

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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FLORIDA HURRICANE

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Authority on Meteorology.

On an average the state of Florida is visited about once a year by a tropical cyclone, and a large majority of such visitors to the state are full-fledged hurricanes. During the 45-year period ending with 1930, 46 of these disturbances either moved inland over the state or passed near enough to the coast to cause damaging winds on land. Of these 46 storms, 37 are known to have been of hurricane intensity, while the remaining nine were not violent enough, or doubtfully so, to be classed as hurricanes. The greatest number of consecutive years without tropical storms was two.

Fortunately tropical cyclones are relatively small, and the areas within which they are strong enough to do damage are far smaller. Hence these storms are relatively uncommon at any particular place in the state. C.L. Mitchell, of the U.S. Weather Bureau, has pointed out that the average interval of time between tropical hurricanes on the ~~east~~ coast of Florida, for each hundred-mile section of coast line, is 20 years, while the average interval between storms on the west coast, for the same unit of coast line, is 13.9 years. The shorter interval on the west coast is due to the relatively great number of storms that have occurred between Cedar Keys, Fla., and Mobile, Ala. Only five tropical storms of hurricane intensity in the last 45 years have passed inland over the west coast of the peninsula between Fort Myers and Cedar Keys. Tampa is located in this section of the coastal region, and it has been more nearly exempt from hurricanes than any other coast city in southern Florida.

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