

= 1903 New Jersey hurricane =

The 1903 New Jersey hurricane , also known as the Vagabond Hurricane by The Press of Atlantic City , is the first and only known North Atlantic hurricane to make landfall in the state of New Jersey since records were kept starting in 1851 . The fourth hurricane of the season , the cyclone was first observed on September 12 about 550 miles (885 kilometres) northeast of Antigua . It moved quickly westward , then later turned to the north @-@ northwest , steadily strengthening to reach a peak intensity of 100 miles per hour (155 kilometres per hour) , a Category 2 on the modern @-@ day Saffir @-@ Simpson scale . The hurricane weakened slightly before striking near Atlantic City , New Jersey on September 16 with winds of 80 mph (130 km / h) . It weakened over Pennsylvania and became an extratropical cyclone over western New York on September 17 .

Rough surf and moderate winds from the hurricane capsized several ships along the East Coast of the United States ; 30 people were left missing and presumed killed from a shipwreck in Chincoteague , Virginia . Along the coast , 57 people died due to the storm . In New Jersey , the hurricane caused heavy damage , particularly near the coast and in Atlantic City . Dozens of buildings were damaged or destroyed , and damage across the state totaled \$ 8 million (1903 USD) . In New York City , high winds disrupted traffic , closed businesses , and overturned wagons , with many windows and roofs damaged . On Long Island , President Theodore Roosevelt directly experienced the effects of the hurricane while on a yacht . The life of the president was briefly threatened by the rough conditions , though none on board the yacht suffered any problems from the hurricane .

= = Meteorological history = =

The genesis of the storm is unknown ; it was first observed on September 12 as a 70 mph (120 km / h) tropical storm about 550 miles (885 km) northeast of Antigua in the Lesser Antilles . On that day , the storm appeared on weather maps , and subsequently was tracked by ship reports as a small system . The storm tracked quickly northwestward , followed by a turn to the west @-@ northwest . Around 18 : 00 UTC on September 13 , the storm passed about 270 mi (435 km) south of Bermuda . Its exact track and intensity is unknown , though it is estimated the storm attained hurricane status late on September 14 about 360 mi (580 km) west @-@ southwest of Bermuda . The hurricane steadily intensified as it curved northward , and attained an estimated peak intensity of 100 mph (155 km / h) late on September 15 about 110 mi (190 km) southeast of Cape Hatteras , North Carolina .

By late on September 15 , the hurricane was beginning to affect the North Carolina coastline . The high winds near the center prompted the United States Weather Bureau to issue storm warnings on the morning of September 16 into the next day . Turning northward , the hurricane weakened slightly and made landfall near Atlantic City , New Jersey , shortly before 12 : 00 UTC on September 16 . The estimated barometric pressure was 990 mbar (29 inHg) , suggesting hurricane @-@ force winds of 80 mph (130 km / h) at landfall . This made it the first and only known hurricane to strike New Jersey since the Atlantic hurricane database 's beginning in 1851 . The storm structure broadened after landfall , and the Weather Bureau assessed one center splitting off and tracking north @-@ northeastward into New York and Connecticut . The main center continued northwestward , weakening into a tropical storm near Trenton , New Jersey . After crossing northeastern Pennsylvania , the system transitioned into an extratropical cyclone near Syracuse , New York on September 17 . The extratropical remnant persisted for another six hours before losing its identity over eastern Ontario .

= = Impact = =

Overall , the hurricane killed 57 people during its passage through the Mid @-@ Atlantic states . Winds of over 60 mph (97 km / h) affected large portions of the coastline from New Jersey to southern New England .

The hurricane first brought rainfall to coastal parts of Georgia and South Carolina . Strong winds were reported along coastal areas of North Carolina , with sustained winds peaking at 72 mph (116 km / h) at Kitty Hawk . Winds reached 54 mph (87 km / h) at Cape Henry , Virginia , and the combination of the winds and rough surf washed some boats ashore . The schooner Beatrice was lost near Chincoteague with a crew of 30 ; 28 people on board were killed . A squall line destroyed the front mast of a schooner near Cape Henry . Several boats broke free from their moorings near Salisbury and were subsequently destroyed after passing downstream . The schooner Hattie A. Marsh encountered strong winds from the hurricane along the Delaware coast , while strong waves washed it ashore the rocky coastline . The boat was wrecked and the rooms onboard were washed overboard , killing five members of the crew . Two people were rescued after conditions calmed , one of whom was injured and taken to a hospital .

A flock of birds encountered the hurricane over eastern Virginia ; hundreds of birds were killed and fell to the ground near Old Point Comfort , many stripped of their feathers . The outer rainbands of the storm produced heavy amounts of precipitation near Washington , D.C. , canceling a baseball game between the Detroit Tigers and the Washington Senators after the field was flooded . In Ocean City , Maryland , the hurricane was considered the worst in 40 years . The hurricane produced 80 mph (130 km / h) winds and rough waves along the Delaware Capes , indicating hurricane @-@ force winds affected the state . It was one of only two storms on record to produce such winds in the state . Three barges and a steamer capsized in the Delaware Bay , while onshore , the winds of the hurricane destroyed the roofs of four houses in Laurel . The winds downed many trees and destroyed several chimneys near Lewes . In Philadelphia , Pennsylvania , winds reached 45 mph (72 km / h) , which damaged telegraph and phone lines , knocked down several trees , and damaged the roof of Pennsylvania Railroad 's Broad Street Station .

Described by the Weather Bureau as " a most unusual tempest , " the storm was one of only four to produce hurricane @-@ force winds in New Jersey . The storm 's strong surf destroyed several boats along the coastline , including 34 in Waretown . Less than 10 % of the people in Atlantic City evacuated , and after the storm , many people visited the city to observe the storm damage described in newspapers . High winds disrupted 800 telephone lines in Atlantic City , and most communications were cut from the Jersey Shore to the Philadelphia region . Initial damage reports were provided by trains , although there were severe transportation delays due to ongoing flooding . The disrupted communications sparked " wild rumors that the great resort had been entirely washed away , " according to the New York Times . Monetary damage in Atlantic City was estimated around \$ 1 million (1903 USD) . Atlantic City 's power was deliberately shut off to prevent accidents . In the city , the roof of one hotel and the porch of another were destroyed . Trees and awnings were damaged , and thousands of windows were damaged . The winds destroyed the roofs of an estimated 50 to 60 cottages . The surf damaged or destroyed most fishing piers and oceanfront pavilions in the Atlantic City area , with tons of debris dispersed across the beach . The strong winds , combined with heavy rainfall , resulted in one indirect fatality when a man , unable to see owing to the hurricane , drove into a train in Cape May . In Asbury Park , the storm wrecked the roofs of six hotels . High waves damaged the boardwalks at Belmar and Allenhurst . High winds heavily damaged fruit crops in Monmouth , Middlesex , and Hunterdon counties . Fruit trees were uprooted in Vineland , and in Flemington , about 75 % of apples and pears were lost . Damage across the state was estimated at \$ 8 million (1903 USD) ; the worst of the damage occurred in Atlantic City , though moderate damage extended from Cape May northward through Asbury Park .

In New York , the outer periphery of the storm produced 2 @. 4 inches (61 mm) of rain in Central Park , where dozens of trees were knocked down or damaged . High tides peaked at 6 @. 4 ft (2 @. 0 m) , which inundated Battery Park and made ferry passage difficult . Winds in New York City reached 65 mph (105 km / h) , reaching 70 mph (110 km / h) along the coast , with tropical storm force winds extending into Maine . The winds were the strongest in the city since August 1889 , lasting about four hours at its peak . Funneled by the streets and tall buildings of New York , the high winds swayed buildings , spires , and bridges , overturning wagons on the Brooklyn Bridge . The shape of the Flatiron Building tossed horse @-@ drawn carriages , and two people were injured when a wagon of furniture was overturned . The rains and winds knocked down signs

and awnings while wrecking dozens of windows , chimneys , and roofs , causing residents to evacuate buildings and damaging several storefronts . One woman was hospitalized after being struck by an airborne sign . The high amount of damage led to the greatest number of inspectors of the New York City Department of Buildings to determine which buildings were safe . In Brighton Beach , the roof of the Ocean Hotel was completely blown off , and a similar fate befell the top of the Steeplechase Tower in Coney Island resort area , which sustained considerable damage . In Brooklyn , church steeples were dislodged or blown off , and many homes in the borough were flooded or damaged . Construction work on the Williamsburg Bridge was halted during the storm . On Staten Island , the winds blew off the roof of a school . The hurricane also left businesses and the stock market quiet for the day , owing to the threat of blowing debris . Trees and signs were blown down in the New York suburbs . One person died in New York City due to the storm .

The high waves and winds caused the greatest marine damage in a decade around New York City . More than 100 boats were overturned or beached in Jamaica Bay , and another 150 boats were wrecked between Hell Gate and the west end of Coney Island . At least ten houseboats were damaged or sank , with boaters injured and requiring rescue . A man attempting to row ashore near Point O ' Woods required rescue amid strong winds . Passengers swam safely ashore after their boat capsized in Hell Gate . President Theodore Roosevelt directly experienced the effects of the hurricane while vacationing on the naval yacht Sylph along Long Island . Also on the yacht were Roosevelt 's wife , son , his secretary , several friends and members of the press association . The yacht experienced gusty winds and heavy rainfall , along with rough seas , and witnessed a boat capsizing in Hell Gate . Passengers left the deck of the yacht for safety while their belongings were secured . After the President was considered to be in danger , the yacht headed for land , and instead of embarking toward Ellis Island as originally planned , the yacht landed at Brooklyn Navy Yard . Farther north , high winds downed many trees along coastal Connecticut , which cut telegraph and telephone lines in Bridgeport . A boy was killed in Hartford after stepping onto a downed power line . Several boats were washed ashore along the Connecticut coast . Farther inland , winds disrupted power in Leicester and damaged crops .