

= 1898 Georgia hurricane =

The 1898 Georgia hurricane was the most recent major hurricane to hit the U.S. state of Georgia , as well as the strongest on record in the state . It was first known to exist on September 29 , although modern researchers estimated that it developed four days earlier to the east of the Lesser Antilles . The hurricane maintained a general northwest track throughout its duration , and it reached peak winds of 135 mph (215 km / h) on October 2 . That day , it made landfall on Cumberland Island in Camden County , Georgia , causing record storm surge flooding . The hurricane caused heavy damage throughout the region , and killed at least 179 people . Impact was most severe in Brunswick , where a 16 ft (4 @. @ 9 m) storm surge was recorded . Overall damage was estimated at \$ 1 @. @ 5 million (1898 USD) , most of which occurred in Georgia . In extreme northeastern Florida , strong winds nearly destroyed the city of Fernandina , while light crop damage was reported in southern South Carolina . After moving ashore , the hurricane quickly weakened and traversed much of North America ; it continued northwestward until reaching the Ohio Valley and turning northeastward , and it was last observed on October 6 near Newfoundland .

= = Meteorological history = =

On September 28 , 1898 , island stations in the Lesser Antilles indicated the presence of a tropical cyclone , which was confirmed by the next day . Modern researchers determined that the system developed on September 25 about 220 miles (350 km) east of Guadeloupe . For most of its duration , the system maintained a northwest track , reaching hurricane status on September 27 . Later that day , a barometric pressure of 977 mbar , suggesting winds of 90 mph (150 km / h) . Its intensification rate slowed on September 28 , before strengthening continued on October 1 . The winds reached 115 mph (185 km / h) , which is the equivalent of a major hurricane , or Category 3 on the Saffir @-@ Simpson scale . Around that time , the hurricane turned toward more to the west @-@ northwest , due to a large ridge across the western Atlantic .

On October 2 , the hurricane continued toward the west @-@ northwest , approaching the southeastern United States . That day , it made landfall on Cumberland Island in Camden County , Georgia , and initially was thought to have done so as a Category 2 on the Saffir @-@ Simpson scale . A storm surge of 16 ft (4 @. @ 9 m) was observed in Brunswick , Georgia , suggesting a central pressure of 938 mbar based on the SLOSH model . Such intensity ranked the hurricane tied for the 16th strongest United States landfall , as well as the strongest in the state of Georgia . It is also the most recent major hurricane to hit the state as of 2011 . Additionally , its radius of maximum wind was estimated at 20 miles (33 km) . Almost a century after the hurricane , researchers estimated the hurricane made landfall with winds of 135 mph (215 km / h) , a Category 4 on the Saffir @-@ Simpson scale . After making landfall , the hurricane quickly weakened , deteriorating to tropical storm status within 12 hours . After moving across Georgia , the storm weakened further to tropical depression status over northeastern Alabama on October 3 . It continued northwestward through the Ohio Valley before recurving northeastward , accelerating through southeastern Canada and later dissipating over Newfoundland on October 6 .

= = Impact = =

On October 1 , a day before the hurricane moved ashore , the U.S. Weather Bureau issued northeast storm signals from Key West , Florida to Norfolk , Virginia . Similar warnings were issued in the hours preceding the hurricane moving ashore . The advisories were credited with saving dozens of lives and millions of dollars in shipping cargo , due to advance warning for boats to remain ashore .

Before the hurricane made landfall in Georgia , it produced strong winds in northeastern Florida , reaching Category 2 strength on the Saffir @-@ Simpson scale . The worst effects from the storm were confined to a very small portion of extreme northeastern Florida . At Fernandina Beach , the storm surge was estimated at 12 ft (3 @. @ 7 m) , causing extensive flooding in the city . The

October 1898 Monthly Weather Review described Fernandina as " nearly destroyed " , and most anchored boats were sunk or washed inland into the marshes . Damage along the coastline reached as far south as Mayport . The hurricane was small , and despite passing 50 miles (80 km) northeast of Jacksonville , produced only 60 mph (97 km / h) winds in the city . However , for the first time in the history of the city , all communications were cut between Jacksonville and cities further north , such as New York . Damage throughout the state was estimated at \$ 500 @, @ 000 (1898 USD) .

The hurricane made landfall on Cumberland Island with winds estimated at 135 mph (215 km / h) . It produced record storm surges across the coastline , including a 16 ft (4 @. @ 9 m) report in Brunswick . There , damage was heaviest , and most buildings were flooded . Similar impact was reported in Darien , where 32 people were killed . One coastal location reported the hurricane as causing the worst flooding since 1812 . Further north , all of Hutchinson Island in the Savannah River was covered with up to 8 ft (2 @. @ 4 m) of water . The storm surge flooding entered warehouses and storage areas all along the coast , leaving many small ships wrecked or sunk . Heavy damage also occurred to coastal wharves and houses . According to the Savannah Weather Bureau office , about 5 @, @ 000 barrels of rosin were dispersed , and 60 @, @ 000 bushels of rice were wrecked . Winds in the city reached 60 mph (95 km / h) , and the flooding severely damaged the railway to nearby Tybee Island . Along the Blackbeard Island National Wildlife Refuge , the hurricane destroyed a hospital that helped people afflicted with yellow fever . A total of 179 people were killed along the Georgia coast , and damage totaled around \$ 1 million (1898 USD) . In South Carolina , the hurricane produced gusty winds and storm surge flooding . Some slight damage occurred at Port Royal , and in the southern portion of the state , the high tides left damage to rice and cotton crops . The Charleston Weather Bureau reported that " a number of persons were drowned along the South Carolina coast " . Heavy rainfall was reported across northeast Florida , Georgia , and the western Carolinas . The highest amount recorded was 12 @. @ 5 inches (320 mm) at Highlands , North Carolina .