



The Chinquapin

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Spring 2022

The Official Publication Of The Royal Oak Nature Society

Friends Of Fungi Report – 2021

by Mary Fredricks

The year 2021 was a challenging year for all of us. The fungi in our woods were challenged as well, but not by Covid. The spring was so dry that the fungus season didn't start until June, and I wasn't able to schedule the first walk until then. Rainy weather forced me to postpone that walk until the following Saturday. After that, however, a walk was held every fourth Saturday from July 24 through October 23, alternating woods each month. In spite of the

pandemic and the need to social distance and wear masks, the walks were well attended. Thankfully, fungi showed up, too!

Below are some of the slime molds and fungi that we saw on our walks in 2021. Upper left: Scrambled eggs slime mold; Upper right: Raspberry slime mold; Lower left: Young chicken of the woods ; Lower right: Mature chicken of the woods



Meadow Restoration Progress Report – 2021

by Mary Fredricks

Restoring the meadow in Cummington has been an ongoing project for a number of years. 2021 was the first year that a regular workday was scheduled once a month, on the first Saturdays. We averaged about six people each time and only worked for about an hour each day, but that allowed us to accomplish quite a lot. There were four workdays in 2021.

Our first goal was to deadhead the burdock. I had been told that it was wisest not to pull the burdock, because that would lay the ground bare to other invasives. Since burdock is a biennial, the best approach is to remove

buds and flowers before they set seed during the second year of growth. The plant dies at the end of the second year. Deadheading over several years will effectively eliminate the burdock. We have made good progress, but we will have more to do in 2022.

Other invasives, especially wild grape and woody shrubs like honeysuckle, were also removed. These workdays will continue in 2022, starting sometime in the spring. I'm also hoping to do a survey of the plants so that we have a better idea of the progress that we are making.

Ghost Plants of Royal Oak

by Donald Drife

Our nature parks have a few bizarre species of flowering plants. These flowering plants lack chlorophyll and receive their needed nutrients from host plants. They have no green leaves and look similar to a fungus. Some attach directly to the host plants and others attach to mycorrhizal fungi which then attaches to the host plant. The mycorrhizal fungi serve as a bridge. Reduced, colored scales are all that remain of their leaves. There are approximately 3000 species of non-photosynthetic flowering plants worldwide. Squaw-root, Cancer Root, Coral-root, Dodder, Pine-drops, and Dwarf Mistletoe are some other examples of Michigan's non-photosynthetic flowering plants. We know of three species of these ghostly plants in the parks.

Beech-drops (*Epifagus virginiana*) attaches directly to beech tree roots. The scientific name comes from *epi* meaning upon and *fagus* which is the genus of the beech trees, so the name means "upon the beech." It has tall, slender stems. The upper flowers on the spike require pollination, but the lower ones set seed without ever opening. The flower color varies from reddish-brown to cream to even white. This plant grows in both nature parks.

Indian-pipe (*Monotropa uniflora*) is found under beech, maples, oaks, hemlock and white pine. Plants have a single hanging flower that becomes upright as the plant matures. It grows near the pond in Tenhave. This species and the next use mycorrhizal fungi as a bridge to the host tree. Indian-pipe's mycorrhizal fungi are in the genera *Russula* and *Lactarius*.

Pinesap or False Beech-drops (*Hypopitys monotropa*) occurs under birches, oaks, spruces, poplars and beech. It resembles Indian-pipe but has multiple flowers. We recently discovered eight clumps of plants in seed in the eastern part of Cummington. Because we found the dried seed capsules we do not know the flower color of our plants. Flowers are yellowish or bright red and the flower color might distinguish two distinct species. The flowering photo is from up north. It and Indian-pipe are in the same family as Blueberries and Rhododendrons. Pinesap's mycorrhizal fungi are in the genus *Tricholoma*.

Because these plants do not rely on sunlight to produce food they often grow in dense shade where little else can grow. These plants are fun to find because they are so different. Look for them in our nature parks and elsewhere.



Photos on your right:

Top: Beech-drops

Middle: Indian Pipe

Bottom: Pinesap or False Beech-drops

SPEAKER PROGRAMS

We normally have our monthly general meeting/speaker programs from October to April 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 electronically to all of our members.

Cummingston Has a New Trail

by Amy Fedyk

On a snowy Saturday morning on December 18, 2021, a group of Boy Scouts, adult troop members and Royal Oak Nature Society volunteers met to trailblaze a new path in Cummingston Park. Anthony Fedyk, Life Scout with Royal Oak Boy Scout Troop 1610, and Nature Society president Bob Muller planned the endeavor to fulfill an Eagle Scout project. The trail was a desired addition to the park to enable access to the east side of the park from the clearing adjacent to the play structure. The new route now allows our Royal Oak naturalist to lead nature walks to a large glacial erratic which was previously not accessible. It also provides access to shagbark and pignut hickory, a forest type according to Don Drife, Nature Society botanist, that was not easily accessible before. One outstanding plant in this area is the parasitic Pinesap. Workers were instructed not to cut away vegetation without inspection to avoid destroying desirable plants, such as the Pinesap. Finally, the trail provides a circular route to the trail system to prevent backtracking.

Over the course of 4 hours, about 20 volunteers used a system of poles and ropes to move 6-8 foot precut logs to outline the 600-foot trail addition. The scouts used a tool called a peavey as needed to roll and lift the log to place heavy ropes under the log. The ropes have loops on both ends and poles are placed in the loops over the log, providing a yoke system. A pair of men could then lift with each pole. While most logs were carried by 4-6 participants, the final log they deposited in place required a little more manpower. This 22-foot long log of green elm, estimated at a half a ton, was hefted into place by a now well-coordinated crew of 14 men. This was the final piece



Volunteers lining Cummingston's newest trail

of the trail to connect the trail to the preexisting Arkona Beach trail. Large snowflakes began to fall again as the scouts walked the trail out for a final time, leading many to join in singing a magical rendition of Winter Wonderland as they enjoyed the product of a good day's work.

To explore the new Cummingston trail, start at the northeast end of the open field located on the east side of the park and follow the trail northward. Continue to follow it as it turns westward and ends at the Arkona Trail.

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 a March meeting scheduled. If we decide to have one, 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).

Filling the Birdfeeders During the 2021/22 Season

The Nature Society wants to thank three members of the 8th grade members of the Michigan Junior Honor Society (MJHS) at Royal Oak Middle School for keeping the Royal Oak Arboretum & Tenhave Woods birdfeeders filled for the 2021/22 season.

As members of MJHS, they needed to participate in doing community service. Ron Fessler, one of their dads, checked out the city of Royal Oak's website and found the Nature Society as a volunteer opportunity where the girls could get their community service hours.

The girls began filling the bird feeders in November and will continue to fill them about once a week throughout the winter season and into the spring.

They have also been active volunteering for other community activities including organizing holiday donations for the Judson Center.

Photo on the right: Penelope Fessler (left), Natalie Kornmiller (middle) and a 3rd student (right) filling up the birdfeeder located next to Dragonfly Pond in Tenhave Woods.



A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR PATRON MEMBERS

A special thank you from the Nature Society goes out to our following 2021/22 Patron members for their generous financial contribution to us: **Kent & Barbara Aughe, Alyssa Beavers, Ann Bueche, Debbie Elliott, Elaine Frydrych, Don & Kathy Gavin, Barbara Grinke, Chris Hartwig, Cole & Priscilla Hawkins, Jaynmarie Hubanks, Elaine Jerkins, Sandy MacPherson, Alice & Arthur Marotti, Bonnie Michalak, Tom Reagan, Jeanette Roger, Laura Sayen, Nancy Shead, Kristin, Derek, Jackson, Ty Smith, Richard & Patricia Stoll, and Jean Watson**

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>

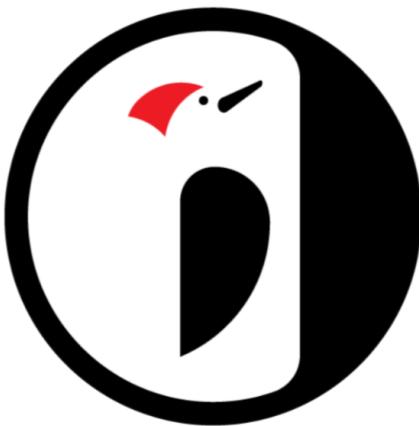
Please check out our Facebook page & "like" the Royal Oak Nature Society.

<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
info@treefirst.org

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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 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

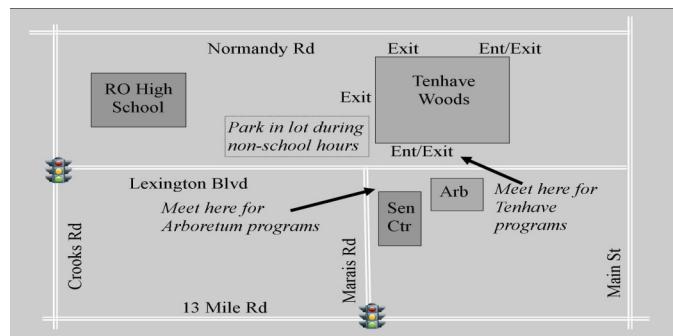
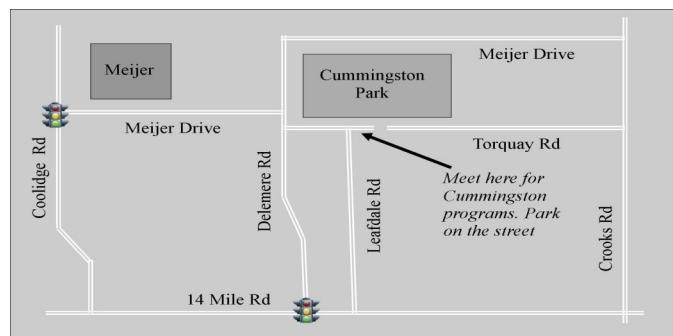
Stewardship-Tenhave & Royal Oak Arboretum: Open

Stewardship-Cummingston: Mary Fredricks

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"

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 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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