



Warm weather, rain brings more mosquitoes, flies

RECORD-BREAKING hot temperatures throughout Sydney and heavy rain in spring has led to an increase in mosquito and fly numbers.

Entomologist Bryce Peters, general manager of technical services at the faculty of science at University of Technology Sydney, said there were thousands of fly species in the country but only two that caused Sydneysiders grief: the house fly (*Musca domestica*) and bush fly (*Musca vetustissima*).

While house flies can be found indoors, resting on food, bush flies enjoy landing on humans outside.

"They're responsible for that famous Australian salute," Mr Peters said.

Forensic entomologist associate professor James Wallman, from the school of biological sciences at the University of Wollongong, said bush flies were attracted to sweat.

"The reason for this is that the female bush fly wants to drink sweat to mature her eggs. So bush flies will hone in on 'sweaters' and sources of moisture," he said.

Hot weather coupled with bodies of water were ideal for mosquito breeding, said medical entomologist Cameron Webb, of University of Sydney and NSW Health.

Dr Webb said heavy rain in Sydney and flooding of wetlands last year meant mosquito numbers had increased significantly.

— **Hannah Paine**