

= 1893 New York hurricane =

The 1893 New York hurricane , also known as the Midnight Storm , was a powerful and destructive tropical cyclone that struck the New York City area in August 1893 . First identified as a tropical storm on August 15 , over the central Atlantic Ocean , the hurricane moved northwestward for most of its course , ultimately peaking with maximum sustained winds of 115 mph ( 185 km / h ) and a minimum barometric pressure reading of 952 mbar ( hPa ; 28 @. @ 11 inHg ) . It turned due northward as it approached the U.S. East Coast and struck western Long Island on August 24 . It moved inland and quickly deteriorated , degenerating the next day .

The storm inflicted severe damage with storm tides as high as 30 ft ( 9 @. @ 1 m ) . Trees were brought down , houses were demolished , and Hog Island was largely washed away by the cyclone . Several areas suffered extensive effects from the hurricane , and at least 34 sailors lost their lives . The storm is regarded as one of the most severe hurricanes to strike the city .

= = Meteorological history = =

The system was first classified as a tropical storm while situated in the central Atlantic Ocean on August 15 , 1893 . It steadily intensified as it tracked generally toward the west and attained hurricane force . Gradually curving northwestward , the storm continued to gain power and , on August 18 , it achieved wind speeds corresponding to Category 2 intensity on the modern @-@ day Saffir @-@ Simpson Hurricane Scale . This scale was devised in 1971 to categorize tropical cyclones based on their maximum sustained winds . The storm is estimated to have maintained winds of approximately 100 mph ( 155 km / h ) for several days as it passed well to the north of the Lesser Antilles . As the hurricane turned more northerly still , approaching the United States , it strengthened to major hurricane intensity , Category 3 , on August 22 . At this point , it peaked in intensity with winds of 115 mph ( 185 km / h ) . The lowest known barometric pressure in relation to the storm was 952 mbar ( hPa ; 28 @. @ 11 inHg ) .

Less than a day later , the storm deteriorated to Category 2 strength . Cape Hatteras , North Carolina experienced the hurricane on the morning of August 23 while its center passed less than 100 mi ( 160 km ) offshore . Heading nearly due northward , the cyclone skimmed the New Jersey coastline , passing just east of Atlantic City , and weakened further to Category 1 status . On August 23 the storm was one of four hurricanes occurring simultaneously within the Atlantic Ocean . On August 24 the storm moved ashore on western Long Island , in the New York City area . At 1200 UTC that day , while centered just inland , its maximum winds were estimated to have been 85 mph ( 140 km / h ) . It progressed northward through New England , quickly weakening . It was briefly downgraded to a tropical storm before becoming extratropical . It dissipated fully on August 25 , near the mouth of the Saint Lawrence River .

= = Impact = =

Winds from the storm exceeded 50 mph ( 80 km / h ) at Atlantic City and New York , initially blowing from the northeast before shifting southwesterly . The hurricane wrought severe destruction , described by The New York Times on August 25 as " a mighty war of winds and a great tumbling of chimneys " . A 30 ft ( 9 @. @ 1 m ) storm surge impacted the shore , demolishing structures . The storm has been cited as an example of a noteworthy New York City tropical cyclone . The cyclone is known for largely destroying Hog Island , a developed island that existed south of the modern @-@ day Long Island coast . The island peaked in size during the 1870s at about 1 mi ( 1 @. @ 6 km ) long .

The worst of the damage was reportedly confined to a 50 mi ( 80 km ) area surrounding New York City . In a 24 @-@ hour period , 3 @. @ 82 in ( 97 mm ) of precipitation fell , breaking the daily rainfall record . Hundreds of thousands of dollars in losses accompanied the severe impact . Low @-@ lying areas of the city , particularly those near the coast , were flooded . Roofs and chimneys were ripped off buildings and windows were broken in many homes and businesses . In Central

Park , " More than a hundred noble trees were torn up by the roots , and branches were twisted off everywhere . " The park was devastated and thousands of dead birds fell to the ground after being washed out of , or drowned in , their nests . Groups of children gathered the birds and picked them up , with the apparent intention of selling them to restaurants . The storm took the lives of 34 sailors as vessels were blown ashore and men swept overboard . The tugboat Panther , towing two coal barges , was wrecked ; 17 crew members perished and three lived .

High winds brought down telegraph wires and left the city almost entirely cut off from communication with outside locations . At Coney Island , the storm completely destroyed many buildings , walkways , piers , and beach resorts . Brighton Beach was hit particularly hard . The raging seas swept inland , washing out tracks of the Marine Railway . Bathing houses were moved a great distance by the cyclone . Near the Sheepshead Bay , Emmons Avenue was heavily damaged . Further to the east , at Greenport , numerous yachts were wrecked and scattered . Corn crops on land were ruined and fruit trees lost their fruits .

At Brooklyn , still an independent city from New York , houses were dismantled and uprooted trees blocked streets . Damage was widespread throughout the area and flood waters reached waist @-@ high levels . The storm was the most severe in years at Jersey City , New Jersey , despite the fact that its damage was moderate . Trees were blown down and cellars filled with water there and in nearby areas , such as Hoboken .

Many of the same areas along the Eastern seaboard , including New Jersey and New York , already reeling from this storm , would be ravaged again less than a week later by the separate and even more destructive Sea Islands Hurricane that made landfall in Georgia on August 27 and then moved up the coast , causing extensive damage and casualties as far north as New England , before finally dissipating over eastern Canada on September 2 .