

Unusually dry July

Had we not had four days with rain at the very end of the month, July 1979, would have gone down as the driest in the area for the past 34 years.

Until July 28 we had only had four days with recorded rain totalling 2.9mm (0.11in). The final four days brought this to 16.5mm (0.65in), still a deficit of 50mm (1.97in) for a normal July, but 4mm (0.16in) above the total recorded in July 1977 which was the driest on record.

The heaviest intensity of rain came within six hours of the end of the month during a heavy shower when it was falling at a rate of 28mm/hr (1.10in/hr) for a period of five minutes.

DEPLETED

We have now had two very dry months in this area, and gardens have begun to suffer from a gradual lowering of the water table. The small amounts which have fallen in July have quickly evaporated and so have not helped much to restore depleted supplies.

Temperatures have been well up, the mean daily of 16.5C (62F) being above that expected in July by 1C (1.8F). July 27 was the warmest day, when a maximum of 28.3C (83F) was recorded.

This came in a week of typically English summer weather, broken cloud and periods of hot sunshine.

An exceptionally clear day on July 24 produced the highest radiation temperature of 56.1C (133F) though this day did not provide the highest air temperature.

REALLY WARM

Though the end and middle of the month was warm and fairly sunny, the first week saw a spell of relatively cool and overcast days. The lowest temperatures, air and soil, were noted on the first of the month and it took a day or two of really warm sunshine to raise air temperatures significantly.

Much of the month was dominated by high pressure

areas and light westerly winds, mainly blowing at around 5 knots. The windiest day was July 7 with a 15 knot westerly, no gales being recorded during the month.

Thunder, which is normally heard on average three times in July, occurred only once, on July 29 when we also had the only recorded hail shower, both features almost always being noted together.

PLEASANT

To summarise the month. It has been abnormally dry with only 25 per cent of the normal rainfall. The month has been warmer than usual, maximum air temperatures by about 2.3C (4F), minimum air by 0.4C (1F) and grass minimum temperatures by 5.4C (10F).

Days have been slightly more cloudy than usual and the humidity at 8 am has been six per cent higher than in an average July. All in all, a fairly pleasant summer month.

HAYLEY GREEN

52°26'N 02°04'W 155m AMSL

CG Roberts

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