



Double Trouble Pacific Ocean

The island of Hawaii rarely takes a direct hit from a hurricane. In August 2016, two Pacific storms almost changed that.

The Suomi NPP satellite observed Hurricanes Madeline and Lester stirring up the central Pacific Ocean as category 3 and 4 storms while moving northwest toward the Hawaiian Islands. The tight, deep eye of category 3 Hurricane Madeline (right) appears almost three-dimensional even in a two-dimensional satellite view. Lester (next page) showed off an equally menacing eye. The bright streaks across the ocean surface are areas of sunglint, where sunlight reflected directly back at the image.

Ultimately, the storms blew just south and north of the islands without making landfall. In fact, no hurricane has made landfall on the Big Island since recordkeeping started in 1949. Only 15 hurricanes have passed within 200 nautical miles of the island in that time.