

= Hurricane Able ( 1950 ) =

Hurricane Able was the first named tropical cyclone in the Atlantic hurricane database , and was also the first of six major hurricanes in the 1950 Atlantic hurricane season . Its development was confirmed on August 12 by the Hurricane Hunters , which is a group that intentionally flies into a hurricane for observations . Hurricane Able initially threatened to strike the Bahamas , but instead turned to the northwest and later to the northeast . As it neared the Outer Banks , Able reached peak winds of 125 miles per hour ( 201 km / h ) , equivalent to a modern @-@ day Category 3 hurricane on the Saffir @-@ Simpson hurricane wind scale . After brushing those islands and Cape Cod , Able moved ashore on Nova Scotia as a minimal hurricane . It later crossed Newfoundland and dissipated on August 24 .

The hurricane prompted standard precautions in the Bahamas and Florida , although it did not affect the region . In North Carolina , winds and waves brushed the coast , while around New York City , heavy rainfall caused some flooding . Along Cape Cod and Nantucket , Able produced winds up to 55 mph ( 90 km / h ) and high waves , and across New England there were nine traffic fatalities . The hurricane killed 2 people in Canada and caused over \$ 1 million in damage .

= = Meteorological history = =

The beginning of the 1950 Atlantic hurricane season was considered " remarkably quiet " by the U.S. Weather Bureau , with no noteworthy activity until early August . A Hurricane Hunters flight into an easterly wave on August 12 indicated a developing tropical storm east of the Lesser Antilles ; it was later given the name " Able " , which is the first name in the Joint Army / Navy Phonetic Alphabet . It moved steadily northwestward and reached hurricane status on August 14 , as it passed to the north of the Leeward Islands . The next day , Hurricane Able turned to the west and west @-@ southwest , due to a high pressure system to its north . On August 17 it attained major hurricane status , and by early on August 18 reconnaissance aircraft measured winds of 140 mph ( 225 km / h ) , though Atlantic hurricane reanalysis later determined that those winds were unrepresentative of the intensity . At the time , the storm was 350 miles ( 565 km ) in diameter .

Able was expected to continue to the west toward the Bahamas and Florida . It was the strongest hurricane to threaten the Bahamian capital , Nassau , since a hurricane in 1929 . The hurricane turned to the northwest , however , sparing the Bahamas from the strongest winds . On August 19 , Able turned to the north , and attained its peak intensity of 125 mph ( 201 km / h ) while doing so ; shortly before peak intensity , aircraft measured a central pressure of 953 millibars ( 28 @.@ 14 inHg ) , the lowest in the life of the storm . The next day Able accelerated to the northeast , after passing just offshore Cape Hatteras , North Carolina . Having maintained peak winds for 12 hours , Hurricane Able began to weaken on August 20 , and early the next day it moved quickly by Cape Cod . It produced winds of hurricane force in Nova Scotia before it moved ashore on August 21 near Goodwood with winds of 75 mph ( 121 km / h ) . Subsequently it deteriorated into an extratropical cyclone , and Able crossed Newfoundland before dissipating early on August 24 in the far northern Atlantic Ocean .

= = Impact and records = =

When Hurricane Able was expected to move through the Bahamas , people executed standard preparations such as securing windows and bringing ships to harbor . One cruise liner diverted its route from the Bahamas toward New York . In Florida , the U.S. Air Force made preliminary plans to move planes . Ultimately , the hurricane spared the region . Further north , the United States Weather Bureau issued northeast storm warnings from Morehead City , North Carolina to the Eastern Shore of Virginia . There , the hurricane ended up bringing light winds and rough waves . Moderate precipitation occurred along the North Carolina coast . In southern New England , Able dropped 3 ? 5 inches ( 75 ? 125 mm ) of rainfall , with a peak of 6 @.@ 89 inches ( 175 mm ) in Beechwood , Massachusetts . Flooding was reported in portions of New York City . The resulting

slick roads from the rains caused nine traffic fatalities across New England . The storm produced 55 mph ( 90 km / h ) gusts in Nantucket and Cape Cod , along with high tides and waves . Offshore , the waves damaged a freighter headed for Florida .

In Nova Scotia , Able produced hurricane force winds , the only land along its path to receive such winds ; a gust of 99 mph ( 160 km / h ) was reported in Halifax . The hurricane also dropped heavy rainfall , including over 4 @. @ 92 inches ( 125 mm ) in Annapolis Valley . Initially there were three fishing boats missing throughout the region , although two later returned to harbor . By August 22 , the third was still missing over the Grand Banks , which prompted a rescue team to search for the boat . Many other boats crashed against the coast , and two children died when their raft capsized . Two bridges and several roadways were washed out or flooded , and in Charlottetown , Prince Edward Island , floodwaters left roadways impassable . On land , Able produced heavy damage estimated at over \$ 1 million ( CAD ) , half of which in Annapolis Valley , and split between crops , communications , and fishing industries .

From 1950 through 1952 , names from the Joint Army / Navy Phonetic Alphabet were first used for storms in the North Atlantic . Able is the first name in the alphabet , and as such , Hurricane Able in 1950 was the first name officially to be used for an Atlantic hurricane . It was also the first of eight major hurricanes in the 1950 Atlantic hurricane season , which as of 2010 is still the record for the most major hurricanes in a season .