



**PROJECT GREEN CHALLENGE 2017**  
**DAY 14**

**GREENEST**



# ADVENTURE

Going forward with our GREENER adventure plan...  
with a TWIST!



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# AN ADVENTURE

Today was the **PERFECT** day for the Adventure Challenge and following our adventure plan from the **Greener** challenge!

Ben W. participated in a cross-country meet (The Manhattan HS XC Invitational Meet) at Bronx's Van Cortlandt Park and was actually able to follow most of the plan the rest of us made for the Greener challenge. We had made a comprehensive plan to explore on of "NYC's most beautiful parks" to complete the PGC scavenger hunt and to see the flora and fauna of this park.



*Ben W. and two XC teammates at the Manhattan Invitational Meet at Van Cortlandt Park.*



October 14th, 2017

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Overall, visiting the Bronx's Van Cortlandt Park was a **thrilling experience**. After competing the Varsity Boys 4Km (2.5 miles), Ben W. decided to explore the Van Cortlandt park. He encountered all sorts of wildlife that were in all to fleeting!



Ben took a beautiful panorama of the field expanse at Van Cortlandt Park, demonstrating the **lush, grassy expanse**, dotted rhythmically with **Horse Chestnut trees** and **White Ash trees** in the distance. The Bronx in New York had an aura of reserved character, yet a spirit that was awaiting to be reborn, especially on the day of such a BIG event! Although it was a **cloudy day in the morning**, the sky cleared up and the **sun came out** around 11AM, making it a perfect day for a running competition!



A picture of the iconic maple leaf indicating the entrance of a New York City public park. Van Cortlandt Park is home to a museum AND a nature center, where residents of the Bronx have the opportunity to connect with nature at times they see fit.

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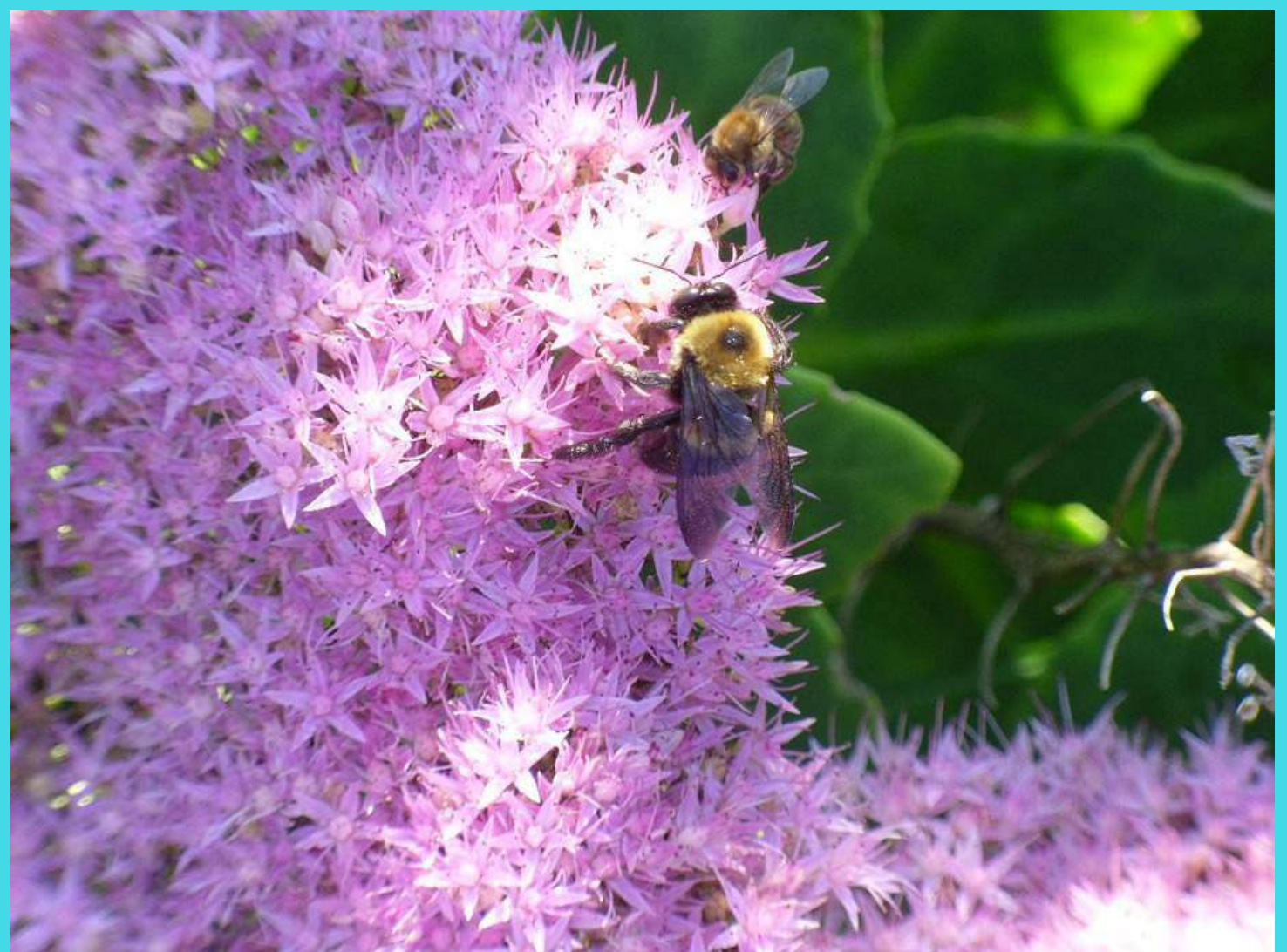
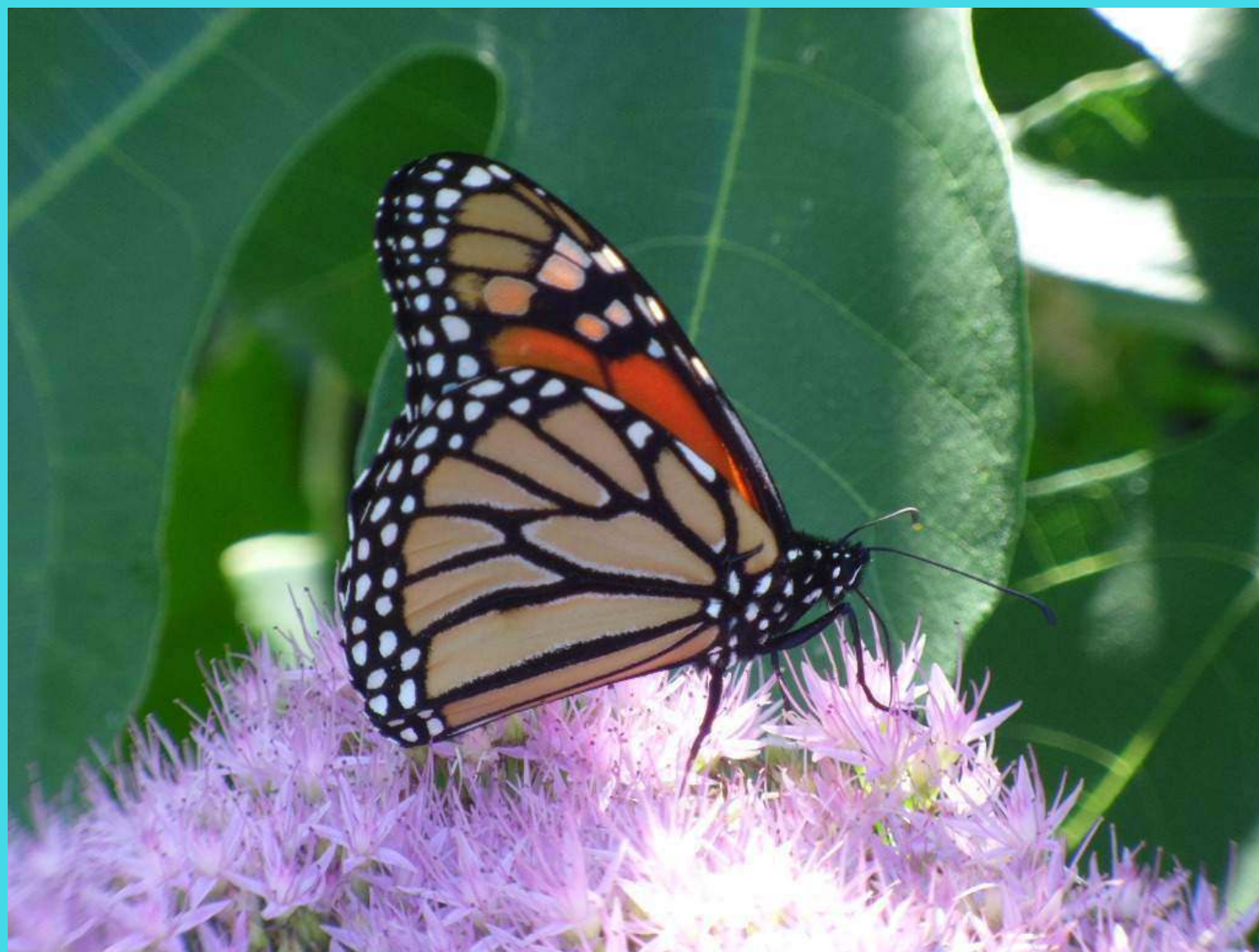




Ben decided to take a explore the park and look for some wildlife of Van Cortlandt Park! He decided to go venture the park with two friends to look for any animals that call the park their home!



## Butterfly & Bees!



At the beginning of the Cass Gallagher Nature Trail within the park, Ben was super surprised to encounter a monarch butterfly AND two bees pollinating these purple star-like flowers. It took him a really long time to capture these images because they moved so quickly from flower to flower. *Seeing live pollination was extremely inspiring.* Nevertheless, it was really cool to see these organisms interact with the environment in such an urban area.



# 2

## A FROG?!

As Ben passed the Van Cortlandt Historical House coming back from the Cass Nature Trail, his friend found a small frog attached to a door! It was probably from the frog swamps or the small river in the park! This was really *surprising* to identify!



# 3

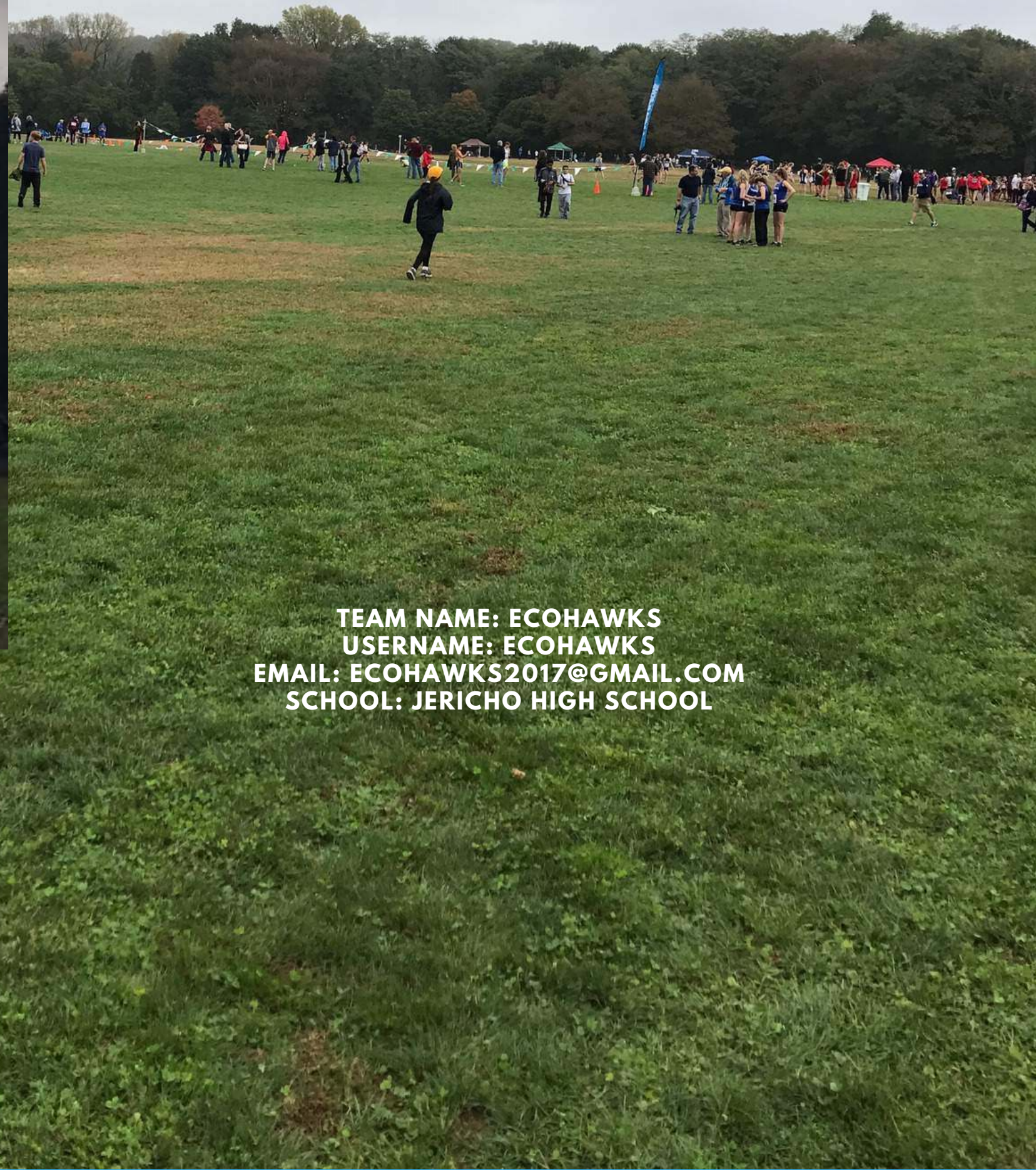
## SQUIRRELS

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Continuing their walk, Ben and his friends encountered so many of one animal: **Squirrels!** The scientific name of squirrels is *Sciurus carolinensis*, and it looks like many are preparing for hibernation in the winter. Many were already collecting acorns to store!







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The afternoon was absolutely wonderful, in terms of weather. The **sun** came out through the heavy clouds, brightening the ground and causing the wetness on the ground to evaporate, resulting in a **musky, earthy smell** that permeated throughout the park.

The **terrain** of the park is mostly earthy, with lots of soil and topsoil. However, the main green is filled with soft grass that was pretty damp from the early morning rain.



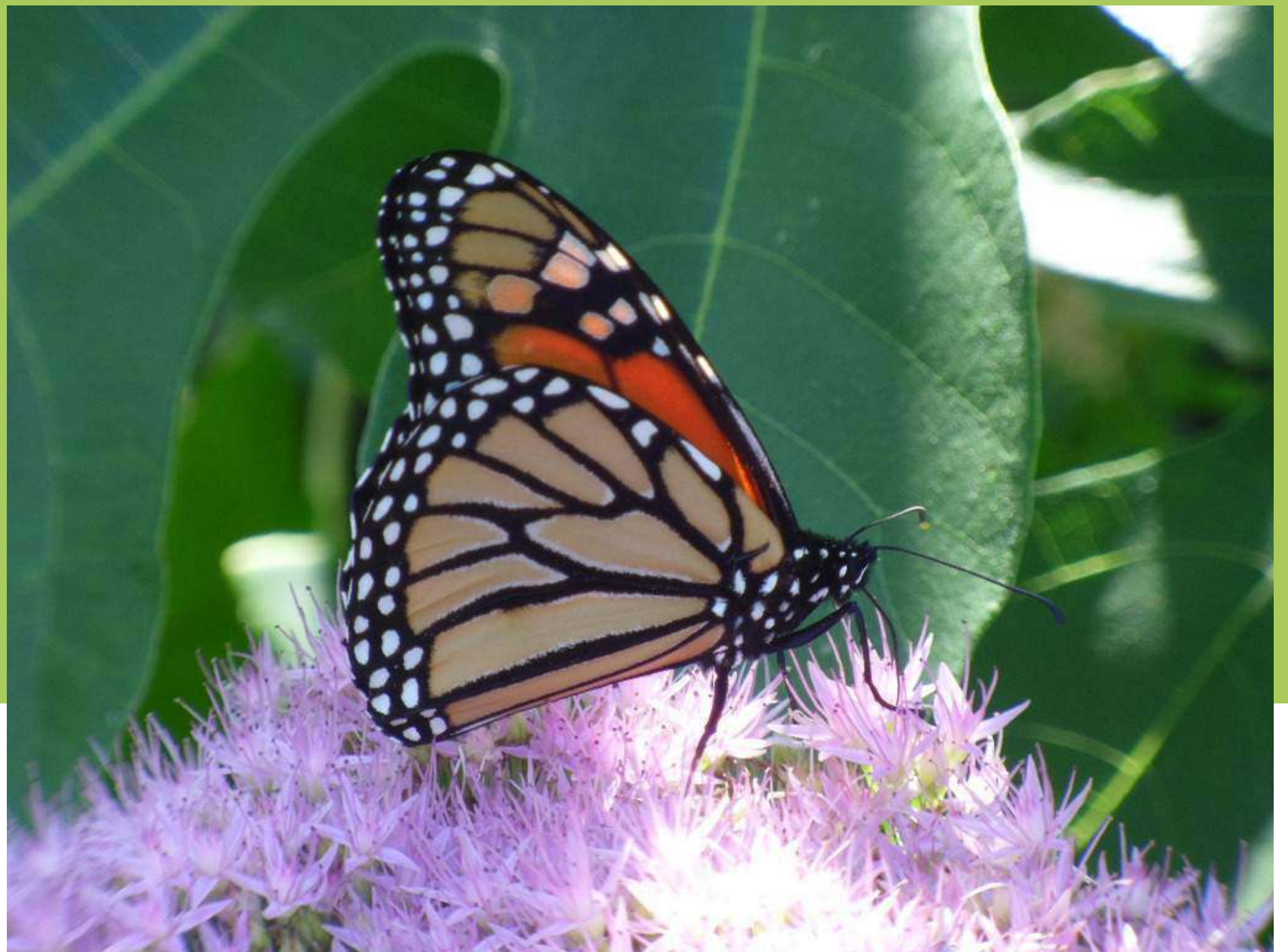
Unfortunately, we couldn't seem to identify and find any birds in the park at the time. Maybe they were already heading to the south? Maybe the park wasn't a habitat for birds? We want to look more into this next time we go back!



# INVITATION FOR ADVENTURE!

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Ben W. decided to invite his friend, Sarah, who is now a freshmen at Stanford University, to visit Van Cortlandt Park with him when she come back to NY!



Dear Sarah,

I recently visited Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx today for a cross-country meet. Little did I know that I would be exploring the natural environment of such a beautiful park, something you would totally enjoy. I still remember our walks in Central Park together whenever I visited the city, and us stopping at different plants to see if we can find any cool insects or pollinators. Well at Van Cortlandt, I found a beautiful monarch butterfly, which I know you care very much about because they are close to extinction. When you come back to visit from Stanford, I hope we can visit Van Cortlandt Park to go hiking to find some amazing pollinators and other butterflies!