

= Hurricane Anna (1961) =

Hurricane Anna impacted Central America and the Windward Islands in July 1961 . The first tropical cyclone and first hurricane of the hurricane season , Anna developed on July 20 from an easterly wave located in the Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) over the Windward Islands . Initially a tropical storm , it moved westward across the Caribbean Sea . Favorable environmental conditions allowed Anna to reach hurricane intensity late on July 20 . Early on the following day , the storm strengthened into a Category 2 hurricane on the modern @-@ day Saffir ? Simpson hurricane wind scale . Intensification continued , and later on July 21 , Anna became a major hurricane , upon reaching Category 3 intensity . After attaining peak intensity on July 22 , the hurricane slightly weakened while brushing the northern coast of Honduras . Further weakening occurred ; when Anna made landfall in landfall in Belize (then known as British Honduras) on July 24 , winds decreased to 80 mph (130 km / h) . Anna rapidly weakened over land and dissipated later that day .

As a developing tropical cyclone over the Leeward Islands , Anna produced strong winds over Grenada , though damage was limited to some crops , trees , and telephone poles . Other islands experienced gusty winds , but no damage . Passing just north of Venezuela , the hurricane produced strong winds over the country , peaking as high as 70 mph (115 km / h) . Strong winds caused widespread damage in northern Honduras . Throughout the country , at least 36 homes were destroyed and 228 were damaged . Severe damage in the Gracias a Dios Department left hundreds of people homeless . Additionally , high winds toppled approximately 5 @,@ 000 coconut trees . Overall , Anna caused a fatality and \$ 300 @,@ 000 in damage (1961 USD) , primarily in Central America .

= = Meteorological history = =

The origins of Hurricane Anna were likely from an easterly wave located over Africa . On July 16 , Television Infrared Observation Satellite (TIROS) imagery showed a cloud mass situated about 1 @,@ 020 miles (1 @,@ 640 km) west @-@ southwest of the southernmost islands of Cape Verde . The existence of an easterly wave was not confirmed by United States Navy reconnaissance aircraft and ship reports until the following day , at which time the system was located over 445 miles (715 km) east of Antigua . Although no circulation existed while the wave approached the Windward Islands , significant amounts of deep convection was associated with the system and located near the Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) . Early on July 20 , ship reports indicated a developing circulation between Grenada and Trinidad ; squalls on the former island produced wind gusts as strong as 50 mph (80 km / h) . According to HURDAT ? the North Atlantic hurricane database ? the system developed into Tropical Storm Anna at 0000 UTC on July 20 , as confirmed by a reconnaissance aircraft flight .

Situated about 25 miles (40 km) east @-@ northeast of Tobago with an initial wind speed of 40 mph (65 km / h) , Anna immediately began to strengthen while moving slightly north of due west . The first advisory on Anna , issued at 1330 UTC on July 20 , reported sustained winds of 60 mph (95 km / h) . Later that day , the storm was upgraded to a hurricane after a reconnaissance aircraft reported hurricane @-@ force winds . Anna then deepened more steadily , becoming a Category 2 hurricane early on July 21 . Later that day , the storm became a major hurricane by 1800 UTC , after reaching Category 3 hurricane intensity . At 1200 UTC on July 22 , Anna attained its peak intensity with maximum sustained winds of 115 mph (185 km / h) and a minimum barometric pressure of 976 mbar (28 @.@ 8 inHg) . Early on July 23 , Anna weakened to a Category 2 hurricane while beginning to brush the northern coast of Honduras . Weakening continued , and by early on July 24 , the storm deteriorated to a Category 1 hurricane . Around 1200 UTC , Anna made landfall in a rural area of Stann Creek District , Belize with winds of 80 mph (130 km / h) . Late on July 24 , the system weakened to a tropical storm and then dissipated .

= = Preparations = =

The United States Weather Bureau issued tropical cyclone watches and warnings for Venezuela , Curaçao , Bonaire and Aruba . In Jamaica , meteorologists forecast that the storm would bypass the island to the south without causing any effects . As Anna continued westward , it was predicted to make landfall in either northern Nicaragua or southeastern Honduras . Residents in those countries were advised to take precautions ahead of the storm . Central Americans residing along Gulf of Honduras were also warned about 10 feet (3 @. @ 0 m) tides and strong winds . As the storm neared Honduras , small boats and other water craft were advised to remain in port . Additionally , a hurricane watch was posted for the Swan Islands . In Belize , the threat of the storm forced 100 residents to evacuate their homes , while numerous businesses were closed down . At Belize Harbor , many ships and boats were moved upstream inland . The hurricane was also forecast to bring heavy rainfall to the mountainous areas of Belize , causing a concern for flash flooding . Additionally , Belize 's Church Welfare Service began to ship clothing and other materials in anticipation of the hurricane .

= = Impact = =

In Grenada , Anna produced wind gusts of 50 mph (80 km / h) . Damage from the storm 's impact on Grenada was limited to banana crops , trees , and telephone poles . Winds were light on Barbados and Saint Lucia , reaching only 29 mph (47 km / h) on both islands . Damage on Trinidad was minor . In northern Venezuela and the ABC Islands , the storm produced winds of 50 ? 70 mph (80 ? 113 km / h) in Curaçao , Los Hermanos and La Blanquilla ; A weather station in Aruba reported winds of 50 mph (80 km / h) .

In Honduras , damage from Anna was moderate and limited to the Atlantic coast . A weather station in Tela recorded rainfall of 0 @. @ 29 ? 1 @. @ 5 inches (7 @. @ 3 ? 25 @. @ 4 mm) over a two @- @ day period , and another station in Puerto Cortés measured 2 inches (51 mm) . In Plaplaya , the storm damaged 215 homes . In Trujillo , a number of buildings suffered damage . At Limón , nine houses were destroyed and eighteen more were left uninhabitable . Serious damage also occurred in Gracias a Dios Department , where hundreds of people were left homeless . On the Bay Islands , nine houses were demolished and thirteen suffered damage . High winds toppled about 5 @, @ 000 coconut trees on Útila . Damage from Anna in Honduras amounted to \$ 300 @, @ 000 . The hurricane killed one person and injured 12 others , and victims required food and medical aid in Anna 's wake . In Belize , Anna produced waves 7 ? 10 ft (2 @. @ 1 ? 3 m) and gusty winds . Though unspecific , there were reports of considerable damage in the country .