

= 1857 Atlantic hurricane season =

The 1857 Atlantic hurricane season was the earliest season documented by HURDAT ? the official Atlantic hurricane database ? to feature no major hurricane . A total of four tropical cyclones were observed during the season , three of which strengthened into hurricanes . However , in the absence of modern satellite and other remote @-@ sensing technologies , only storms that affected populated land areas or encountered ships at sea are known , so the actual total could be higher . An undercount bias of zero to six tropical cyclones per year between 1851 and 1885 has been estimated . Additionally , documentation by Jose Fernandez @-@ Partagas and Henry Diaz included a fifth tropical cyclone near Port Isabel , Texas ; this storm has since been removed from HURDAT as it was likely the same system as the fourth tropical cyclone .

The first storm was tracked beginning on June 30 offshore North Carolina . It moved eastward and was last noted on the following day . However , no tropical cyclones were reported in the remainder of July or August . Activity resume when another tropical storm was located southeast of the Bahamas on September 6 . It intensified into a hurricane before making landfall in North Carolina and was last noted over the north Atlantic Ocean on September 17 . The SS Central America sank offshore , drowning 424 passengers and crew members . Another hurricane may have existed east of South Carolina between September 22 and October 26 , though little information is available . The final documented tropical cyclone was initially observed east of Lesser Antilles on September 24 . It traversed the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico , striking the Yucatán Peninsula and later Port Isabel , Texas . The storm dissipated on September 30 . In Texas , damage was reported in several towns near the mouth of the Rio Grande River .

The season 's activity was reflected with a low accumulated cyclone energy ( ACE ) rating of 43 . ACE is , broadly speaking , a measure of the power of the hurricane multiplied by the length of time it existed , so storms that last a long time , as well as particularly strong hurricanes , have high ACEs . ACE is only calculated for full advisories on tropical systems at or exceeding 34 knots ( 39 mph , 63 km / h ) or tropical storm strength .

= = Storms = =

= = = Tropical Storm One = = =

The ship Star of the South experienced heavy gales offshore the East Coast of the United States on June 30 . HURDAT lists the first tropical cyclone of the season beginning at 0000 UTC , while located about 100 miles ( 160 km ) southeast of Cape Hatteras , North Carolina . The storm moved slightly north of due east with winds of 60 mph ( 95 km / h ) . It was last noted about 265 miles ( 425 km ) north @-@ northwest of Bermuda by the bark Virginia late on July 1 .

= = = Hurricane Two = = =

A tropical storm was first observed east of the Bahamas on September 6 . It moved slowly northwestward towards the coast of the United States and attained hurricane strength early on September 9 . The cyclone continued travelling northwest along the US coast , becoming a Category 2 hurricane whilst off the coast of Georgia on September 11 . On September 13 the cyclone made landfall near Wilmington , North Carolina , but then quickly weakened to a tropical storm and turned eastward into the Atlantic on September 14 . Throughout September 15 , whilst over water , the storm regained hurricane strength and continued northward before becoming extratropical in the mid @-@ Atlantic on September 17 .

The hurricane caused much coastal damage particularly in the Cape Hatteras area during September 9 and September 10 and then to other parts of the North Carolina coast . Flooding was reported at New Bern . Considerable wind damage also occurred . An article from the Wilmington Journal reported that , " It looked as though everything that could be blown down , was down .

Fences were prostrated in all directions , and the streets filled with the limbs and bodies of trees up @-@ rooted or twisted off . " . Several ships were caught in rough seas of the East Coast of the United States . The Norfolk was abandoned in pieces ten miles south of Chincoteague early on the morning of September 14 . Further south , on September 11 , the hurricane struck the steamer Central America which sprung a leak and eventually sunk on the night of September 12 with the loss of 424 passengers and crew . Also on board the ship were 30 @,@ 000 pounds of gold , the loss of which contributed to the financial Panic of 1857 .

= = = Hurricane Three = = =

Based on reports bark Aeronaut and the schooner Alabama indicating a severe gale , Partagas and Diaz identified a Category 1 hurricane about 405 miles ( 650 km ) east of Charleston , South Carolina between September 22 and September 26 . Sustained wind speeds of 80 mph ( 130 km / h ) were observed . No evidence was found for a storm track so the hurricane was assigned a stationary position , at latitude 32 @.@ 5 ° N , 3 @.@ 5 ° W. Among the ships which encountered the hurricane was the brig Jerome Knight , which sprung a leak and sunk on the night of September 22 .

= = = Hurricane Four = = =

The final tropical cyclone was first observed at 0000 UTC on September 24 , while located about 420 miles ( 680 km ) east of Guadeloupe . Initially a tropical storm , it strengthened slightly before crossing the Leeward Islands on September 25 . In Guadeloupe , several ships at the port in Basseterre were swept out to sea . Continuing eastward , the storm soon entered the Caribbean Sea . Early on September 26 , the system strengthened into a hurricane . By September 28 , it was west of the Cayman Islands and had reached Category 2 strength . The storm weakened to a tropical storm after passing Cancun early on September 29 and impacted the Gulf coastline , near the United States ? Mexico border , at that strength the next day before dissipating . At Port Isabel , Texas , several hundred homes were swept away , and several towns near the mouth of the Rio Grande also sustained damage .