

Let us know you agree to cookies

We use cookies to give you the best online experience. Please let us know if you agree to all of these cookies.

Yes, I agree

No, take me to settings



Menu

World | Africa | Asia | Australia | Europe | Latin America | Middle East | US & Canada

In pictures: Drought in Europe exposes sunken ships, lost villages and ominous 'hunger stones'

By **Elsa Maishman**
BBC News

🕒 1 hour ago

World War Two



REUTERS

| A carving on one of the "hunger stones" in the Rhine revealed a previous low point

Europe has been suffering weeks of drought, with persistent heatwaves leading to evacuations and deaths.

Rivers and lakes have dried, causing major problems for shipping and other vessels. The receding water levels have also revealed some usually-buried treasures.

The most ominous of these are "hunger stones", engraved at the waterline of rivers during previous droughts as a warning to future generations that when the stones are above water, hardship lies ahead.

Most of the stones have reappeared on the banks of the river Elbe, which flows from the Czech Republic through Germany.

One stone, which was first carved as far back as the 15th Century, also surfaced in 1616, when locals inscribed into it the words "if you see me, cry".

Low water levels in the Danube in Serbia have revealed the sunken remains of World War Two ships, still loaded with explosives.

The ships, found near the town of Prahovo, were part of a Nazi fleet sunk in 1944. More are expected to emerge as the drought continues.

- [Drought on the Rhine: 'We have 30cm of water left'](#)
- [The science of drought explained in pictures](#)
- [Why drought can lead to dangerous flooding](#)



REUTERS

| Several German ships were sunk at Prahovo as the Nazis were fleeing Soviet forces

Unexploded ordnance has also been found in the River Po in Italy.

About 3,000 people **were evacuated from a village** near the city of Mantua in July, while experts removed and safely exploded a previously-submerged WW2 bomb.

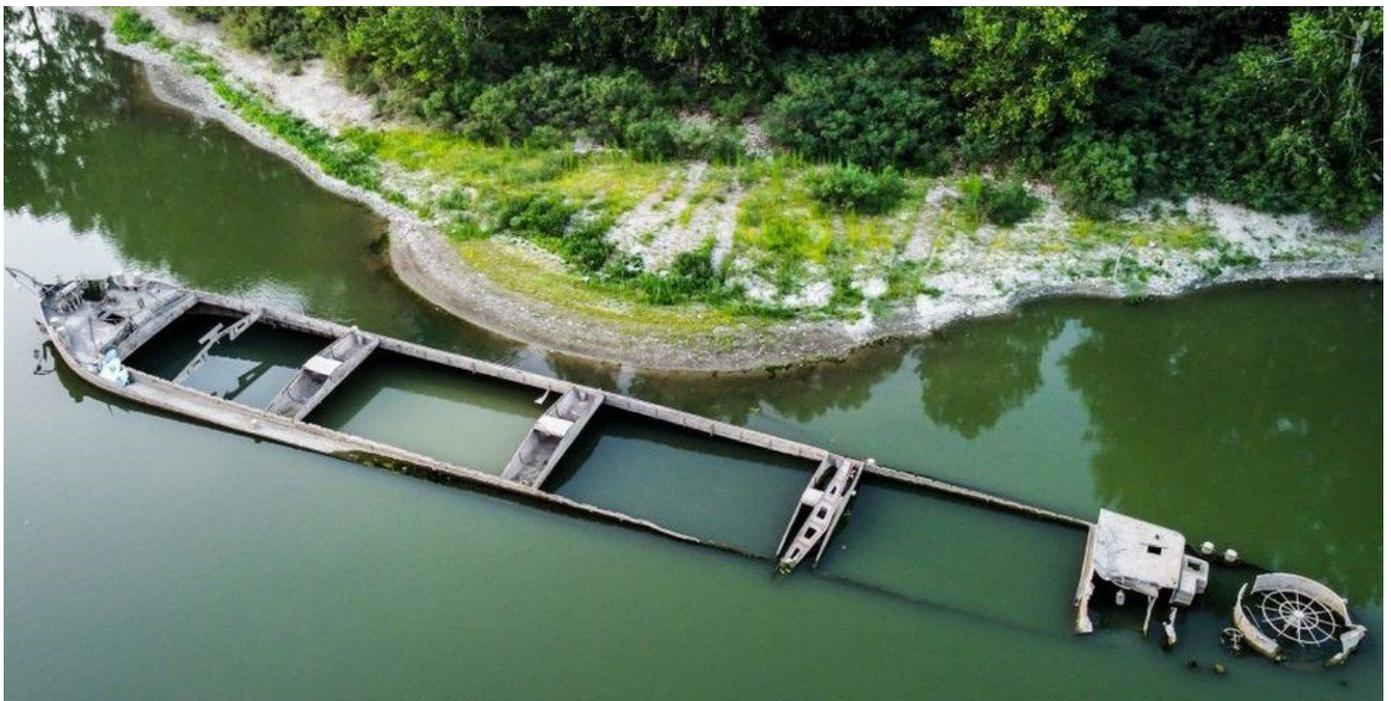


REUTERS

| The unexploded bomb was pulled from the River Po by the Italian army

A barge used by Germans and sunk in 1943 has also emerged in the River Po.

Locals began to see the Zibello barge as water levels dropped some months ago, and more of it has been revealed as the drought continues.



GETTY IMAGES

| The "Zibello" barge is being revealed gradually

Low levels of the River Tiber in Rome have revealed the ruins of an ancient bridge which may have been built by the Emperor Nero around 50AD.

It has always been possible to see a small part of the ruins at low water level, but much more than usual can now be seen of the structure.

It lies below the site of a modern bridge, the Vittorio Emanuele II.



GETTY IMAGES

| Ruins of the bridge built by Nero have been revealed in the River Tiber

In Spain, the "Spanish Stonehenge" has appeared in the Valdecanas reservoir in the central province of Caceres.

Officially called the Dolmen of Guadalperal, the circle of stones is believed to date back to 5000BC.

They were discovered by an archaeologist in 1926, but the area was flooded in a rural development project in 1963.

Since then they have only been visible four times.





REUTERS

| The "Spanish Stonehenge" was submerged by Franco-era officials but the dolmen is back in full view

In Galicia, on the border with Portugal, a "ghost village" emerged earlier in the year as drought dramatically emptied the waters of a reservoir.

Aceredo was flooded in 1992 to make way for the reservoir. Some of its former residents have returned to look around the now-ruined buildings.



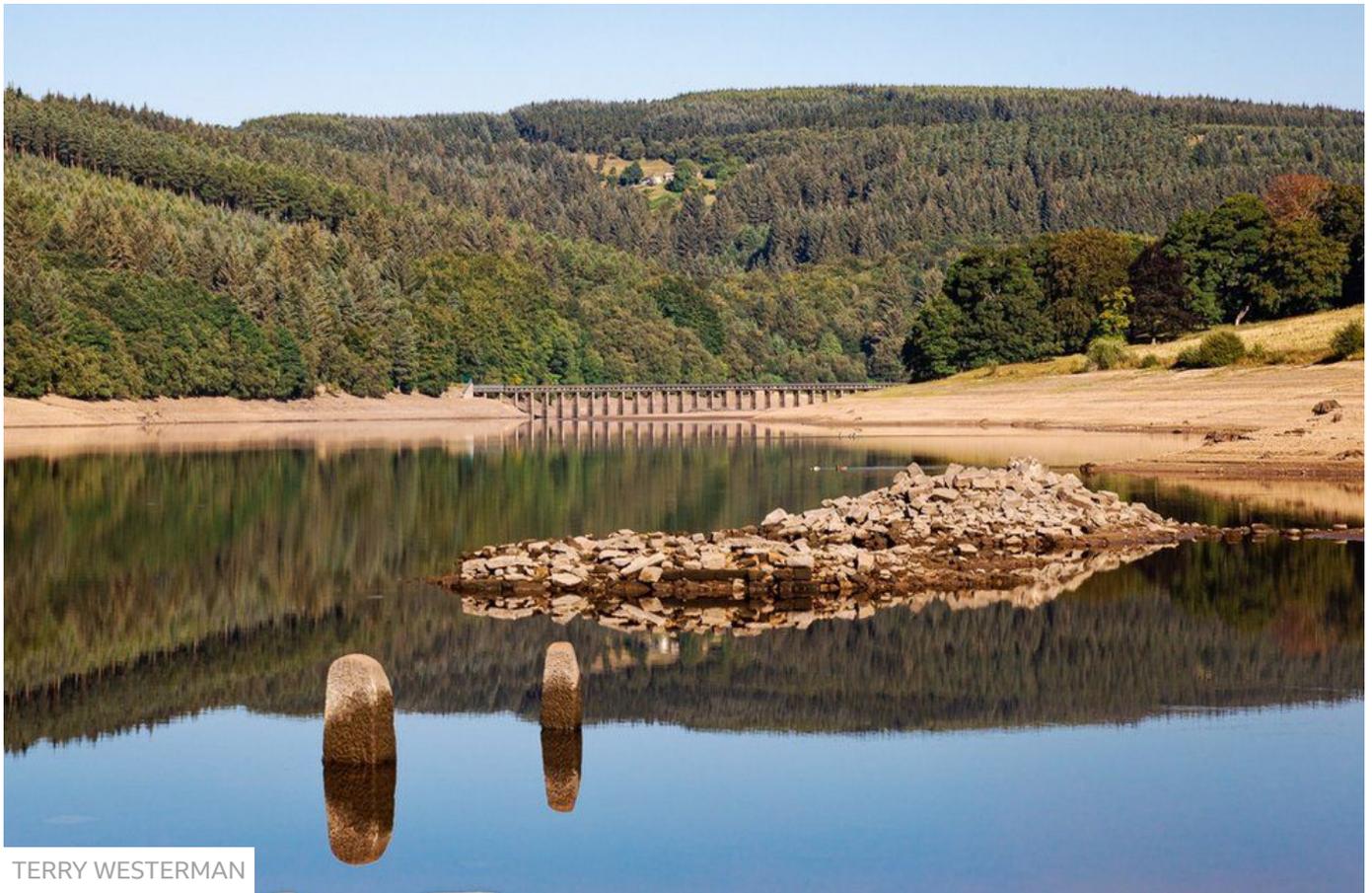
GETTY IMAGES

| The village of Aceredo in Spain's Galicia region is normally under water

Lost treasures have also been revealed in the UK.

Ruins thought to be of a church in the village of Derwent in Derbyshire have been exposed.

The village was flooded in the 1940s to make way for the Ladybower reservoir.



TERRY WESTERMAN

| The Derwent church spire was originally left intact as a memorial but later demolished

The remains of old trees have been exposed at Colliford Lake reservoir in Cornwall.

The area on Bodmin Moor was flooded in the 1980s.



GETTY IMAGES

| These trees have been underwater since the reservoir on Bodmin Moor was flooded

And traces of some 17th Century gardens appeared at **Lydiard Park in Swindon**, in south-west England, after hot weather killed off grass to reveal impressions in the ground beneath.

Similar "ghost gardens" **have also appeared at Longleat**, a nearby stately home.



PHIL JEFFERIES

| Impressions in the ground show previous gardens at Lydiard Park

You may also be interested in:



| Watch: Water levels on Italy's Lake Garda at 15 year low

More on this story



In pictures: Heatwaves, drought and wildfires

11 August



Where has a drought been declared?

1 day ago





Lost 17th Century gardens revealed

3 days ago

Related Topics

Archaeology

Spain

Serbia

Drought

Italy

World War Two

Top Stories

Daughter of Putin ally killed in Moscow blast

2 hours ago

Nationalised energy should be on the table - Sturgeon

2 hours ago

Tyson Fury reveals cousin stabbed to death

1 hour ago

Features





'If it was A-Levels this would be sorted way quicker'



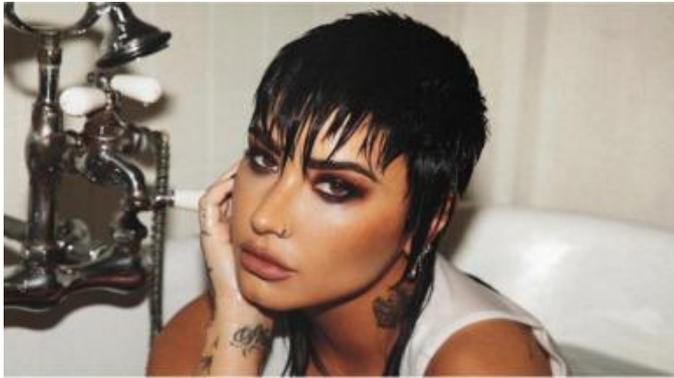
The under-18s who get to pick the next PM



Is there a hosepipe ban in my area?



How much are prices rising for you? Try our calculator



Demi Lovato is back, and this time she's angry



Over-50s turn to house-shares to beat rising rents



The pomp and celebrations as new Zulu king crowned



Why are bakers' fortunes on the rise?





Greece promotes smaller islands over Mykonos and Corfu

Elsewhere on the BBC



A mysterious app seeks out its next victim

It's not just their battery that could die...



The colonial legacy of homophobia

Tom Daley on attitudes towards LGBTQ+ people in Commonwealth countries



Inside the factory where trains are made...

Gregg Wallace has special access to learn every step of the process



Fancy a film tonight?

There's something for everyone on BBC iPlayer

Most Read

- 1 Tyson Fury reveals cousin stabbed to death
- 2 Daughter of Putin ally killed in Moscow blast
- 3 In pictures: Drought exposes sunken treasures

- 4 Decathlete Gregory 'in coma' after bike crash
- 5 Nationalised energy should be an option - Sturgeon
- 6 Singapore to end ban on gay sex
- 7 Map may show evidence of sunken Welsh kingdom
- 8 Police spoke to woman on day of missing report
- 9 Greece promotes smaller islands over Mykonos and Corfu
- 10 Why are bakers' fortunes on the rise?

BBC News Services

On your mobile

On smart speakers

Get news alerts

Contact BBC News

Best of the BBC



Getting the troops out of Afghanistan



BBC iPlayer



Is expensive paint worth it?

BBC Sounds



Is marrying your cousin really that bad?

BBC Sounds



Can a soldier rely on his memories?

BBC iPlayer

Home

Weather

CBBC

Bitesize

Local

News

iPlayer

CBeebies

Arts

Three

Sport

Sounds

Food

Taster

[Terms of Use](#)

[About the BBC](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Cookies](#)

[Accessibility Help](#)

[Parental Guidance](#)

[Contact the BBC](#)

[Get Personalised Newsletters](#)

[Why you can trust the BBC](#)

© 2022 BBC. The BBC is not responsible for the content of external sites. [Read about our approach to external linking.](#)