



Parks as a Refuge for Urban Fauna

A little help for the pollinators of Mexico City

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Chlosyne ehrenbergii, a butterfly endemic to Mexico visiting *Lantana velutina* in our garden.

When we were planning the garden, existing wild plants such as sorrels (*Oxalis* spp.), four o'clocks (*Mirabilis jalapa*), and cerotes (*Aldama buddlejiformis*) were not removed, as they are native species that are well adapted to the local climate and soil, showing resistance to the lack of water and the slightly drier and warmer environment of the city.

Parks are important places, as they are outdoor spaces where people can go for a walk, sit under the shade of a tree, or watch birds without having to leave the city. In Mexico City one of the most interesting parks is Tezozómoc Park, where I have worked with my father all my life. This park is in Azcapotzalco, north of Mexico City, and is also home to birds, butterflies, spiders, and bees, which is why we decided to take care of and improve the planter located next to our “store” using native plants.

Mexico City is surrounded by mountains and volcanoes with a great diversity of plants, including scrublands and forests of oak, pine, and Oyamel. By visiting the UNAM Botanical Garden, one can find local species like *Lantana velutina*.



Native shrubs like *Lantana velutina* benefited native bees like *Xylocopa* aff. *fimbriata*.

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Allowing the city's wild plants (such as *Aldama buddlejiformis*) to develop unimpeded, and reintroducing some others such as dahlias, sages, and shrubs, allowed several species of butterflies, birds, and native bees to find food and shelter in an urbanized area full of exotic plants. There are even records of migratory species in the garden, where they stop to look for food and rest before resuming their journey towards the temperate forests where they will spend the winter.



Aldama buddlejiformis blooms in October–November, coinciding with the migration of the monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*).



Western tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*) is another migratory species that also finds food in the garden, such as the fruits of *Lantana velutina*.



The presence of flowers throughout the year allows resident species, such as the broad-billed hummingbird (*Cyanthus latirostris*), to find shelter and food in this part of Mexico City.

To learn more about pollinator gardens in Mexico:

<https://www.biodiversidad.gob.mx/poliniza>

<https://www.biodiversidad.gob.mx/ecosistemas/procesose/polinizacion/jardin-de-polinizadores>

To learn more about this garden:

<https://mexico.inaturalist.org/projects/jardin-de-polinizadores-ahuizotl-del-bosque-azcapotzalco-cdmx>

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