

## **Peregrine falcons, frogs and bees move into Sydney's Central Park in unprecedented natural growth**



Gardeners are having to cope with unusual issues at the Central Park building on Broadway.  
Picture: John Grainger

IF you are getting sick of mowing your lawn and trimming your hedges, spare a thought for these blokes.

Not only do horticulturalists at Broadway's Central Park have to dance with death on a daily basis while pruning, they are also swatting away an unprecedented number of bees and wasps.

A small colony of green frogs and two peregrine falcons have also moved in, turning the high-rise into the ultimate urban jungle.



With a small colony of green frogs and two peregrine falcons calling the gardens home.  
Picture: John Grainger

The explosion of life on the country's most spectacular vertical gardens has been fuelled by the unseasonably warm start to autumn, with April temperatures more than 2C higher than average.

Junglefy managing director Jock Gammon, who manages the six fulltime garden staff, said the bees are attracted to the rare and spectacular flowers still in full bloom.

“At the moment there are more flowers on this wall than in any other part of the city, so it’s not surprising that the bees and insects are attracted by them,” he said.

“There is such a large range of plant species on the building — about 300 — so there has been an increase in biodiversity with insects.

“The two falcons are living in the chimney stack of the old Carlton and United Breweries building.”



Urban jungle: Temperatures have been above 20C every day since January.  
Picture: John Grainger



The building is the vision of French botanist Patrick Blanc. Picture: John Grainger

Since January there has not been a day where maximum daily temperatures have dropped below 20C.

The warmer weather and relatively dry conditions has meant the 1120sq m of green walls have been thirstier than usual. The gardens are still using up to 7L of recycled water per square metre per day, or 7840L in total.

“We are still watering as if it we were at the height of summer,” he said.

The giant hydroponic set up is the vision of French botanist Patrick Blanc.

The gardens have an even number of native and exotic species, including acacias, goodenia, grevillea, lomandra, poa, themeda and viola.



The gardens include acacias and goodenia. Picture: John Grainger

The average maximum temperature for Sydney this April has been around 22.4C and even higher out west, according to the Bureau of Meteorology.

“The higher temperatures have been driven by a quite a few high pressure systems and higher sea surface temperatures,” senior climatologist Agata Imielska said.

“Minimums have also been 2C higher than normal.”

The bureau expects this winter to be hotter and drier than average, driven by climate change and the last stages of the current El Niño.

Sydney can expect maximum temperatures above 20C again this week.

**BEN PIKE**  
The Daily Telegraph