

= 1955 Atlantic hurricane season =

The 1955 Atlantic hurricane season was , at the time , the costliest season ever recorded . The hurricane season officially began on June 15 , 1955 , and ended on November 15 , 1955 . It was slightly above average , with 13 recorded tropical cyclones . The first storm , Alice , had persisted since December 30 , 1954 . Alice caused relatively minor impact as it tracked through the Lesser Antilles and eastern Caribbean Sea in early January . Tropical Storm Brenda caused two deaths and minor damage along the Gulf Coast of the United States in early August . The quick succession of Hurricanes Connie and Diane caused significant flooding in the Northeastern United States , with nearly \$ 1 billion (1955 USD) in losses and at least 232 fatalities . The next three storms ? Hurricanes Edith and Flora and Tropical Storm Five ? caused very minor or no impact . In early August , Hurricane Gladys caused severe localized flooding in Mexico , primarily in Mexico City . Additionally , an offshoot of Gladys inflicted minor impact in Texas .

Hurricane Hilda struck the Greater Antilles and then Mexico . It was attributed to at least 304 deaths and \$ 120 million in losses . In mid @-@ September , Hurricane Ione struck eastern North Carolina and contributed the flooding from Connie and Diane , resulting in seven fatalities and \$ 88 million in damage . Later that month , Hurricane Janet , which peaked as a Category 5 hurricane , lashed several countries adjacent to the Caribbean Sea , as well as Mexico and British Honduras . Janet resulted in \$ 53 @. @ 8 million in damage and at least 716 deaths . An unnamed tropical storm in the month of October did not impact land . Hurricane Katie , the final storm , caused minor damage in a sparsely populated area of Hispaniola , totaling to at least \$ 200 @, @ 000 ; 7 fatalities were also reported . Collectively , the storms caused 1518 deaths and \$ 1 @. @ 2 billion in losses , making it the costliest season at the time . A record number of names ? four ? were retired following the season , which was tied by 1995 and 2004 , and then surpassed in 2005 (when five names were retired) .

= = Season summary = =

On April 11 , 1955 , which was prior to the start of the season , Gordon Dunn was promoted to the chief meteorologist of the Miami Hurricane Warning Office . Dunn was replacing Grady Norton , who died from a stroke while forecasting Hurricane Hazel of the previous season . In early June , the Hurricane Hunters received new reconnaissance aircraft , which contained the latest radar and electronic equipment , at the time . Later that month , shortly before the start of the 1955 season , a bill was proposed in the United States Senate to provide funding for 55 new radar stations along the East Coast of the United States . After the United States House of Representatives passed a bill allotting \$ 5 million , the Senate disputed about possibly increasing the funding two @-@ fold to \$ 10 million . Eventually , the radars were installed , starting in July 1955 . After the devastating storms of the season , particularly Connie and Diane , a United States Government organization with the propose of monitoring tropical cyclones was established in 1956 with \$ 500 @, @ 000 in funding ; it later became the modern @-@ day National Hurricane Center .

The Atlantic hurricane season officially began on June 15 , 1955 . It was an above average season in which 13 tropical cyclones formed . In a typical season , about nine tropical storms develop , of which five strengthen to hurricane strength . All thirteen depressions attained tropical storm status , and eleven of these attained hurricane status . Six hurricanes further intensified into major hurricanes . The season was above average most likely because of an strong , ongoing La Niña . Hurricane Alice developed in late December 1954 , but persisted into January 1955 , and was operationally analysed to have developed in the latter . Within the official hurricane season bounds , tropical cyclogenesis did not occur until July 31 , with the development of Tropical Storm Brenda . However , during the month of August , four tropical cyclones formed ? including Connie , Diane , Edith , and an unnamed tropical storm . Five additional tropical cyclones ? Flora , Gladys , Hilda , Ione , and Janet ? all developed in September . Tropical cyclogenesis briefly halted until an unnamed tropical storm formed on October 10 . The final storm of the season , Katie , dissipated on October 19 , almost a month before the official end of hurricane season on November 15 . Eight

hurricanes and two tropical storms made landfall during the season and caused 1 @, @ 603 deaths and \$ 1 @. @ 1 billion in damage .

The season 's activity was reflected with an accumulated cyclone energy (ACE) rating of 199 , which was above the 1950 @-@ 2000 average of 96 @. @ 1 . 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 . It is only calculated for full advisories on tropical cyclones with winds exceeding 39 mph (63 km / h) , which is tropical storm strength .

= = Storms = =

= = = Hurricane Alice (1954) = = =

On January 1 , there was already a tropical cyclone located in the central Atlantic Ocean , having developed on December 30 of the previous year . Operationally it was first observed as a hurricane on January 1 , which resulted in it being named Alice . The hurricane passed through the Leeward Islands on January 2 . Alice reached peak winds of 80 mph (130 km / h) before encountering cold air and turning to the southeast . It dissipated on January 6 over the southeastern Caribbean Sea . Alice produced heavy rainfall and moderately strong winds across several islands along its path . Saba and Anguilla were affected the most , with total damage amounting to \$ 623 @, @ 500 . Operationally , lack of definitive data prevented the U.S. Weather Bureau from declaring the system a hurricane until January 2 . It received the name Alice in early 1955 , though re @-@ analysis of the data supported extending its track to the previous year , resulting in two tropical cyclones of the same name in one season . It was one of only two storms to span two calendar years , along with Tropical Storm Zeta in 2005 and 2006 .

= = = Tropical Storm Brenda = = =

Tropical Storm Brenda developed in the north @-@ central Gulf of Mexico at 0600 UTC on July 31 . During the next 24 hours , the storm strengthened rapidly and attained its maximum sustain wind speed of 70 mph (110 km / h) early on August 1 (although it is possible it briefly reached hurricane intensity) . Later that day , Brenda made landfall east of New Orleans , Louisiana at the same intensity . The storm steadily weakened inland and by August 2 , it was downgraded to a tropical depression . Early on August 3 , Brenda dissipated while located over eastern Texas .

Between Pensacola , Florida and Lake Charles , Louisiana , rainfall totals were generally about 4 inches (100 mm) ; flooding , if any , was insignificant . Tropical storm force winds were reported , peaking at 50 mph (80 km / h) at Shell Beach , Louisiana on the south shore of Lake Borgne . At the same location , tides between 5 and 6 feet (1 @. @ 5 and 1 @. @ 8 m) above normal were measured . Four people were rescued by the United States Coast Guard after their tugboat sank in Lake Pontchartrain , while three others swam to shore . Additionally , two fatalities occurred in the vicinity of Mobile , Alabama .

= = = Hurricane Connie = = =

A tropical wave developed into a tropical depression east of Cape Verde on August 3 . After six hours , it strengthened into Tropical Storm Connie . By August 4 , Connie began to rapidly strengthen , becoming the first major hurricane of the season later that day . Initially , it posed a threat to the Lesser Antilles , although it passed about 50 miles (80 km) north . The outer rainbands produced hurricane force wind gusts and intense precipitation , reaching 8 @. @ 65 inches (220 mm) in Puerto Rico . In the United States Virgin Islands , three people died due to the hurricane , and a few homes were destroyed . In Puerto Rico , Connie destroyed 60 homes and caused crop damage . After affecting Puerto Rico , Connie turned to the northwest , reaching peak

winds of 140 mph (220 km / h) . The hurricane weakened while slowing and turning to the north , and struck North Carolina on August 12 as a Category 2 hurricane .

Connie produced strong winds , high tides , and heavy rainfall as it moved ashore , causing heavy crop damage and 27 deaths in the state of North Carolina . Connie made a second landfall in Virginia , and it progressed inland until dissipating on August 15 near Sault Ste . Marie , Michigan . Four people were killed in Washington , D.C. due to a traffic accident . In the Chesapeake Bay , Connie capsized a boat , killing 14 people and prompting a change in Coast Guard regulation . There were six deaths each in Pennsylvania and New Jersey , and eleven deaths in New York , where record rainfall flooded homes and subways . At least 225 @, @ 000 people lost power during the storm . Damage in the United States totaled around \$ 86 million , although the rains from Connie was a prelude to flooding by Hurricane Diane . The remnants of Connie destroyed a few houses and boats in Ontario and killed three people in Ontario .

= = = Hurricane Diane = = =

A tropical wave spawned a tropical depression between the Lesser Antilles and Cape Verde on August 7 . It slowly strengthened and became Tropical Storm Diane on August 9 . After a Fujiwhara interaction with Hurricane Connie , Diane curved northward or north @-@ northeastward and quickly deepened . By early on August 8 , the storm was upgraded to a hurricane . Only several hours later , Diane peaked as a Category 2 hurricane with winds of 105 mph (165 km / h) . The storm resumed its west @-@ northwestward motion on August 13 . Colder air in the region caused Diane to weaken while approaching the East Coast of the United States . A recently installed radar in North Carolina noted an eye feature , albeit poorly defined . Early on August 17 , Diane made landfall near Wilmington , North Carolina as a strong tropical storm . The storm then moved in a parabolic motion across North Carolina and the Mid @-@ Atlantic before re @-@ emerging into the Atlantic Ocean on August 19 . Diane headed east @-@ northeastward until becoming extratropical on August 20 .

Despite landfall in North Carolina , impact in the state was minor , limited to moderate rainfall , abnormally high tides , and relatively strong winds . Further north , catastrophic flooding occurred in Pennsylvania , New Jersey , New York , and New England . Of the 287 stream gauges in the region , 129 reported record levels after the flooding from Tropical Storm Diane . Many streams reported discharge rates that were more than twice of the previous record . Most of the flooding occurred along small river basins that rapidly rose within hours to flood stage , largely occurring in populated areas ; the region in which the floods occurred had about 30 million people , and 813 houses overall were destroyed . The floods severely damaged homes , highways , power lines , and railroads , and affected several summer camps . Overall utility damage was estimated at \$ 79 million . Flooding in mountainous areas caused landslides and destroyed crop fields ; agriculture losses was estimated at \$ 7 million . Hundreds of miles of roads and bridges were also destroyed , accounting for \$ 82 million in damage . Overall , Diane caused \$ 754 @.@ 7 million in damage , of which \$ 600 million was in New England . Overall , there were at least 184 deaths .

= = = Hurricane Edith = = =

An easterly tropical wave developed into a tropical depression on August 21 in the tropical Atlantic . Moving towards the west @-@ northwest , the disturbance slowly intensified , reaching tropical storm strength at 1200 UTC on August 23 and as such was named Edith by the Weather Bureau . Afterwards , Edith began to curve towards the northwest as it gradually intensified , attaining hurricane strength on August 25 . The hurricane continued to intensify as it recurved and accelerated to the northeast , reaching its peak intensity on August 28 as a Category 2 hurricane with maximum sustained winds of 100 mph (160 km / h) . At the same time , a reconnaissance aircraft reported a minimum barometric pressure of 991 mbar (hPa ; 29 @.@ 27 inHg) in the storm 's eye as Edith made its closest pass to Bermuda . The hurricane began to gradually weaken after it passed east of the island , before becoming extratropical on August 31 . The cyclone would later

make a clockwise loop before dissipating completely late on September 3 . Although Edith remained at sea , it was suspected that the hurricane may have caused the loss of the pleasure yacht Connemara IV , after it separated from its moorings .

== Tropical Storm Five ==

A weak disturbance was first observed near Grand Cayman on August 23 , gaining tropical storm strength by 0600 UTC that day . Moving towards the north @-@ northwest , the storm passed over western Cuba on August 24 , without much change in intensity . Once in the Gulf of Mexico , the tropical storm marginally intensified , reaching peak intensity with maximum sustained wind speeds of 45 mph (75 km / h) by 1200 UTC on August 26 . Nearing the Gulf Coast of the United States , the system curved towards the west . The storm maintained its intensity up until landfall in Louisiana near New Orleans on August 27 . Moving inland , it slowly weakened while crossing the Central United States , degenerating to tropical depression strength by August 29 and later dissipating over Missouri the following day .

Strong waves generated by the storm caused tides 4 ft (1 @.@ 2 m) above average , slightly damaging coastal resorts . Weather offices advised small craft offshore to remain in port due to the strong waves . Rough seas battered the schooner Princess Friday , but the ship was able to ride out the storm . The storm produced squalls further inland , causing heavy rains . A weather station reported a minimum pressure of 1000 mbar (hPa ; 29 @.@ 53 inHg) , the lowest in association with the tropical storm . Despite the strong waves and heavy rains , only minor damage was reported .

== Hurricane Flora ==

A tropical wave moved along the Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) and passed through Cape Verde between August 30 and August 31 . Although the Panair do Brasil headquarters in Recife , Brazil reported a closed circulation on August 30 , Tropical Storm Flora did not develop until 0600 UTC on September 2 , while located about 400 miles (640 km) of Cape Verde . The storm strengthened at a steady pace for the following 48 hours and reached hurricane status late on September 3 . Flora headed on a parabolic track , initially moving west @-@ northwestward and then northwesterly by September 4 . It continued to intensify and by September 6 , the storm curved northward . Around time , a minimum barometric pressure of 967 mbar (28 @.@ 6 inHg) was reported . However , it may have been lower , as the storm did not attain its maximum sustained wind speed of 105 mph (165 km / h) until September 7 . Flora maintained this intensity while curving to the northeast , but became extratropical at 0000 UTC on September 9 , while located about midway between Flores Island in the Azores and Sable Island , Nova Scotia .

== Hurricane Gladys ==

A tropical depression developed in the southern Gulf of Mexico at 1200 UTC on September 4 . Six hours later , it strengthened into Tropical Storm Gladys . The storm quickly intensified and reached hurricane status on September 5 , roughly 24 hours after developing . Around that time , Gladys peaked as a Category 1 hurricane with maximum sustained winds of 75 mph (120 km / h) . Later on September 5 , an offshoot of Gladys with cyclonic turning formed in the northern Gulf of Mexico and struck Texas on September 6 ; it may have been a separate tropical cyclone . Initially , Gladys headed north @-@ northwestward , but then re @-@ curved south @-@ southwestward while approaching the Gulf Coast of Mexico . Early on September 6 , it made landfall near Tampico , Tamaulipas as a weakening tropical storm . The system rapidly dissipated inland .

Gladys dropped up to 25 inches (640 mm) in Tampico , Tamaulipas . The worst of the flooding from Gladys occurred in Mexico City . Roughly 5 @, @ 000 residents were isolated and required rescue . Police estimated that 2 @, @ 300 homes were inundated with 5 to 7 feet (1 @.@ 5 to 2 @.@ 1 m) of water . About 30 @, @ 000 families were impacted by the storm . Two children

drowned and five additional people were listed as missing . In Texas , the highest sustained wind speed was 45 mph (75 km / h) in the Corpus Christi ? Port O 'Connor area , with gusts between 55 and 65 mph (89 and 105 km / h) offshore . Precipitation peaked at 17 @. @ 02 inches (432 mm) in Flour Bluff , a neighborhood of Corpus Christi . Flooding in the area forced " scores " of people to evacuate their homes . Damage estimates reached \$ 500 @, @ 000 .

= = = Hurricane Ione = = =

A tropical wave developed into a tropical depression early on September 10 , while located about midway between Cape Verde and the Lesser Antilles . After six hours , the depression strengthened into Tropical Storm Ione . Eventually , it turned to the northwest . At 0000 UTC on September 15 , Ione reached hurricane intensity , while situated north of the Leeward Islands . Ione continued to deep while moving northwest . The storm reached Category 4 intensity with maximum sustained winds of 140 mph (220 km / h) and a minimum barometric pressure of 938 mbar (27 @. @ 7 inHg) early on September 18 . Around midday on the following day , it made landfall near Wilmington , North Carolina as a Category 2 hurricane . Shortly after moving inland over eastern North Carolina , Ione weakened to a tropical storm . Late on September 19 , Ione re @-@ emerged into the Atlantic near Norfolk , Virginia . The storm quickly re @-@ strengthened early on September 20 , but transitioned into an extratropical cyclone on September 21 .

Strong winds , heavy rainfall , and abnormally high tides lashed some areas along the East Coast of the United States , especially North Carolina . In Cherry Point , sustained winds reached 75 mph (121 km / h) , with gusts up to 107 mph (172 km / h) . Overall , damage was slightly more than \$ 88 million , mostly to crops and agriculture . Rainfall in the state peaked at 16 @. @ 63 inches (422 mm) in Maysville . Storm surge in North Carolina peaked at 5 @. @ 3 feet (1 @. @ 6 m) in Wrightsville Beach . As a result , several coastal roadways were flooded , including a portion of Highway 94 and Route 264 . Seven deaths were reported in North Carolina . The remnants of Ione brought gusty winds to Atlantic Canada , which broken poles , uprooted trees , interrupted telephone service , damaged chimneys and caused power outages , especially in St. John 's , Newfoundland and Labrador .

= = = Hurricane Hilda = = =

A tropical wave located near the Lesser Antilles spawned a tropical depression on September 12 . It is estimated that the depression strengthened into Tropical Storm Hilda early on the following day . Hilda quickly intensified while moving westward into a small hurricane by September 12 . Although the storm passed just north of Hispaniola on September 13 , damage is unknown , if any . Later that day , Hilda made landfall near the southeastern tip of Cuba on September 13 . There , it dropped heavy rainfall and produced gusty winds that destroyed 80 % of the coffee crop in Oriente Province . In the eastern Cuban city of Baracoa , Hilda severely damaged the oldest church in the country . Damage totaled \$ 2 million in Cuba , and there were four deaths .

Later , the hurricane moved across the Caribbean Sea , causing light damage in the sparsely @-@ populated region of the eastern Yucatán Peninsula . After reaching the Gulf of Mexico , Hilda strengthened to reach peak winds of 120 mph (195 km / h) late on September 18 . Before the hurricane moved ashore , there was residual flooding in Tampico from earlier Hurricane Gladys . Hilda struck the city early on September 19 , with gusts estimated at 150 mph (240 km / h) . The storm dropped heavy rainfall that flooded 90 % of Tampico , while its strong winds damaged half of the homes , leaving 15 @, @ 000 homeless . Throughout Mexico , 11 @, @ 432 people were directly affected by Hilda . Overall , the storm killed 300 people and caused over \$ 120 million . Additionally , the outerbands of Hilda caused minor flooding in southern Texas , particularly in Raymondville .

= = = Hurricane Janet = = =

Hurricane Janet was the most powerful tropical cyclone of the season and one of the strongest

Atlantic hurricanes on record . The hurricane formed from a tropical wave east of the Lesser Antilles on September 21 . Moving toward the west across the Caribbean Sea , Janet fluctuated in intensity , but generally strengthened before reaching its peak intensity as a Category 5 hurricane on the Saffir ? Simpson hurricane scale with winds of 175 mph (280 km / h) . The intense hurricane made landfall at that intensity near Chetumal , Mexico on September 28 . Janet 's landfall as a Category 5 hurricane on the Yucatán Peninsula marked the first recorded instance that a storm of such intensity in the Atlantic basin made on a continental mainland , with all previous storms making landfall as Category 5 hurricanes on islands . After weakening over the Yucatán Peninsula , it moved into the Bay of Campeche , where it slightly strengthened before making its final landfall near Veracruz on September 29 . Janet quickly weakened over Mexico 's mountainous terrain before dissipating on September 30 .

In its developmental stages near the Lesser Antilles , Janet caused significant damage to the island chain , resulting in 189 deaths and \$ 7 @. @ 8 million in damages in the Grenadines and Barbados . While Janet was in the central Caribbean Sea , a reconnaissance aircraft flew into the storm and was lost , with all eleven crew members believed perished . This was the only such loss which has occurred in association with an Atlantic hurricane . A Category 5 upon landfall on the Yucatán Peninsula , Janet caused severe devastation in areas on Quintana Roo and British Honduras . Only five buildings in Chetumal , Mexico remained intact after the storm . An estimated 500 deaths occurred in the Mexican state of Quintana Roo . At Janet 's second landfall near Veracruz , significant river flooding ensued , worsening effects caused by Hurricanes Gladys and Hilda earlier in the month . The floods left thousands of people stranded and killed at least 326 people in the Tampico area . The flood damage would lead to the largest Mexican relief operation ever executed by the United States . At least 1 @, @ 023 deaths were attributed to Hurricane Janet , as well as \$ 65 @. @ 8 million in damages .

= = = Tropical Storm Eleven = = =

A tropical wave moved off the coast of Africa on September 18 and continued west @-@ northwestward . It is possible that the system developed into a tropical depression the next day , although lack of data prevented such classification until September 23 , when a nearby ship reported winds of 35 mph (55 km / h) . An approaching cold front turned the system to the north on September 24 . The structure gradually became better organized , and after turning to the northeast on September 26 , the depression intensified into a tropical storm . This was based on a ship report of 45 mph (75 km / h) winds , which was also estimated as the system 's peak intensity . On September 27 , the system became extratropical and accelerated its forward motion , dissipating within a larger extratropical storm south of Iceland on the next day .

= = = Tropical Storm Twelve = = =

A tropical wave was reported to have passed through Cape Verde on October 4 . The system slowly developed a vertex as it curved in a generally northward direction . By early on October 10 , two ships reported that a tropical depression formed almost halfway between the Azores and the Leeward Islands . After six hours , the depression strengthened into a tropical storm . While re @-@ curving to the northeast , the storm attained its maximum sustained winds of 65 mph (100 km / h) ; the lowest atmospheric pressure recorded in relation to the storm was 1 @, @ 000 mbar (30 inHg) , but the time of measurement is unknown . Although no significant weakening occurred , it eventually merged with an extratropical cyclone on October 14 , while still well southwest of the Azores . During its extratropical stage , a ship in the area reported an atmospheric pressure as low as 979 mbar (28 @. @ 9 inHg) .

= = = Hurricane Katie = = =

A disturbance in the ITCZ developed into a tropical depression north of Panama on October 14 .

Early on the following day , the depression strengthened into Tropical Storm Katie . The system moved generally northeast due to the presence of a strong low pressure area along the East Coast of the United States . Later that day , Hurricane Hunters observed a rapidly intensifying hurricane , encountering winds of 110 mph (175 km / h) and a pressure of 984 mbar (29 @. @ 1 inHg) several hours before the peak intensity . Early on October 17 , Katie made landfall in extreme eastern Sud @- @ Est Department , Haiti as a strong Category 2 hurricane (although it may have been stronger) . About half of homes in the town of Anse @- @ à @- @ Pitres were destroyed . Across the border in Pedernales , Dominican Republic , 68 houses were damaged . Overall losses were at least \$ 200 @, @ 000 and 7 fatalities were reported .

While crossing the mountainous terrain of Hispaniola , Katie became very disorganized and rapidly weakened to a tropical storm early on October 17 , within a few hours after moving inland . Later that day , the storm emerged into the Atlantic Ocean just east of Puerto Plata , Dominican Republic . Katie began accelerating to the northeast on October 18 . During that time , the storm re @- @ intensified and briefly approached hurricane intensity , although it failed to strengthen further due to interaction with a cold front . After passing just east of Bermuda on October 19 , the storm transitioned into an extratropical cyclone . The remnants of Katie were last observed the following day .

= = Storm names = =

The following names were used for tropical cyclones that reached at least tropical storm intensity in the North Atlantic in 1955 . However , two of such storms went unnamed . Connie , Diane , Ione , and Janet would later be retired . The 1955 season was tied with the 1995 and 2004 for the most storm names retired after a single season , until five names were retired in 2005 . Storms were named Brenda , Connie , Diane , Edith , Flora , Gladys , Hilda , Ione , Janet and Katie for the first time . Names not assigned are marked in gray .