

= Hurricane Bridget (1971) =

Hurricane Bridget of June 1971 was one of the worst hurricanes to strike the Mexican city of Acapulco . It formed on June 14 as a tropical depression , which is a minimal tropical cyclone with winds less than gale force . However , it was soon upgraded to a tropical storm , and Bridget steadily intensified to become a hurricane on June 15 . After peaking at Category 2 intensity , it weakened to a tropical storm on June 17 , then made landfall in Mexico . Hours later , however , it turned offshore as a tropical depression . Bridget dissipated on June 20 after leaving heavy damage and 17 deaths in the Acapulco area .

= = Meteorological history = =

The origins of the hurricane were from a tropical wave that exited the coast of Africa on June 3 . Around four days later the system entered the Caribbean Sea , passing over the San Andres islands on June 12 . The area of convection , or thunderstorms , spread across Central America . A surface circulation developed offshore El Salvador , and the system formed into a tropical depression on June 14 . For much of the summer of 1971 , a large pool of anomalously warm water temperatures extended from Central America to the Gulf of California off the Mexican coast , reaching $89\text{ }^{\circ}\text{F}$ ($32\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$) . This allowed for steady intensification as it tracked through the Gulf of Tehuantepec .

Early on June 15 , a ship reported winds of 40 mph (65 km / h) and 13 ft (4 @ 0 m) seas , which prompted the Eastern Pacific Hurricane Center (EPHC) to upgrade the depression to Tropical Storm Bridget . The storm maintained a general northwest track toward the southwest Mexican coastline . It gradually intensified , and satellite images late on June 16 indicated that Bridget attained hurricane status about 55 mi (95 km) southwest of Puerto Ángel , Oaxaca . It quickly intensified as it neared the coast , reaching winds of 100 mph (155 km / h) just southwest of Acapulco coastline before weakening . Bridget paralleled the Mexican coastline just offshore before making landfall at 1200 UTC on June 17 , about 100 mi (160 km) southeast of Manzanillo , Colima . The hurricane rapidly weakened over the mountainous terrain , emerging into the Pacific Ocean as a tropical depression after being over land for only a few hours . Bridget turned westward as a weak tropical cyclone , eventually dissipating on June 20 to the south of the Baja California peninsula .

= = Preparations and impact = =

While passing to the southwest of Acapulco , Bridget produced heavy rainfall and strong wind gusts reaching 104 mph (167 km / h) . The winds damaged or destroyed many roofs across Acapulco , signs , and windows . Strong winds also downed trees and power lines , which left most of Acapulco without electricity . Along the coast , the hurricane produced high tides and waves which flooded low @-@ lying coastal areas with around 1 @ 5 ft (0 @ 46 m) of water . The high tides damaged coastal properties and destroyed 21 boats , including the flagship of the Admiral of the Mexican Navy . Debris @-@ clogged drains caused drainage facilities to exceed their capacities following the heavy rainfall . Overall , the storm killed 17 people in the region , and caused five additional injuries .

Damage in the area around Acapulco was estimated at around 500 million pesos (\$ 40 million USD) . This made it the worst hurricane to hit the city in at least 25 years . Where Bridget made its final landfall , no damage reports were available due to the sparse population of the area .