

= Hurricane Greta (1956) =

Hurricane Greta was an extremely large late @-@ season Atlantic hurricane in the 1956 Atlantic hurricane season . Originating from a tropical depression near Jamaica on October 30 , the system initially featured non @-@ tropical characteristics as it tracked northward . By November 2 , the system began producing gale @-@ force winds around the low pressure area ; however , winds near the center of circulation were calm . By November 3 , the system intensified into a tropical storm and was named Greta . Steadily strengthening , Greta attained hurricane intensity on November 4 , eventually reaching a peak intensity with 100 mph (155 km / h) winds . Shortly after , Greta began to gradually weaken as it tracked over cooler waters . The storm eventually became extratropical on November 7 over the central Atlantic . Although Greta did not directly impact land as a tropical storm or hurricane , it generated large swells that impacted numerous areas . One person was killed in Puerto Rico and coastal damages from the waves amounted to roughly \$ 3 @. @ 6 million (1956 USD) .

= = Meteorological history = =

Hurricane Greta originated out of a tropical disturbance in the Intertropical Convergence Zone near Jamaica on October 30 , 1956 . A Navy reconnaissance plane recorded sustained winds of 35 mph (55 km / h) and found an area of low pressure . Around this time , the system was classified as a tropical depression . Although a ship near the system discovered a cold @-@ core circulation ? a feature of non @-@ tropical cyclones ? it was classified as tropical . By October 31 , the depression passed near the western edge of Haiti and later crossed the eastern tip of Cuba before entering the Atlantic Ocean . By the afternoon of November 1 , the depression had moved through the central Bahamas and turned towards the northeast .

By this time , the central pressure of the depression had decreased to 998 mbar (hPa ; 29 @. @ 47 inHg) and gale @-@ force winds were recorded over a large area , and the system was upgraded to a tropical storm that morning . The system was compared to that of a Kona low , a large @-@ scale subtropical cyclone that forms near Hawaii . Early on November 2 , the storm turned northwest in response to an area of high pressure over the central Atlantic . Later that day , the first scientific mission into a hurricane with two planes took place when two research aircraft flew into Greta . During the day , an Air Force B @-@ 50 aircraft and NHRP B @-@ 47 high altitude jet flew into the storm . The storm executed a counter @-@ clockwise loop , ending on November 3 , during which time numerous reconnaissance missions were flown into the system . By this time , the storm had also begun a southeastward track .

Continuing to gradually intensify , Greta attained hurricane status on November 4 and later that day it attained Category 2 status on the modern day Saffir ? Simpson Hurricane Scale . After reaching this intensity , the hurricane turned northeastward and accelerated , although it did not intensify further . A reconnaissance mission around this time recorded a minimum pressure of 970 mbar (hPa ; 28 @. @ 64 inHg) .

Around the time it first reached peak intensity , Greta was an extraordinarily large hurricane , with the gale @-@ diameter of the storm extending roughly 1 @, @ 200 mi (1 @, @ 930 km) . After attaining its peak intensity , the storm began to move over cooler waters , resulting in the circulation becoming elongated , however it did not weaken over the next couple days . On the morning of November 6 , Greta transitioned into an exceptionally large and intense extratropical cyclone .

= = Preparations and impact = =

Although Greta did not directly track over land as a tropical storm or hurricane , the size of the system contributed to large waves , exceeding 20 ft (6 @. @ 1 m) in height over a large expanse of the Atlantic . Impacts from the storm were felt as far away as the eastern United States . The National Weather Bureau warned ships in the vicinity of the system to take precautions . St. Croix was nearly isolated and stressed into an emergency due to Greta after the storm 's swells destroyed

docks and prevented ships carrying food from reaching the island . Several light vessels were destroyed by Greta 's gale @-@ force winds and only schooners with little carrying capacity were able to make it to the island . Along the coast of Jacksonville , Florida alone , coastal structures sustained roughly \$ 1 @.@ 2 million (1956 USD ; \$ 9 @.@ 6 million 2009 USD) in damages . In Puerto Rico , waves up to 20 ft (6 @.@ 1 m) caused significant damage and resulted in the death of one person after he did not evacuate his home . Swells up to 25 ft (7 @.@ 6 m) were recorded in the Virgin Islands . In Guadeloupe , 80 % of the port installations were destroyed by rough seas . In all , damages from Greta amounted to roughly \$ 3 @.@ 6 million (1956 USD ; \$ 31 @.@ 3 million 2016 USD) .