she joined the National Park Service as a Seasonal Ranger, later becoming a year-round employee. She is currently working at a National Monument in the Albuquerque, NM area.

My family has always enjoyed the things hosted by the Royal Oak Nature Society, and they have enriched all of our lives, however, the Nature Society has also contributed as a step in my daughter's journey in becoming an Interpretive Park Ranger for the National Park Service.

*(Continued from page 1)*

Patron member, 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. Please list other household members you want included as Nature Society members (no extra cost). If you want to pay with a credit or 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."

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 below) and send that information to: [naturesociety@romi.gov](mailto:naturesociety@romi.gov).

For those who choose not to continue being members, you 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.

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 Cummington 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.

<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>



**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**  
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

Fundraiser: Open

Program: Bob Muller

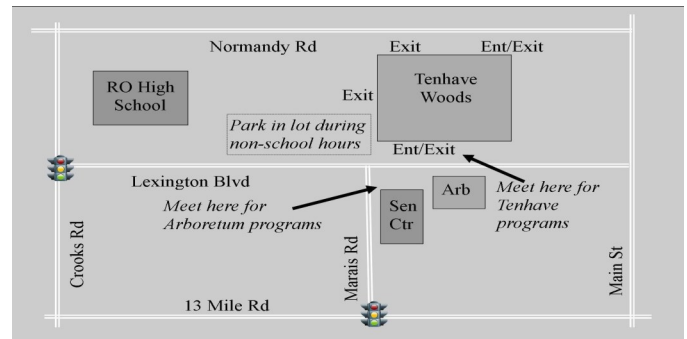
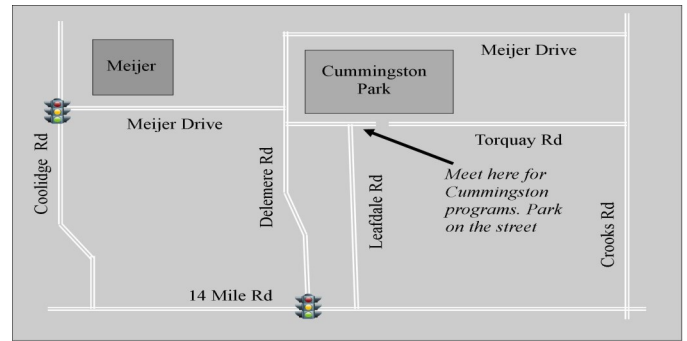
Stewardship-Tenhave & Royal Oak Arboretum: John Semchena

Stewardship-Cummingston: Mary Fredricks

At Large: Michelle Watson

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  
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