

= 1941 Florida hurricane =

The 1941 Florida hurricane was a compact but strong tropical cyclone that affected the Bahamas , Florida , and the southeastern United States in October 1941 . The fifth known storm of the 1941 Atlantic hurricane season , it was first observed to the north of the Virgin Islands on October 3 . The storm tracked generally westward , reaching peak winds of 120 miles per hour (193 km / h) before passing through the Bahamas . After weakening somewhat , the storm later passed across southern Florida with winds of 100 mph (161 km / h) . The hurricane then emerged into the Gulf of Mexico as a tropical storm , but regained hurricane intensity and made another landfall along the Florida Panhandle . Turning northeast , it crossed Georgia and South Carolina , and entered the Atlantic Ocean on October 8 .

In advance of the storm , preparations were extensive ; residents boarded up homes and businesses , while evacuations were recommended in some coastal areas . In the Bahamas , where winds reached 104 mph (167 km / h) , the storm killed three people . The city of Nassau was struck particularly hard . In Florida , damage was relatively severe , and included the deaths of several people . High winds brought down trees and power lines , though the storm was characterized by highly unusual rainfall patterns . In the Everglades region , a storm surge flooded local streets . As the storm progressed northward , the city of Tallahassee suffered widespread power outages and damage to numerous vehicles . Throughout the state , the hurricane inflicted \$ 675 @, @ 000 USD (\$ 10 @. @ 9 million 2011 USD) in damage . The cyclone later killed one person in Georgia .

= = Meteorological history = =

On October 3 , the first indications of a tropical system were observed 300 miles (483 km) to the north of the Virgin Islands . A tropical storm is estimated to have been present late that day , though observations were very sparse near the cyclone . The next day , morning observations confirmed the presence of a circulation center , and soon afterward the cyclone underwent rapid intensification : it became a hurricane late that day , and 24 hours later , on October 5 , the storm reached a peak of 120 mph (193 km / h) ? equivalent to a modern @-@ day Category 3 hurricane on the Saffir @-@ Simpson hurricane wind scale . Shortly afterward , the smaller @-@ than @-@ average , fast @-@ moving cyclone tracked over Cat Island in the Bahamas , where a weather station indicated a pressure of 28 @. @ 48 inches of mercury (964 mb) inside the eye . The measurement coincided with light winds of 20 mph (32 km / h) , meaning it was not in the exact center of the eye , so a recent reanalysis found the central pressure to be somewhat lower , at 962 mb (28 @. @ 41 inHg) . After striking Cat Island , the cyclone began a weakening trend and passed south of New Providence , seat of the Bahamian capital Nassau , early on October 6 . At the time , the storm was still found to be a compact , well @-@ developed hurricane .

Later that day , it made landfall 13 mi (21 km) south of Miami in South Florida ; observers reported that the small eye produced calm conditions at Goulds , near Homestead . The storm contained peak winds of 100 mph (161 km / h) ? equivalent to low @-@ end Category 2 status ? and a radius of maximum wind just 10 mi (16 km) from the center . Originally , the Atlantic hurricane database (HURDAT) listed winds of 120 mph (193 km / h) at landfall in South Florida , but reanalysis determined that these winds occurred somewhat earlier , over the eastern Bahamas . Maintaining a small size , the hurricane moved through the Everglades , passing between Everglades City and Fort Myers . The storm entered the Gulf of Mexico as a strong tropical storm and broadly curved toward the northwest , tracking offshore along the west coast of Florida . It remained over open waters and recovered its intensity until the following day , when it made landfall at Carrabelle with winds of 90 mph (145 km / h) , equivalent to a high @-@ end Category 1 hurricane , and a measured central pressure of 29 inHg (982 mb) . The cyclone still exhibited a small radius of outermost closed isobar but had reduced its forward speed .

Turning north and then northeast , the storm moved beyond Tallahassee and entered Georgia . It weakened as it progressed inland , and after passing through South Carolina , the storm re @-@ emerged into the Atlantic Ocean on October 8 with winds of 40 mph (64 km / h) . While over water ,

the storm re @-@ intensified , reaching peak winds of 60 mph (97 km / h) on October 9 . The cyclone kept its intensity for two more days as it moved toward the southeast , executed a small loop , and turned generally toward the east @-@ northeast , passing south of Bermuda on the night of October 11 . The storm became extratropical on October 12 , fully dissipating the next day .

= = Preparations = =

During the days before the storm 's arrival in Florida , the Weather Bureau issued 40 tropical cyclone @-@ related advisories . Extensive preparations that resulted in a low loss of life and property were attributed to the warnings . In southern Florida , residents boarded up homes and businesses , and sought shelter in large structures . Hurricane parties took place in bars and hotel rooms , while some residents sat in hotel lobbies , listening to radio broadcasts . In Miami , stores sold out of various essentials ? including bread and butter ? as people prepared for the storm . Evacuations were recommended from Homestead to Key West , and three Coast Guard planes dropped warnings to boats near the Florida coast . The Civilian Conservation Corps also evacuated 150 of its workers from West Summerland Key to Key West .

Local chapters of the American Red Cross organized first @-@ aid stations and shelters ; transportation was provided to those who were unable to reach the shelters . In advance of the storm , Pan American World Airways suspended flights departing from and arriving at Miami and redirected them to Havana , Cuba . The United States Navy also prepared its bases in the Florida Keys for the arrival of the storm by securing boats to piers and canceling all shore leaves , while the United States Army Air Corps moved its planes from Morrison Field to a safer location inland . The state of Florida stockpiled food for those affected by the storm , establishing depots in West Palm Beach , Miami , and Fort Myers , and the Governor of Florida , Spessard Holland , ordered state agencies to prepare for relief work . A detachment of officers from the Florida Highway Patrol was sent to Miami and patrolled along highways to provide gasoline to motorists evacuating the storm . The state also opened all of the school buildings in Dade County as emergency shelters .

= = Impact = =

= = = Bahamas = = =

In the Bahamas , where considerable property damage was reported , the storm killed three people . Winds in Nassau reached 104 mph (167 km / h) . City streets were filled with debris , including a schooner , four sloops , and numerous other boats deposited by the winds on Nassau 's Bay Street . The winds knocked down trees and power lines , resulting in fires and extensive power outages . Along the coast , boats were ripped from their moorings and smashed against seawalls . No casualties occurred in the city . A schooner , the Goodwill II , sank during the storm . Properties and gardens received significant damage . On Cat Island , the storm produced 1 @.@ 62 inches (40 mm) of rainfall .

Two men , Christopher Whymss and Salathiel Johnson drowned near Andros Island after trying to reach shore from a drowning schooner . One man , Samuel Seymour , was killed on Cat Island after his home was toppled by the wind , and several other injuries were reported on the island . " Most homes , all churches , and most public buildings " on Cat Island were also destroyed by the storm . The storm also downed telephone lines and destroyed crops . As a result , the Duke of Windsor , governor @-@ general of the Bahamas , cabled to the Red Cross for assistance , and a ship carrying " food , clothing , building materials and seeds " was quickly dispatched to Cat Island . According to a survey conducted a few days after the hurricane , 300 families on Cat Island were left homeless as were 120 families on Watlings Island . To aid these families , the Duke of Windsor announced on October 7 that he would establish a relief fund for those affected by the storm .

= = = United States = = =

On making landfall , the storm generated high winds at the Fowey Rocks Light , although they were below hurricane force . A peak wind gust of 123 mph (198 km / h) was reported at Dinner Key with sustained winds up to 90 mph (145 km / h) . Unusually little rain fell in association with the storm ; 0 @. @ 35 inches (8 @. @ 9 mm) of precipitation was reported in Miami , while locations closer to the center of the cyclone received less than 1 inch (25 mm) . The light rainfall was evident throughout southeastern Florida , except for the Florida Keys , where thunderstorms enhanced the precipitation . This aspect of the storm was considered highly unusual , as most tropical cyclones are characterized by heavy rainfall . According to one study , the unusual precipitation patterns can be attributed to one of two possible conditions : " the air might have been too dry " , or " the horizontal convergence of air might have been insufficient to produce a large enough transport of moisture upwards " . The intense winds blew salt water several miles inland ; due to the lack of rainfall , the salt burned vegetation throughout the region . The high winds brought down trees and utility poles and shattered some windows in Dade County .

No deaths were reported in the region , although minor damage was inflicted on communication lines and homes and several injuries were reported . Several communities lost electricity . Some hospitals were left without power , forcing the delivery of six babies by candlelight . The storm injured seven people in the Miami area , including five firefighters who were injured " as they fought a blaze fanned by the high winds " of the hurricane . As the hurricane tracked inland , it passed over the Everglades , producing winds of 65 mph (105 km / h) at Everglades City . Along the southern shore of Lake Okeechobee , winds gusted to 60 mph (97 km / h) ; barometric pressure there fell to 995 mb (29 @. @ 38 inHg) . Storm surge in the region triggered foot @- @ deep flooding of some streets in local towns . Docks and fishing equipment suffered extensive damage in the region . As the hurricane passed offshore , winds reached 60 mph (97 km / h) near Tampa Bay . The storm also grounded a fishing schooner from Cuba off the coast of Collier County , Florida . Although no one was injured , members of the schooner crew were detained by immigration authorities .

After emerging into the Gulf of Mexico , the hurricane made another landfall at Carrabelle on the Florida Panhandle . Winds in the region were estimated at 75 mph (121 km / h) , and tides ran at up to 8 feet (2 @. @ 4 m) above normal . In Tallahassee , the winds downed trees and power lines and scattered debris , rendering roads impassable . The Tallahassee Democrat reported that " at the height of the wind several hundred Tallahasseeans were seen rushing into their yard to gather pecans which were knocked down by the swaying trees " . The storm destroyed vehicles throughout the region ; replacement automobiles were sparse , as assembly plants were producing cars for the Army . Despite a lack of electricity due to the winds , the Tallahassee Democrat managed to publish 6 @, @ 000 copies of a special storm edition . Initial fears of severe damage along the coast prompted rescue crews to push toward St. Marks ; however , upon arrival a group of local residents convinced the crew that their assistance was unnecessary . Considerable crop and property damage was reported ; total losses in the state were estimated at \$ 675 @, @ 000 USD (\$ 10 @. @ 9 million in today 's terms) . Seven injuries were reported , and five men drowned in the storm tide at a fishing net drying yard in Panacea , Florida . Initially , there were reports of 20 missing fishermen . Thirty @- @ four Cuban fishermen were also trapped off the coast near Carrabelle , Florida , when ten boats ran aground and were damaged after the storm surge subsided . The fishermen 's supply of food was destroyed by salt water , but they were rescued by the Coast Guard cutter Nemesis without any injuries . After their rescue , they reported that five men had drowned in a small boat nearby .

The storm was still producing high wind gusts as it tracked into Georgia , killing one person and leaving a trail of considerable damage as far north as Albany . The single death in Georgia was a 16 @- @ year @- @ old girl , Frances Hester , of Pavo , Georgia , who died after tripping over an electrical wire downed by the storm . Up to 6 inches (150 mm) of rain fell within the state . The storm passed through South Carolina with little damage . Throughout parts of the southeastern United States , rainfall associated with the hurricane was unusually light and unevenly distributed along its track .