

= Hurricane Fox (1952) =

Hurricane Fox was the strongest and deadliest tropical cyclone of the below average 1952 Atlantic hurricane season . The seventh tropical storm , sixth Atlantic hurricane , and the third major hurricane of the season , Fox was a small and intense Caribbean storm that developed northwest of Cartagena , Colombia , in the southern Caribbean Sea . It moved steadily northwest , intensifying to a tropical storm on October 21 . The next day , it rapidly strengthened into a hurricane and turned north . The cyclone attained peak winds of 150 mph (240 km / h) as it struck Cayo Guano del Este off the coast of Cienfuegos . Fox made landfall on Cuba at maximum intensity , producing peak gusts of 170 ? 180 mph (275 ? 290 km / h) . It weakened over land , but it re @-@ strengthened as it turned east over the Bahamas . On October 26 , it weakened and took an erratic path , dissipating west @-@ southwest of Bermuda on October 28 .

Hurricane Fox was the second most intense hurricane to strike Cuba until Hurricane Michelle in the 2001 Atlantic hurricane season . It was originally believed to have been the second Category 4 hurricane in Cuba prior to the Atlantic hurricane reanalysis . At the time , the cyclone produced the fourth lowest pressure in a landfalling Cuban hurricane ; only the 1917 , 1924 , and 1932 hurricanes were more intense . Hurricane Fox killed at least 40 people across the island , causing severe crop damages in rural areas . The hurricane also ruined 30 percent of the tomato crops on Eleuthera in the Bahamas . Across the archipelago , Fox produced wind gusts in excess of 110 mph (175 km / h) . Total damages reached \$ 10 million in Cuba . Fox was the second hurricane to hit land during the season , after Hurricane Able struck South Carolina .

= = Meteorological history = =

On October 20 , a tropical depression formed in the Caribbean Sea , 170 miles (270 km) northwest of Cartagena , Colombia . Fox is believed to have developed from a low pressure area in the Intertropical Convergence Zone , though it was not operationally detected until October 21 . The system steadily advanced northwest and it gradually intensified . On October 21 , a reconnaissance mission flew into the system , reporting sustained winds in excess of 40 mph (65 km / h) . At the time , the system is estimated to have strengthened to Tropical Storm Fox . The cyclone continued to deepen , and it reached the equivalent of a Category 1 hurricane on the Saffir @-@ Simpson Hurricane Scale , 120 miles (200 km) southeast of the Swan Islands , Honduras . The hurricane rapidly intensified and turned north on October 23 , strengthening to attain winds which correspond to a modern @-@ day major hurricane , a storm of Category 3 status or higher on the Saffir @-@ Simpson Hurricane Scale . Late on October 24 , the cyclone struck the small island of Cayo Guano del Estes in the Archipelago de los Canarreos , south of Cienfuegos . Maximum sustained winds were near 150 mph (240 km / h) , and the island 's weather station recorded a minimum pressure of 934 mbar (27 @.@ 59 inHg) . The cyclone crossed the mainland coast of Cuba west of Cienfuegos , and it weakened as it crossed the island .

Early on October 25 , Hurricane Fox entered the Atlantic Ocean . It crossed central Andros and turned east across the Bahamas . On October 26 , the hurricane briefly re @-@ intensified as it crossed Cat Island . The center became ill @-@ defined , and the cyclone quickly weakened . It turned north and then took an erratic northeast turn as it weakened to a tropical storm on October 27 . The system gained extratropical characteristics as it merged with a polar frontal boundary , and it dissipated west @-@ southwest of Bermuda on October 28 .

= = Preparations = =

Advisories , along with coordination between the National Observatory at Havana and U.S. Weather Bureau , were credited for the reduced deaths in Cuba . Weather observations were also readily available from Cuban meteorological stations . On October 25 , the cyclone 's hurricane force winds were expected to remain off the Florida east coast , although gale @-@ force winds were anticipated from the Florida Keys to Palm Beach , Florida . Accordingly , storm warnings were

issued from Key West , Florida to Vero Beach , Florida . Military aircraft were transported to safer locations , while watercraft were stored in harbors and rivers . Hotels and resorts were boarded up on the barrier islands . The Bahamas received warnings well in advance of the hurricane . The hurricane turned quickly to the east , which reduced the threat to Bimini , Cat Cay , Grand Bahama , and the Abaco Islands .

= = Impact = =

An aircraft flight into the storm experienced severe turbulence , and wind driven rain reportedly stripped paint from the plane 's surfaces .

As a result of the storm , 70 people were injured in Cuba . Severe damage to properties and crops occurred in rural areas . In Zulueta , 30 structures were destroyed , while a Japanese freighter was washed ashore on the reefs near Cayo Breton . The crew survived , though another ship was disabled during the storm . The fringes of the storm produced heavy rainfall in Cuba , flooding low areas and causing several rivers to overflow their banks . Strong winds uprooted large trees in Santa Isabel , and winds of 100 mph (155 km / h) were reported in the city of Cienfuegos . In Aguada de Pasajeros , 600 buildings were demolished , while 36 of 261 sugar mills across the island were damaged by Hurricane Fox . In all , Hurricane Fox killed 40 people in Cuba and caused \$ 10 million in damages .

The cyclone produced peak winds of 50 mph (85 km / h) in Nassau , Bahamas , causing no reported damage . Crops were damaged by high winds and heavy precipitation on Eleuthera . About 30 percent of the tomato crops were destroyed during the storm . A man who attempted to secretly seed and weaken the storm was missing and presumed dead after his plane disappeared off Miami , Florida . Multiple searches by the Coast Guard were unsuccessful .

In the early 1950s , Atlantic tropical cyclones were named via the Joint Army / Navy Phonetic Alphabet . Hurricane Fox of 1952 was the final Atlantic tropical cyclone to be designated with this naming system , and a female list of tropical cyclone names was utilized in the 1953 Atlantic hurricane season . After the stronger 1917 Pinar del Río hurricane , Hurricane Fox was Cuba 's second most intense landfall until Hurricane Michelle struck the island in 2001 . Originally , the 1917 hurricane was believed to have been a Category 3 hurricane prior to the Atlantic hurricane reanalysis , which made Fox the second Category 4 landfall after the 1932 Cuba Hurricane . At the time , Fox was the fourth most intense hurricane to strike Cuba in terms of atmospheric pressure ; only the 1917 , 1924 , and 1932 storms were stronger at one point in their life spans .