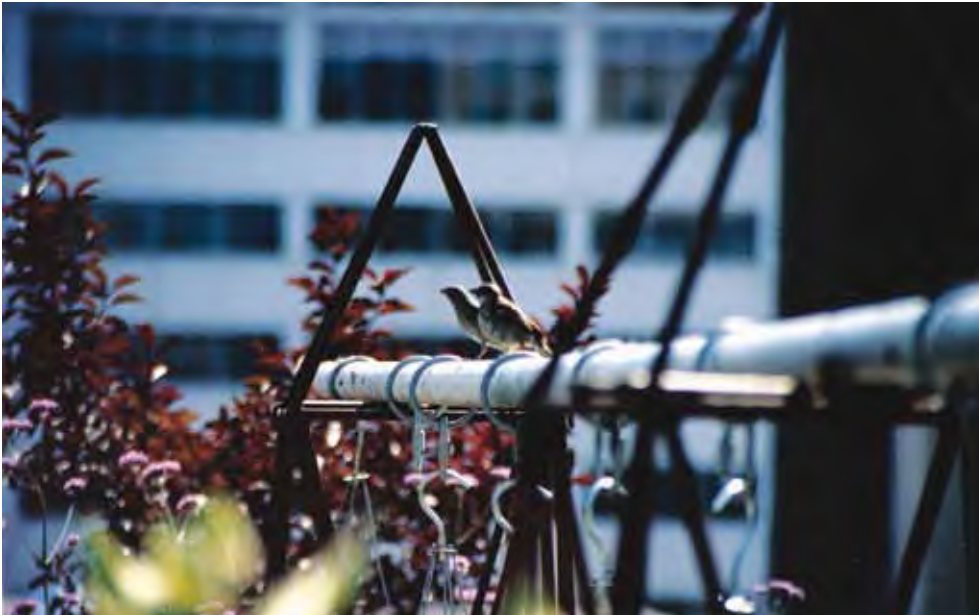


GREEN TORONTO AWARD WINNERS

# ROOF GARDENS WITH BIODIVERSITY

Text By Erin MacKeen

Images courtesy and copyright of Urbanspace Property Group



The roof gardens on these two heritage buildings provide a unique green oasis in the midst of a highly urbanised area in downtown Toronto. Tenants who work in the buildings use the roof gardens as common spaces for creative rejuvenation.

## 401 RICHMOND ST. W.

The roof garden at 401 Richmond St. W. began in an informal way back in 1995. Since then, it has evolved to include a 6,500 square foot cedar deck, resplendent with flowers, vines, and bushes—many of which were grown from seed—and a lush blanket of sedum that covers close to 3,000 square feet of roof beyond the deck. There are also a number of large planters that hold trees and perennial shrubs that winter over on the roof and a 40-foot greenhouse. The plants and flowers in the roof garden are selected for beauty, aroma and their ability to attract bees, butterflies, ladybugs, birds, and other insects. And they do!

Besides being a treasured gathering space and a Wireless Toronto hot spot with internet access for its tenants, the roof garden is also a hot spot for bees.





**ON THIS SPREAD AND THE NEXT** The roof garden at 401 Richmond St. W. is a hot spot for birds, bees and butterflies.







#### THE ROBERTSON BUILDING (215 SPADINA AVE.)

The 4,000 square foot extensive green roof was installed over one half of the Robertson roof in June 2004. This is the only green roof in Toronto that has been designed with biodiversity as its principal planning priority. As a result, the Robertson roof has become a poster green roof for the City of Toronto and its ongoing commitment to a greener city.

This special space is also home to an amazing proliferation of biodiversity in plants, animals, bees, butterflies, and birds.

Urbanspace Property Group was presented the Green Toronto Award in 2008 for their innovative work in creating and managing the roof gardens.

“ THE ROBERTSON ROOF HAS BECOME A POSTER GREEN ROOF FOR THE CITY OF TORONTO AND ITS ONGOING COMMITMENT TO A GREENER CITY. ”

