

May 2008



Big Country Chapter
Texas Master Naturalist

The Prickly Pear



From the President

We are progressing through this year's training and we have had a great time so far.

We have three sessions left and then graduation and class evaluation.

I want to thank our current Master Naturalists for showing up and supporting the Master Naturalist Interns.

The Friends of the Abilene State Park Spring Festival had a strong showing of Master Naturalist Volunteers and a big thank you goes out to each of you!

I have included some photos of the Spring Festival and recent training events.

Russ Hayward



From the Fossil Record (Rodney Sturdivant):

Plant of the Month



Eastern Cottonwood - *Populus deltoids*. A large tree found in riparian areas. Its distribution is the eastern U.S. to the Rocky Mountains. It has a massive trunk with deep-furrowed gray bark and deltoid-shaped leaves. The soft wood is used for boxes, pallets, and Coke crates. It is also used for pulp wood.



Beavers, porcupines, rabbits, and squirrels eat the bark and terminal buds. Deer will also eat the new shoots. The trees are important for raptor nests and turkey roosts.

Word of the Month

Boreal (bor-e-al). Latin, *boreas*, north wind. Relating to a northern ecological area characterized by tundra and coniferous forests.

Trivia or “Gee Whiz” Stuff

There is more protein in a pound of cockroaches than there is in a pound of peanut butter. Watch out for those Reese’s crunchy peanut butter cups!



Above are photos from the Spring Festival at the State Park April 19 — submitted by Connie Watkins



**BIG COUNTRY CHAPTER
TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST**

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future issues, please contact Mary Burrows at
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The photos below were taken at the Art Walk April 10 (making bird feeders) and shared by Connie Watkins.

