



# The Chinquapin

VOLUME 11 Issue 1

/ˈchi[nq]-ki-ˈpin/

Fall 2011

The Official Publication Of The Royal Oak Nature Society

## NATURE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTICE

Membership for the 2011/12 season begins now and ends in August, 2012. Please check your address label to see if you are already paid-up for the 2011/12 season.

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", mailed to your household quarterly. **If you want, we can e-mail it to you instead. With e-mail, the print quality of the newsletter is better and the photos are in color.** Supporting Membership is \$10 & up per year and gets you all of the above benefits plus being listed a supporting member in our newsletter. Patron Membership is \$50 & up per year and gets you all of the above benefits plus two private nature walks a year, listed as a patron member in our newsletter, an invitation to our pre-Dream Cruise picnic at Gunn Dyer Park and one free ticket to our annual fundraiser.

If you want to be an  
*(Continued on page 2)*

## Nature Society's 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Fundraiser

On April 15<sup>th</sup>, we held our 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Fundraiser at the Royal Oak Elks Club, and like last year the festivities began at 7 pm and were over by 10.

Food was made and brought in by Nature Society volunteers. We want to thank everyone who helped us out with the food. There were appetizers & scrumptious desserts along with a cash bar. At 8 o'clock we had our awards ceremony. Award winners are listed on the next page. After the ceremony, our guests continued to bid on 140 various silent auction items. The Nature Society wants to thank everyone who donated an auction item this year. A list of these donors can be found on the next page.

Our major sponsor again this year was **Razor Law Firm**. We had 10 guest tables

& all ten of them had sponsors. Our table sponsors included **Bordine Xpress, Royal Oak Garden Club, Doug Brown Packaging, OUR Credit Union, Emagine Theatre, RO Republican Women's Club, GreenWire Systems, Four Seasons Garden Center, Fifth Avenue and Play & Stay.**

We want to thank all of our sponsors for their generous donations and support.

Summing it all up, we had another successful fundraiser. There were 150 people attending and the event earned us around \$4,700.

Please be sure to pencil us in for Friday, **April 20, 2012** for our **7<sup>th</sup> Annual Fundraiser**. It is being held again at the Royal Oak Elk's Club. Hope to see you then.

## Message From the President

by Don Drife

The Society is beginning its 12<sup>th</sup> program year. We continue to exist with only a small number of extremely dedicated volunteers and I thank them. We held our Sixth Annual Soirée last April. It was successful largely due to the work of our fundraiser chair, Ted Vickers. While Bob Muller and I do many things that are visible, Ted chooses to work behind the scenes. The Society simply could not run without him. I would be remiss if I did not mention the work of Sandy Wilkins, our food coordinator, and the volunteers who provided the delicious treats served. It was a great evening once again. Nancy Vickers and Kelly Muller contacted donors for the silent auction, helped to lineup table sponsors, and saw to countless minor details that no one notices unless they are not done.

Chris Ethridge, who heads our Education committee, has done great work creating and leading programs for homeschoolers and Royal Oak elementary school children. These programs have taught children about Michigan Owls, trees and seeds,

observing nature and pond life, among other things. In the past year over 600 children and adults have attended one of Chris's programs, and we want to salute his hard work and the positive impact he is having.

Work on the Arboretum, behind the Senior Center, continues under the supervision of John DeLisle. Part of the area is beginning to resemble an Oak Savannah and is becoming one of my favorite areas for a quick evening walk. We are moving toward our goal of having all the native Michigan trees located within the combined area of our Arboretum and Tenhave Woods. We purchase trees from specialized nurseries, get donations from individuals and grow some from seeds.

Dena (angel-of-death) Serrato works with the invasive plant species in Tenhave Woods. There is a noticeable reduction in the amount of Garlic Mustard and European Buckthorn, but we need more people to help out. John is working on a plan to control the Reed Grass

*(Continued on page 4)*

## 2011 ROYAL OAK NATURE SOCIETY AWARD WINNERS

The **President's Award** is given annually by the President to the individual or group who has made the greatest contribution toward the Society's mission the previous year. It may be given for work on a single event.

The 2011 President's Award was given to **Edi Sonntag**. Edi was instrumental in helping the Society analyze water quality in what was to become Dragonfly Pond. It was found at the time that the water had a high ammonia content and almost zero dissolved oxygen, making it toxic to almost everything but mosquitoes. The data Edi provided and the many discussions we had on what might be done to improve the quality of the pond, lead us to our decision to cut the trees, open up the area and let sunlight back in. This resulted in instant success. The multitude of life forms we have in the pond today appeared in the first year after we cut down the trees. Along with this, Edi has been a valuable member of our School Nature Night team for many years. She brings her "friends" including turtles, lizards and snakes to socialize with the school children. Her "friends" are always a big hit. Her life long interest in herpetology and critters of all kinds has lead to both to her

own continuing education and the teaching of others. Edi has a BA in Animal Behavior from MSU, a Masters in Environmental Science from U of M-Dearborn and is working on finishing her PhD in Ecology from MSU. She worked at the Detroit Zoo with their reptiles and amphibians for 7 ½ years. She is now an Adjunct Faculty member at Henry Ford Community College, U of M-Dearborn and OCC. Edi is a Founder and Past President of the MSU Herp Club, a life long member of the Girl Scouts and a member of the Graduate Women in Science.

The **Chinquapin Award** may be given to an individual or group. This award recognizes notable contributions toward achieving the goals of the Society in a given year.

The 2011 Chinquapin Award was given to **Jimmy Kipps**. Jimmy graduated from Royal Oak High last June. He has had a lifelong interest in insects and is now attending Oakland Community College and plans on transferring to Michigan State for their entomology program. Jimmy has been a great help to the Royal Oak Nature Society. Since 2008, he has run the afternoon Pond Life program

*(Continued on page 5)*

### Thank you to all of our 2011 Annual Fundraiser Auction Donors:

Dennis Andrejak	Ewe-nique Knits	Miner's Den
Annette's Hair Studio & Spa	Frentz Hardware	Moosejaw
Aquarium Shop	Frittata	Motor City Auto Spa
Athens Coney Island	Barbara Gleason	Bob Muller
Batteries Plus	Golden Pond Financial	Norm's Field of Dreams
bd's Mongolian BarBQ	Golfing in Michigan	Oak City Grille
Billings Lawn Equipment	Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival	Oakland County Parks
Black Lotus Brewing Company	Green Toe Gardens	OUR Credit Union
Bordines	Gustafson-Morningstar Dentistry	Outback Steakhouse
Carol Bradshaw	Colleen Hilzinger	Quay Street Brewing Company
Briggs Gallery	Mitzi Hoffman	Rec Diving
Button's Rent-it	Holiday Market	Reds Salon & Barber
Mary Ann Carmichael	Hollywood Super Market	Royal Oak Cosmetic Dentistry
Kim Ciolek	Hopeakuu, holistic massage	Royal Oak Golf Club
City of Royal Oak	Diane Howey	Anita Sane
Clover Stones	Adam Huttenstine	Stephanie Schneider
Pat & Ray Coleman	Jan's Pottery	Barry Shulman
Contract Design Group	Jazzercise Fitness Center of Royal Oak	Lynda Sirko
Helen Cost	Mary Kleiss	Stagecrafters
Costco Wholesale	Winnie Kowalski	John & Lori Topor
Emily Damstra	Lady Bug Craft Shoppe	Town Tavern
John DeLisle	Maddie Laule	Trader Joe's
Detroit Institute of Arts	Leon & LuLu	Van Every Family Chiropractic Center
Dos Manos, LLC	Rick Lieder	Nancy Vickers
Don & Joyce Drife	Lilly's Sea Food	Vinsetta Grill
Duggan's Irish Pub	Pat Llewellyn	Vintner's Cellar of Royal Oak
Priscilla Eggen	Manzo Eye Care	Westin Southfield-Detroit Hotel
Jim Ellison	Mark Ridley's Comedy Castle	Zumba's Mexican Grille
English Gardens	Gloria Mayer	

*(Membership continued from page 1)*

Associate, Supporting or Patron member, please fill out a membership form (page 5) and mail it along with a check to the Nature Society. Please list other household members you want included as Nature Society members (no extra cost).

Through your donation, you will be helping to cover the costs to produce our newsletter and will also be assisting in funding educational programs that we provide.

Donations are always tax deductible.

If you only want to be a General Member, please e-mail

us the information asked for on our membership form (p.5) & send that information to: [naturesociety@ci.royal-oak.mi.us](mailto:naturesociety@ci.royal-oak.mi.us).

Your membership whether General, Associate, Supporting or Patron, will help to strengthen this organization.

Non-members 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.

## **SPEAKER PROGRAMS**

*Our monthly general meeting/speaker programs are now held at the **Royal Oak Middle School** (formerly Dondero High School). The school is located at 709 N. Washington, between 11 Mile Road & Catalpa (11 ½ Mile). The meeting/program will be held in the auditorium or "Gathering Place", both of which can be reached via the school's south-east entrance. At our monthly Wednesday meetings from September to June, we present speaker programs that are usually slide shows 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. The general meeting begins around **7:25 pm**, with the speaker program following several minutes later.*

**"The Wildlife of Royal Oak 350 Million Years Ago"** is being held on Wednesday, **September 7<sup>th</sup>**. We often describe our nature parks as windows through which we can view Royal Oak before development. If we are a window on the past, then John Topor, amateur paleontologist, is a time machine. He will discuss the Michigan Basin fossils found here deep beneath our feet. He will have many fossils on hand for your close examination. John and his brother Mike have had a soft bodied polychaete worm they discovered, named after them. This is your chance to learn about the wildlife that lived in your backyard long before the dinosaurs.

**"The Fantastic World of Honey Bees"** is being held on **October 5<sup>th</sup>**. Rick Wieske is a long time beekeeper who some of you may have seen at the Royal Oak Farmers Market. He will talk to us on the fascinating world of honey bees. Come and find out what's happening with honey bees, their health and ours. Take a look at their history in this area and importance for our future. Learn about what is needed to keep a hive in the city, where, why and how.

**"In Search of Bat Roosts"** is being held on **November 2<sup>nd</sup>**. Understand the importance of field research and how biologists study bats in the wild. Identify equipment and skills needed to catch, release and track bats to their roost trees in a dense forest. Know the risks and challenges of field studies as Vanessa Rojas, Wildlife Biologist, takes you through a typical day of being a wildlife field technician. By the end of the presentation, you'll be able to identify potential roosting locations of bats in your neighborhood.

**"Mount St. Helens Revisited"** is being held on **December 7<sup>th</sup>**. On May 18, 1980 at 8:32 am, Mt. St Helens (in the state of Washington) exploded. In minutes, over 200 square miles of timber had been leveled and 57 people were dead. In the years following that eruption, Mt St Helens has taught scientists a lot about geology and biology. Come join guest Gordon Lonie, retired Sterling Heights Naturalist, for a look at Mt St Helens then and now. Gordon visited the area in 1992 and again in 2004.

## **Nature Society's 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Open House**

Our 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Open House was held on Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup>. For a change, this year's weather was perfect. The temperature was mild and the skies were clear. .

The day began at 9 am with a migratory bird walk, lead by Doris Applebaum, an Oakland Audubon birder. Our bird list contained a large group of migratory birds, including a Water Thrush, Black & White Warbler, Yellow Rumped Warbler, Yellow Warbler, American Red Start, Nashville Warbler, and a Tennessee Warbler. At 10 am, Bob Muller, our resident naturalist, lead the morning wildflower walk where White & Red Trillium, Blue and Yellow Violets, true Solomon's seal, Spring Beauty, Trout Lilly, Foam Flower, Jack-in-the-Pulpit, white Baneberry, Wood Poppy, False Solomon's Seal & Wood Anemone were carpeting the forest floor.

At 11:30, Bob Muller began a Pond Study by sampling the water in Dragonfly Pond. Viewing trays were available to examine and identify what was found. Clam shrimp, dragonfly nymphs, Damselfly nymphs, Caddis fly

larva, Snails, Fingernail clams, Water beetle larva, Back swimmers were on display.

In the afternoon, Jimmy Kipps, from Troop 1627 took over the Pond Life program. Kristine Hill, a high school science teacher, lead a small group of young children through the woods looking for animals and evidence of their existence. Pat & Ray Coleman, professional photographers, lead a walk where they showed how to capture nature through photography. Bob Muller lead a group through the woods, identifying the many type of trees that can be found in Tenhave. John DeLisle, Nature Society naturalist, wrapped things up by leading another wildflower walk through the park. Total attendance for all of our programs was around 85.

Next year's open house will be held on Saturday, May 5, 2012. When you get next year's calendar, please pencil us in and join us for a fun day and a great way to learn something about nature.

## NATURE WALKS

**CUMMINGSTON PARK:** Park & meet at Leafdale & Torquay

**TENHAVE WOODS:** Park in lot at Marais & Lexington Blvd. and meet at the Lexington Entrance (300 feet east of parking lot). For the Owl Hoot, park & meet at the Marais/Lexington lot.

**ARBORETUM:** Park & meet in on the north side of the Royal Oak Senior/Community Center building (3500 Marais)

*Wearing boots while in the parks is recommended in the winter & spring months. Using insect repellent and dressing appropriately is advised from late spring to the end of summer.*

"**Arboretum in Early Fall**" is being held at the Royal Oak Nature Society **Arboretum** on Sunday, **September 25<sup>th</sup>**, beginning at **2:00 pm**. Take a tour of the meadow in our developing arboretum (behind the community center) and see what fall wild flowers are blooming.

"**Fall Color**" is being held at **Cummingston** on Saturday, **October 15<sup>th</sup>**, beginning at **10:00 am**. This is the most beautiful time to take a look at our nature study areas.

"**Fall Color**" is being held at **Tenhave Woods** on Sunday, **October 23<sup>rd</sup>**, and again on Saturday, **October 29<sup>th</sup>**. Both programs begin at 2:00 pm. This is the most beautiful time to take a look at our nature study areas.

"**Geological Features**" is being held at **Tenhave Woods** on Saturday, **November 5<sup>th</sup>**, beginning at **10:00 am**. Come and look at the geological features of Tenhave

Woods. What can we see that the glaciers left behind? What did Royal Oak look like 10,000 years ago?

"**Mammals of Tenhave**" is being held at **Tenhave Woods** on Sunday, **December 4<sup>th</sup>**, beginning at **2:00 pm**. Come and learn about the mammals that live in Tenhave Woods. We will look for signs of these mammals and have skulls and skins with us to help describe them and how they live.

"**Owl Hoot**" is being held at **Cummingston** on Friday, **December 16<sup>th</sup>**, beginning at **7:30 pm**. We will walk into Cummingston and attempt to lure in or have screech & great horned owls answer tape recordings of their calls.

Since 2004, Diane Pruden, an active member of the North American Mycological Association, has lead an annual early fall mushroom walk inside Tenhave Woods. The goal during the walk is to identify as many of the mushrooms and fungi that are encountered. Because the park has dried up by this time of year, it is a good time to go off trail looking for them. This has become one of our more popular nature walks. The adjacent photo was taken at our September, 2010 Mushroom Walk. It shows Diane passing around a mushroom found nearby for people to look at.

There will be a Mushroom Walk this fall, but an exact date has not been set yet. If we have your e-mail address, we will contact you by e-mail when the date has been determined. If you don't have e-mail, please call our message center (248-246-3380) at the end of August. Hopefully, we have the date by then.



*(Continued from page 1)*

(*Phragmites australis*) at Cummingston. It is taking over Cummingston's Crawdad Pond.

One of the successes the Society has had is in controlling the standing water at Cummingston. We have put in a drainage ditch, dug a pond, and installed a drain field. The drain field was paid for with funds from a block grant and installed by the City. The paper work was filed by another one of our behind the scenes workers, Helen Cost.

Even after 40 years of observing these nature areas, they continue to surprise me. Bob found a small concrete foundation at Tenhave. We are not sure what it was, maybe a small farm outbuilding. Bob also found a Tupelo tree in Tenhave Woods. We have known about the one growing along Normandy Road and I have looked in for this species in the woods for many years. It is about 12 inches in diameter and only four feet from the trail. It grows in a grove of Sassafras trees and I missed it because the bark looks similar to the Sassafras.

(Continued from page 2)

at our May Open Houses in Tenhave Woods. He often joins our naturalists in helping with their pond life programs. Jimmy has an insect display which he has brought to our School Nature Night programs for the past several years. He is the keeper of the Nature Society's insect collection. He helped us last spring when we put on a pond life program for 75 children from Addams School. Without his help we would not have been able to offer that program to that many children. Last summer

with Jimmy's help, we experimented with a night insect program in Tenhave Woods. Jimmy was involved in Boy Scout and became an Eagle Scouts after doing his Eagle project in Tenhave Woods. Under his direction the Scout and Swamp Trails were relined and improved. He also put up tree identification tags. These have been very popular with the public. The tree ID program has been expanded and now is an ongoing program of the Nature Society in both nature parks and the Arboretum.



From left to right: Bob Muller, Jimmy Kipps, Don Drife, Edi Sonntag & Jim Rasor

The Nature Society's old Group Facebook page is being terminated by Facebook. Please continue your support by checking out our new Facebook page & becoming a fan of the Royal Oak Nature Society.

New page:  
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Royal-Oak-Nature-Society/22809523388256#!/pages/Royal-Oak-Nature-Society/228095233882566>



**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

4934 Fernlea  
Royal Oak, MI 48073

**DIGITAL PUBLISHING & PRINT SERVICES**  
[www.heathpress.com](http://www.heathpress.com)

Phone: 248.288.5580  
Fax: 248.288.1430  
[printdoctor@heathpress.com](mailto:printdoctor@heathpress.com)

### NATURE SOCIETY TEAMS

Please contact us if you would like to become actively involved with one or more of our teams:

**Stewardship:** Maintains a trail system and enhances the overall park experience at Tenhave Woods & Cummington Park.

**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, which includes the coordinating and organizing of the Annual Spring Fundraiser & other fund-raiser programs approved by the board.

**Programming:** Is responsible for setting up the speaker programs, workshops and all of the nature programs within Cummington Park and Tenhave Woods.

**Ways & Means:** Investigates means of grant solicitation and then follows through accordingly.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Don Drife (248-528-0479)

Vice President & Arboretum Stewardship: John DeLisle (248-672-7611)

Treasurer & Ways & Means: Helen Cost (248-549-9423)

Recording Secretary: Nancy Vickers (248-549-5366)

Tenhave Woods Stewardship: Dena Serrato (248-542-2820)

Communication: Ted Vickers (248-549-5366)

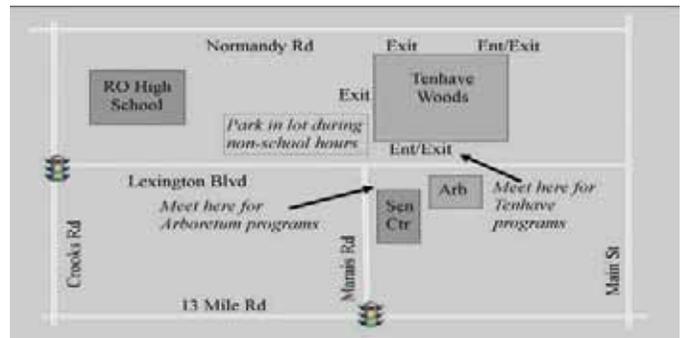
Education: Chris Ethridge (248 229-9335)

Program: Bob Muller (248-398-0195)

Newsletter: Ted Vickers

Engineer: Richard Stoll

## Cummington Park, Tenhave Woods, and the Arboretum



To locate and print out Tenhave Woods & Cummington 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 Cummington 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 creating an arboretum in Worden Park East. We also offer a wide range of natural history educational programs.*

The Royal Oak Nature Society  
 1600 N. Campbell  
 Royal Oak, MI 48067  
 248-246-3380  
 nature\_society@ci.royal-oak.mi.us  
 www.ci.royal-oak.mi.us/nature



FIRST CLASS MAIL