

= Hurricane Ella (1958) =

Hurricane Ella brought flooding to the Greater Antilles and Texas in September 1958 . The fifth named storm and third hurricane of the annual season , Ella developed from a tropical wave located just east of the Lesser Antilles on August 30 . Initially a tropical depression , it strengthened into Tropical Storm Ella six hours later . The system crossed the Leeward Islands and entered the Caribbean Sea late on August 30 . Ella headed westward and by August 31 , intensified into a Category 1 hurricane . Hours later , it strengthened into a Category 2 hurricane on the Saffir ? Simpson hurricane wind scale . The storm curved northwestward while south of Hispaniola and as a result , struck the Tiburon Peninsula of Haiti on September 1 . Flooding in that country killed 30 people in Aux Cayes and left 3 other missing . Additionally , thousands were left homeless , about one @-@ third of crops were washed out , and numerous cattle were killed .

After re @-@ emerging into the Caribbean Sea , Ella deepened further and peaked as 115 mph (185 km / h) Category 3 hurricane on September 2 , while it was making landfall near Santiago de Cuba , Cuba . Heavy rainfall lead to flooding , which in turn caused hundreds to flee their homes , and resulted in 5 fatalities . Hundreds of livestock drowned , and telephone and telegraph services were disrupted in many areas . The storm became disorganized while moving across the southern coast of Cuba and weakened to a tropical storm by later on September 2 . Ella reached the Gulf of Mexico on September 4 and briefly re @-@ strengthened . However , it began to weaken again while approaching the Gulf Coast of the United States . The storm made landfall as a weak tropical storm near Corpus Christi , Texas on September 6 . It rapidly weakened inland and dissipated later that day . Rainfall and rough surf caused both inland and coastal flooding in Texas . Offshore , the captain of a snapper boat fell overboard and went missing ; he was later presumed to have drowned .

= = Meteorological history = =

A tropical wave was first observed near 50 ° W on August 29 . Later that day , reconnaissance aircraft flight reported a wind shift and above average shower and thunderstorm activity , but no low @-@ level circulation . At 0600 UTC on August 30 , a tropical depression developed just east of the Lesser Antilles . Six hours later , the depression strengthened into Tropical Storm Ella . The storm moved through the Leeward Islands and entered the Caribbean Sea late on August 30 . A reconnaissance aircraft into Ella reported sustained winds between 55 and 60 mph (95 km / h) . It was around that time that the Weather Bureau Office in San Juan , Puerto Rico began issuing bulletins and advisories . Ella strengthened into a Category 1 hurricane at 1200 UTC on August 31 , six hours later , before becoming a Category 2 hurricane . On September 1 , Ella curved west @-@ northwestward , and by later that day , made landfall on the Tiburon Peninsula of Haiti with winds of 110 mph (175 km / h) . However , the storm was operationally thought to have remained offshore .

Ella re @-@ emerged into the Caribbean Sea on September 1 and immediately resumed strengthening . While becoming a Category 3 hurricane at 0000 UTC on September 2 , Ella attained its peak intensity with maximum sustained winds of 115 mph (185 km / h) and a minimum barometric pressure of 989 mbar (29 @.@ 2 inHg) . Around that time , the storm made landfall near Santiago de Cuba , Cuba at the same intensity . Rough terrain over the island caused Ella to weaken to a Category 1 hurricane on September 2 . Later that day , it further weakened to a tropical storm . The storm re @-@ strengthened to a 70 mph (110 km / h) before reaching the Gulf of Mexico on September 4 . Ella maintained this intensity for approximately 48 hours while moving west @-@ northwestward , but began to weaken again on September 6 . Hours later , the storm made landfall near Corpus Christi , Texas with winds of 45 mph (75 km / h) . It weakened back to a tropical depression and dissipated by late on September 6 .

= = Preparations and Impact = =

Wind gusts in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands were between 40 and 50 mph (64 and 80 km / h)

. Heavy rainfall in the former caused local flooding . Damage was minor in both locations , confined mostly to crops . In preparation for Ella on the island of Hispaniola , a hurricane warning was issued from Barahona , Dominican Republic , and along the Haitian coastline to Saint @-@ Marc . Ella brought heavy rains , peaking at 9 @.@ 63 in (245 mm) in Polo , Barahona . Damage from the resultant flooding in southwestern Dominican Republic reached \$ 100 @,@ 000 . Additionally , wind gusts up to 37 mph (60 km / h) were reported in Santo Domingo . Heavy precipitation in Haiti caused flash floods that killed 30 people near Aux Cayes , and three other people were listed as missing . As much as 5 to 6 ft (1 @.@ 5 to 1 @.@ 8 m) of water covered roads in low @-@ lying areas . A combination of strong winds and flooding also rendered thousands homeless . Damage to agriculture was heavy , with numerous cattle killed and about one @-@ third of crops washed out , mostly to bananas and sugar cane . There was no monetary damage estimate , though losses in Haiti were noted to have been " considerable " .

Flooding also occurred in Cuba . Hundreds were evacuated their homes in four different provinces in Cuba , including 400 peasant families in Oriente Province . Near Santiago de Cuba , 25 houses were swept away after the Bayamo River overflowed . In the same area , a woman and her four sons drowned due to the swollen river . Additionally , a body of a man was recovered near Santa Cruz del Sur . Hundreds of livestock drowned , and telephone and telegraph services were disrupted in many areas . Losses in Cuba were estimated to have reached \$ 100 @,@ 000 . Ella had a role in the Cuban Revolution as the government troops of Fulgencio Batista y Zaldívar stayed in their barracks during the storm while the rebels made progress under cover of Ella . Later , when the guerrillas heard about Hurricane Fifi on the radio , Che Guevara taught his illiterate comrades that entities like tropical cyclones are named in alphabetical order .

The outerbands of Ella produced gale force winds in the Florida Keys , causing damage mainly to antennas , fences , shrubbery , and signs . Winds on Stock Island damaged and overturned 4 trailers . Further north in Miami , a freighter was disabled and had to be towed in to port by the United States Coast Guard . Due to fears of a storm similar to Hurricane Audrey in the previous year , some residents evacuated southwestern Louisiana . An estimated 1 @,@ 500 fled inland as Ella approached , leaving only 100 people to ride out the storm . In Louisiana , squalls from Ella caused the collision of two ocean @-@ bound freighters along the Mississippi River near New Orleans . Impact elsewhere in Louisiana was limited to minor damage to rice crops in the southwestern portion of the state . On 35 oil platforms offshore of Houston , Texas , 1 @,@ 400 people were alerted about possible evacuations if Ella were to approach the area . Along the coast , there were evacuations in Indianola , Port Alto , Port O 'Connor , and Sabine Pass . Ella brought heavy rains to eastern and southern Texas , including 13 @.@ 1 in (330 mm) in Galveston . Precipitation brought minor flooding to low lying areas of the Bolivar Peninsula , Galveston Island , Kemah , La Marque , the Matagorda Peninsula , Seabrook , and Texas City . Ella also brought swells to the coast of Texas . A portion of Texas State Highway 87 was closed due to inundation between Sabine Pass and High Island . Further south , tidal flooding along Texas State Highway 316 caused the closure of the portion near Indianola . Offshore , a 65 ft (20 m) shrimp trawler sank during the storm , after being smashed against the rocks near Galveston . The crew fled to the life boats and were later rescued by a United States Coast Guard Patrol Vessel . The captain of the snapper boat E. W. Fowler went missing after he was washed overboard ; the man was later presumed to have drowned .