

July 84

Months of rain needed

July was the third month this year to be drier than usual, the 13mm (0.52in) of rain being only 21% of the expected amount.

To date the rain deficit for the year is 101mm (4in), or approximately two months fall.

Only five days in July produced any rain, with half of the month's total falling in 6 hours on July 13. In fact, the month vies with that of July 1977 for being the driest on record since readings began at Hayley Green in 1946.

The month was also hot, though not exceptionally so, temperatures ranging from 30C (86F) on July 8, to 5.4C (42F) on July 3, giving the month fourth placing for warmth since 1956. Twenty-two days registered temperatures above 70F (22C), with six days over 80F (27C).

The unusual wind pattern which began in March continued into July, the predominant south westerlies giving way to north westerlies or north easterlies, on the whole much drier. Mean speeds have been low at 6 mph, the windiest day being July 11 with gusts of 32 mph and a mean of 10 mph.

High pressure has predominated, drawing air from the continent, any rain-bearing systems passing far to the north over Scotland, or to the south over the Mediterranean.

Sunshine has been well above average, skies being less than half covered with cloud on many days. Uninterrupted sunshine was fairly common in the first week of the month.

In summary, a month which was very dry and also warmer than usual, continuing the pattern of low rainfall which began in April. To rectify this deficit in rainfall would require four months' rain in the next nine weeks, an event, which, though unlikely, is not altogether unprecedented, as we saw after the drought of 1976.

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