

fort myers florida hurricane history

fort myers florida hurricane history reveals a long and complex relationship between the city and the powerful storms that have shaped its development and resilience. Situated on the southwest coast of Florida, Fort Myers has faced numerous hurricanes over the decades, influencing everything from urban planning to emergency preparedness. This article explores the historical impact of hurricanes in Fort Myers, detailing significant storms, their effects on the community, and how the city has adapted to the ever-present threat of tropical cyclones. Understanding Fort Myers Florida hurricane history is crucial for appreciating the challenges the region has overcome and the strategies in place to mitigate future risks. The article will cover major hurricanes affecting the area, the evolution of hurricane preparedness, and the environmental and economic consequences of these natural disasters.

- Historical Overview of Hurricanes in Fort Myers
- Significant Hurricanes Impacting Fort Myers
- Effects of Hurricanes on Fort Myers
- Hurricane Preparedness and Response in Fort Myers
- Future Outlook and Climate Considerations

Historical Overview of Hurricanes in Fort Myers

The fort myers florida hurricane history dates back over a century, reflecting the city's vulnerability due to its coastal location along the Gulf of Mexico. Hurricanes have been a recurring natural hazard, with records indicating that the region has experienced numerous tropical storms and hurricanes since the late 19th century. The frequency and intensity of these storms have varied, but their impact has consistently influenced the community's growth and resilience. Early settlers faced devastating storms that shaped the initial development of infrastructure and emergency protocols. Over time, advances in meteorology and urban planning have improved the area's response to hurricanes, but the historical legacy remains critical to understanding the current risk landscape.

Early Recorded Hurricanes

The earliest documented hurricanes impacting Fort Myers occurred in the late 1800s, often causing significant damage due to the limited preparedness of the time. Many of these storms were characterized by prolonged flooding and wind damage, highlighting the need for better construction standards and evacuation plans. Historical records indicate that some storms during this period reached Category 3 intensity, leaving lasting impressions on the community and its development trajectory.

20th Century Hurricane Activity

The 20th century brought increased hurricane activity affecting Fort Myers, with notable storms causing widespread destruction. The city's population growth and economic expansion during this period also meant that the stakes were higher when hurricanes struck. Improvements in forecasting and communication helped reduce casualties, but property damage often remained severe. The fort myers florida hurricane history throughout the 1900s is marked by several key events that underscore the region's ongoing vulnerability.

Significant Hurricanes Impacting Fort Myers

Several major hurricanes have left indelible marks on Fort Myers, shaping the city's approach to disaster management and recovery. These storms are often referenced in discussions about regional hurricane history and are critical case studies for understanding the fort myers florida hurricane history.

Hurricane Donna (1960)

Hurricane Donna was one of the most powerful and destructive hurricanes to hit Fort Myers. Making landfall as a Category 4 storm, Donna caused extensive wind damage, flooding, and power outages. The storm's impact led to significant changes in building codes and emergency preparedness strategies within the city.

Hurricane Charley (2004)

Hurricane Charley remains one of the most memorable storms in the fort myers florida hurricane history due to its rapid intensification and direct hit on the city. Charley was a Category 4 hurricane at landfall, resulting in significant structural damage, displacement of residents, and disruption of local businesses. The aftermath prompted improvements in evacuation routes and communication systems.

Hurricane Irma (2017)

Hurricane Irma, a Category 3 storm upon reaching Fort Myers, caused widespread power outages and flooding. The storm tested the city's emergency response capabilities and highlighted vulnerabilities in infrastructure. Recovery efforts following Irma were extensive, emphasizing the importance of resilience in hurricane-prone areas.

Effects of Hurricanes on Fort Myers

The fort myers florida hurricane history underscores a wide range of effects that hurricanes have had on the city, spanning social, economic, and environmental dimensions. The repeated impact of these storms has necessitated ongoing adaptation and mitigation

efforts.

Economic Impact

Hurricanes have caused billions of dollars in damages to Fort Myers, affecting homes, businesses, and public infrastructure. The tourism industry, a vital component of the local economy, often suffers significant setbacks following major storms. Recovery and rebuilding efforts require substantial investment, influencing long-term economic planning.

Environmental Consequences

Storm surges, flooding, and high winds associated with hurricanes have led to notable environmental changes in and around Fort Myers. Coastal erosion, damage to natural habitats, and water quality issues are common aftereffects. These environmental impacts can persist for years, affecting local ecosystems and biodiversity.

Social and Community Effects

Hurricanes disrupt the social fabric of Fort Myers by displacing residents and stressing community resources. Emergency shelters, healthcare facilities, and social services play critical roles in supporting affected populations. The fort myers florida hurricane history includes numerous instances of community solidarity and resilience in the face of disaster.

Hurricane Preparedness and Response in Fort Myers

In response to its hurricane-prone history, Fort Myers has developed comprehensive preparedness and response measures aimed at minimizing the impact of future storms. These strategies reflect lessons learned from past hurricanes and ongoing improvements in technology and planning.

Emergency Management Systems

The city has established robust emergency management protocols involving coordination between local government, emergency services, and community organizations. These systems include early warning alerts, evacuation plans, and resource distribution networks designed to protect lives and property.

Infrastructure Improvements

Building codes in Fort Myers have been strengthened to ensure structures withstand high winds and flooding. Investments in stormwater management, seawalls, and resilient power

grids are part of the city's efforts to reduce vulnerability to hurricanes.

Community Education and Engagement

Public awareness campaigns and community engagement initiatives educate residents on hurricane risks and preparedness actions. Regular drills, information dissemination, and resource availability contribute to a culture of readiness throughout Fort Myers.

Future Outlook and Climate Considerations

The fort myers florida hurricane history provides valuable insights into potential future risks, especially in the context of climate change. Rising sea levels and changing storm patterns may increase the frequency and severity of hurricanes impacting the region.

Climate Change and Hurricane Trends

Scientific studies suggest that warmer ocean temperatures and altered atmospheric conditions could lead to more intense hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico, including those affecting Fort Myers. Understanding these trends is essential for long-term planning and adaptation.

Adaptation Strategies

Fort Myers is actively exploring strategies to address future hurricane risks, including enhancing natural coastal buffers, updating infrastructure, and integrating climate resilience into urban development plans. These efforts aim to safeguard the city against the evolving threat of hurricanes.

Role of Technology and Innovation

Advancements in meteorological technology, data analytics, and emergency communication are playing an increasing role in improving hurricane forecasting and response capabilities. Fort Myers continues to leverage these tools to enhance preparedness and protect its residents.

- Early hurricane records and their influence on Fort Myers
- Major hurricanes and their impact on the city
- Economic, environmental, and social consequences of hurricanes
- Preparedness measures and emergency response systems

- Future risks and adaptation in the face of climate change

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the history of hurricanes in Fort Myers, Florida?

Fort Myers, Florida has experienced several hurricanes throughout its history, with notable storms causing significant damage. The area's hurricane history includes impacts from major storms such as Hurricane Charley in 2004 and Hurricane Irma in 2017.

Which hurricanes have caused the most damage in Fort Myers?

Hurricane Charley in 2004 is considered one of the most damaging hurricanes in Fort Myers' history, causing widespread destruction. Hurricane Irma in 2017 also caused substantial damage due to high winds and flooding.

How often does Fort Myers experience hurricanes?

Fort Myers is located on the Gulf Coast of Florida and is vulnerable to hurricanes, particularly during the Atlantic hurricane season from June to November. While not hit every year, the area sees hurricanes or tropical storms impacting it several times each decade.

What was the impact of Hurricane Charley on Fort Myers?

Hurricane Charley made landfall near Fort Myers in August 2004 as a Category 4 hurricane, causing severe wind damage, power outages, and flooding. Many buildings were damaged or destroyed, and recovery took several months.

How prepared is Fort Myers for future hurricanes based on its history?

Based on its hurricane history, Fort Myers has improved building codes, evacuation plans, and emergency response systems to better prepare for future storms. The city's infrastructure and community awareness have increased to mitigate hurricane impacts.

Have there been any Category 5 hurricanes that directly hit Fort Myers?

Fort Myers has not experienced a direct hit from a Category 5 hurricane. The strongest storms to impact the area have been Category 3 or 4 hurricanes, such as Hurricane Charley (Category 4).

What lessons were learned from past hurricanes in Fort Myers?

Past hurricanes in Fort Myers have taught the community the importance of preparedness, robust infrastructure, effective evacuation routes, and public communication. These lessons have helped improve resilience against future storms.

How does Fort Myers' hurricane history compare to other parts of Florida?

Fort Myers is vulnerable to hurricanes but generally experiences fewer direct hits than areas on the Atlantic coast of Florida. However, the Gulf Coast, including Fort Myers, can experience intense storms due to warm Gulf waters.

What role does Fort Myers' geography play in its hurricane history?

Fort Myers' location on Florida's Gulf Coast exposes it to hurricanes that form in the Gulf of Mexico or move westward from the Atlantic. Its flat terrain can lead to significant storm surge and flooding during hurricanes.

Additional Resources

1. Storms Over the Southwest: The Hurricane History of Fort Myers

This book chronicles the major hurricanes that have impacted Fort Myers, Florida, from the early 20th century to the present day. It provides detailed accounts of the devastation caused by these storms, highlighting the resilience of the local community. Through firsthand narratives and historical data, readers gain a comprehensive understanding of how hurricanes have shaped the region's development.

2. Eye of the Storm: Fort Myers and the Fury of Florida Hurricanes

"Eye of the Storm" delves into the meteorological aspects and historical impact of hurricanes on Fort Myers. The author examines notable hurricanes, including their paths, intensity, and aftermath. The book also explores the evolving preparedness and response strategies adopted by the city over the decades.

3. Hurricane Haven: Fort Myers' Battle With Nature

This book offers a vivid portrayal of Fort Myers' ongoing struggle with hurricanes and tropical storms. It combines scientific analysis with personal stories from residents who have endured multiple storms. The narrative emphasizes the community's efforts in rebuilding and improving resilience after each disaster.

4. Fort Myers in the Eye: A Historical Account of Hurricanes

Focusing on the historical timeline, this book presents a chronological account of hurricanes that have struck Fort Myers. It includes archival photographs, newspaper clippings, and eyewitness testimonies to paint a rich picture of the city's experiences. The author also discusses the socio-economic consequences of these natural disasters.

5. *After the Storm: Fort Myers' Recovery and Resilience*

"After the Storm" highlights the recovery processes following major hurricanes in Fort Myers. It explores the community initiatives, government assistance programs, and infrastructural changes implemented to mitigate future risks. The book serves as both a historical record and a guide for disaster recovery planning.

6. *Hurricanes of the Gulf Coast: Fort Myers' Legacy*

This comprehensive volume covers the broader Gulf Coast hurricane history with a special focus on Fort Myers. It traces the patterns and frequency of hurricanes affecting the area and discusses their environmental and economic impacts. The book also examines lessons learned and how they have influenced regional hurricane preparedness.

7. *Wind and Water: Fort Myers' Hurricane Chronicles*

"Wind and Water" tells the story of Fort Myers through the lens of its most powerful hurricanes. It features dramatic accounts of storms such as Hurricane Charley and others that left lasting marks on the community. The book also highlights technological advances in weather forecasting that have helped save lives.

8. *Fort Myers Under Pressure: Hurricanes and Urban Growth*

This book investigates the relationship between Fort Myers' rapid urban development and its vulnerability to hurricanes. It analyzes how growth patterns have affected the city's exposure to storm damage and the challenges in balancing expansion with safety. The author offers insights into sustainable urban planning in hurricane-prone areas.

9. *Surviving the Surge: Fort Myers' Fight Against Hurricanes*

"Surviving the Surge" focuses on the human stories of survival and heroism during Fort Myers' most severe hurricanes. It compiles personal interviews, rescue efforts, and community solidarity in the face of disaster. The book underscores the importance of preparedness and community resilience in hurricane-prone regions.

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fort myers florida hurricane history: Florida's Hurricane History Jay Barnes, 2012-08-15
The Sunshine State has an exceptionally stormy past. Vulnerable to storms that arise in the Atlantic, Caribbean, and Gulf of Mexico, Florida has been hit by far more hurricanes than any other state. In many ways, hurricanes have helped shape Florida's history. Early efforts by the French, Spanish, and English to claim the territory as their own were often thwarted by hurricanes. More recently, storms have affected such massive projects as Henry Flagler's Overseas Railroad and efforts to manage water in South Florida. In this book, Jay Barnes offers a fascinating and informative look at Florida's hurricane history. Drawing on meteorological research, news reports, first-person accounts, maps, and historical photographs, he traces all of the notable hurricanes that have affected the state over the last four-and-a-half centuries, from the great storms of the early colonial

period to the devastating hurricanes of 2004 and 2005--Charley, Frances, Ivan, Jeanne, Dennis, Katrina, and Wilma. In addition to providing a comprehensive chronology of more than one hundred individual storms, Florida's Hurricane History includes information on the basics of hurricane dynamics, formation, naming, and forecasting. It explores the origins of the U.S. Weather Bureau and government efforts to study and track hurricanes in Florida, home of the National Hurricane Center. But the book does more than examine how hurricanes have shaped Florida's past; it also looks toward the future, discussing the serious threat that hurricanes continue to pose to both lives and property in the state. Filled with more than 200 photographs and maps, the book also features a foreword by Steve Lyons, tropical weather expert for the Weather Channel. It will serve as both an essential reference on hurricanes in Florida and a remarkable source of the stories--of tragedy and destruction, rescue and survival--that foster our fascination with these powerful storms.

fort myers florida hurricane history: *Historic Hurricanes of Fort Myers* Thomas P. Hall, 2023-09-30 On September 28, 2022, Hurricane Ian struck Fort Myers, Florida, ravaging Fort Myers Beach and Sanibel, Captiva, Matlacha and Pine Islands. Ian was just the latest in a series of storms that have influenced how the region has developed since the mid-1800s. In fact, it was an 1841 hurricane that followed roughly the same track as Ian that caused the Army to move its central supply depot to Fort Myers' present-day location, a site presumably safe from impacts such as storm surge, hurricane force winds and inland flooding. That was not true then. It is not true now. Of all the towns and cities that dot the coast of the United States from the Rio Grande to Eastport, Maine, the City of Fort Myers has the sixth most homes and fourth most multi-family dwellings at risk for storm surge in the entire nation. With more than 400 miles of canals encompassing 520 square miles, neighboring Cape Coral is America's most vulnerable city when it comes to flooding produced by tropical systems. The severity of these impacts and the associated loss of life and property damage are expected to increase in the future due to sea level rise, climate change and ongoing development of single family, multi-family and commercial properties in the shallow flood plains that drain the Caloosahatchee River and its tributaries. With *Historic Hurricanes of Fort Myers*, local historian Tom Hall blends a meticulously researched analysis of where and why Fort Myers is uniquely subject to storm surge, wind damage and inland flooding with old-time stories of how the region's early pioneers weathered storms as they built a town and an economy based on cattle exports to Cuba. For the historian at heart, *Historic Hurricanes of Fort Myers* transports readers to a time when rugged, enterprising men and women assayed to build a town in the footprint of an old Seminole and Civil War fort on the southern bank of the Caloosahatchee River. It chronicles the role played by iconic cattlemen like Jake Summerlin and Capt. Francis Asbury Hendry and the singular importance of the cattle industry in decades following the end of the Civil War. For residents and property owners, this book provides a street-specific road map that delineates each neighborhood's risk for mild to catastrophic damage from storm surge, hurricane force winds and freshwater flooding. It considers how these impacts are likely to worsen in a wetter, hotter climate. And with input from WINK TV Chief Meteorologist Matt Devitt, *Historic Hurricanes of Fort Myers* provides useful tips and concrete recommendations for how to survive a storm ... and when and why to evacuate in advance of one. Readers will glean a greater appreciation of the factors that led to the settlement of this part of Florida. But given the region's unique risk for storm impacts in a changing climate, *Historic Hurricanes of Fort Myers* serves as the quintessential tropical cyclone survival guide.

fort myers florida hurricane history: Fort Myers Beach Mary Kaye Stevens, 2012 The once sleepy barrier island labeled Estero Island on navigational charts was dubbed Fort Myers Beach in the early part of the 20th century by city folks who spent their weekends on its wide, sandy beaches. Centuries earlier, an abundance of fish and other seafood made the 6.5-mile-long island attractive to its earliest inhabitants, the Calusa, as well as explorers, fisherfolk, and a pirate or two. In the late 19th century, early homesteaders were lured by stories of free tillable soil in a balmy climate surrounded by warm waters and ankle-deep shells. When pink shrimp, labeled Pink Gold, were found in nearby waters, another influx of residents arrived. Today, the island is best known as an energetic

resort community, but it retains the influence and charm of its remarkable past.

fort myers florida hurricane history: Lists of Florida Hurricanes ,

fort myers florida hurricane history: 1994 Atlantic Hurricane Season ,

fort myers florida hurricane history: Florida Almanac, 2012 Bernie McGovern, 2012-04-23

An amazing atlas, directory, tourist guide, reference manual, and history book all in one—for natives, visitors, and new residents in the Sunshine State! From basic history and tourist information to obscure facts—such as the size of the largest squash grown—this book has it all. After reading the list of derivatives for the name of each Florida county, the Lake City Reporter called a previous edition of this book “indispensable” and described it as containing “just about everything you ever wanted to know about Florida—and a good deal of information you probably never really thought about.” In addition to listings of national memorials, monuments, and landmarks, this volume contains road maps of each county, charts of rivers and waterways, and facts about Florida’s geography and climate. For those who are visiting the state, there are sections on major attractions, annual festivals, state parks, and lodging as well as regulations for boating, fishing, and hunting. The chapters on education, crime, residency, taxes, and utilities will be invaluable to people who are considering moving to Florida. Anyone interested in the history and settlement of the Sunshine State will appreciate the facts about Native American cultures and the chronology of major events in Florida’s past. Also included are various statistics and a hurricane survival guide. Packed with information and including a detailed index, it’s a useful, comprehensive reference—and a fascinating resource for geography lovers.

fort myers florida hurricane history: 2004 Atlantic Hurricane Season ,

fort myers florida hurricane history: Florida Hurricanes of 1950 Donald Charles Bunting, 1951

fort myers florida hurricane history: Hurricanes Pat J. Fitzpatrick, 2005-11-10 From killer storms to their implications for the insurance premiums of U.S. residents, this much-awaited update explores the ecological, social, and economic consequences of hurricanes and their effects on both coastal and inland areas. In September 1776 the so-called Hurricane of Independence hit Canada and the northeastern United States, leading to 4,170 deaths. In 1900 around 8,000 perished in the Galveston Hurricane and the resulting tidal surge. Coastal defenses, early warning systems, and evacuation procedures have improved enormously. However, hurricanes still pose a potentially devastating threat to life and property, especially in coastal regions of the United States and the Caribbean. What causes these extreme storms? How can we best defend ourselves? *Hurricanes: A Reference Handbook* explores the historical, ecological, economic, and social dimensions of hurricanes in North America. Synthesizing literature from a wide range of authoritative sources, this book is an invaluable guide to hurricanes and their impact and is essential reading for students, scientists, mariners, and coastal residents alike.

fort myers florida hurricane history: Storm of the Century Willie Drye, 2019-08 In 1934, hundreds of jobless World War I veterans were sent to the remote Florida Keys to build a highway from Miami to Key West. The Roosevelt Administration was making a genuine effort to help these down-and-out vets, many of whom suffered from what is known today as post-traumatic stress disorder. But the attempt to help them turned into a tragedy. The supervisors in charge of the veterans misunderstood the danger posed by hurricanes in the low-lying Florida Keys. In late August 1935, a small, stealthy tropical storm crossed the Bahamas, causing little damage. When it entered the Straits of Florida, however, it exploded into one of the most powerful hurricanes on record. But US Weather Bureau forecasters could only guess at its exact position, and their calculations were well off the mark. The hurricane that struck the Upper Florida Keys on the evening of September 2, 1935 is still the most powerful hurricane to make landfall in the US. Supervisors waited too long to call for an evacuation train from Miami to move the vets out of harm’s way. The train was slammed by the storm surge soon after it reached Islamorada. Only the 160-ton locomotive was left upright on the tracks. About 400 veterans were left unprotected in flimsy work camps. Around 260 of them were killed. This is their story, with newly discovered photos and stories of some of the heroes of the

Labor Day 1935 calamity.

fort myers florida hurricane history: Preliminary Reports on Hurricanes and Tropical Storms United States. Office of Meteorological Operations, 1972

fort myers florida hurricane history: Encyclopedia of Hurricanes, Typhoons, and Cyclones, Third Edition David Longshore, 2020-06-01 Praise for the previous edition: ...a strong pick for any collection strong in weather science at the high school or college levels.—Midwest Book Review The entries in the encyclopedia make great reading...has considerable merit and most libraries will want to purchase the volume for their reference collections.—American Reference Books Annual ...comprehensive, highly readable...Recommended.—Choice ...a fact-filled work with articles that are informative and accessible to both student and lay reader...a reasonable and worthwhile investment for both academic and public libraries...larger libraries may want this title for their circulating collections as well.—Against the Grain Now in its third edition, this comprehensive encyclopedia covers all major aspects of tropical cyclone activity. Hundreds of extensively cross-referenced A-to-Z entries detail cyclonic storms in meteorology, history, and culture, along with accessible definitions of technical terms and engaging narratives that capture the dramatic intensity of tropical storms, hurricanes, typhoons, and cyclones and the devastation and loss that often resulted. Hurricanes Andrew, Dean, Felix, Gilbert, Wilma, Sandy, and Maria are covered in detail in this comprehensive reference, as well as the most destructive and deadly tropical cyclone witnessed in the United States in the last 50 years—Hurricane Katrina.

fort myers florida hurricane history: Roads Through the Everglades Bruce D. Epperson, 2016-06-21 In 1915, the road system in south Florida had changed little since before the Civil War. Travelling from Miami to Ft. Myers meant going through Orlando, 250 miles north of Miami. Within 15 years, three highways were dredged and blasted through the Everglades: Ingraham Highway from Homestead, 25 miles south of Miami, to Flamingo on the tip of the peninsula; Tamiami Trail from Miami to Tampa; and Conners Highway from West Palm Beach to Okeechobee City. In 1916, Florida's road commission spent \$967. In 1928 it spent \$6.8 million. Tamiami Trail, originally projected to cost \$500,000, eventually required \$11 million. These roads were made possible by the 1920s Florida land boom, the advent of gasoline and diesel-powered equipment to replace animal and steam-powered implements, and the creation of a highway funding system based on fuel taxes. This book tells the story of the finance and technology of the first modern highways in the South.

fort myers florida hurricane history: Weekly Weather and Crop Bulletin, 1959 Final yearly issue includes index of special articles. December through March issues contain reports of snow and ice conditions.

fort myers florida hurricane history: Hurricanes Michael Woods, Mary B. Woods, 2007-01-01 Explains why hurricanes occur, how we prepare for them and also examines the history of some of the most famous.

fort myers florida hurricane history: Encyclopedia of Hurricanes, Typhoons, and Cyclones, New Edition David Longshore, 2010-05-12 Presents a detailed encyclopedia of named hurricanes, typhoons and cyclones, descriptions of storm activity, definitions of meteorological terms, and more.

fort myers florida hurricane history: Ghosts of Florida's Gulf Coast Alan Brown, 2015-10-17 The only collection of ghost stories from the entire Gulf coast of Florida from Pensacola to Key West.

fort myers florida hurricane history: In the I of the Hurricane Rebecca A. Keen, 2024-07-18 After relocating to Florida, author Rebecca A. Keen lived in a condo on Charlotte Harbor in Punta Gorda, a small community north of Fort Myers. On September 28, 2022, as the eye of Hurricane Ian barreled toward the harbor, she waited in terror. Initially predicted to make landfall farther north, many had ignored the evacuation warnings, and all across southwest Florida, residents sheltered in place. Then, this unpredictable Category 5 hurricane unleashed a 500-year record storm surge, decimating entire towns. Nearly one year later, on August 26, 2023, Hurricane Idalia, a Category 4 storm, struck the Big Bend area of the state, causing chaos and destruction to its victims. In *The I of the Hurricane*, Keen visits the towns and beaches where each storm made landfall. Through weather

bulletins, text messages, and personal accounts, she shares meaningful insights and inspires hope in the face of the unimaginable. This narrative includes her personal, firsthand experience in the storms as well as stories from some of the survivors. She tells how families and entire communities united through the complete devastation of both Hurricane Ian and Idalia.

fort myers florida hurricane history: Library of Congress Catalog Library of Congress, 1965 A cumulative list of works represented by Library of Congress printed cards.

fort myers florida hurricane history: *Hurricanes of the Gulf of Mexico* Barry D. Keim, Robert A. Muller, 2009-08-31 The storm has entered the Gulf. For those who live or travel near the Gulf of Mexico, this ominous announcement commands attention, especially given the frequency and force of hurricane strikes in recent years. Since 2004, the shores around the Gulf of Mexico have been in the crosshairs for an increasing number of hurricanes and tropical storms, including Charley and Wilma in southwestern Florida and Ivan, Dennis, Katrina, Rita, Gustav, and Ike along the northern Gulf coast from Panama City to near Galveston. In this definitive guide, climatologists Barry D. Keim and Robert A. Muller examine the big picture of Gulf hurricanes -- from the 1800s to the present and from Key West, Florida, to Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula -- providing an extraordinary compilation and interpretation of the entire region's hurricane and tropical storm history. Drawing from their own research and from National Hurricane Center records, Keim and Muller examine numerous individual Gulf storms, considering each hurricane's origin, oceanic and atmospheric influences, seasonality, track, intensity, size, point of landfall, storm surge, and impact on life, property, and the environment. They describe the unique features of the Gulf that influence the development of hurricanes, such as the loop current and its eddies, and identify areas of the coastline that are more or less vulnerable because of physical environment, socioeconomic environment, or both. They point out that the increase in population along the Gulf Coast over the past century has led to a rise in hurricane damage as once sparse coastlines are now lined with residents, commerce, and industry. In addition, they assess predicted hurricane activity for coming years in light of competing climate theories as well as cyclical patterns over the past century. Keim and Muller begin their book by scrutinizing the Gulf's deadliest storm, the Galveston Hurricane of 1900, whose victims received little to no warning of its approach. They then retrace 2005's Hurricane Katrina, the most costly storm, using NHC advisories and reports. Their comparison of these two catastrophic events shows that despite 105 years of tremendous technological advances, hurricanes remain ultimately rather unpredictable and human warning, readiness, and response measures continue to be imperfect. Keim and Muller also detail other memorable Gulf storms -- the Labor Day Hurricane of 1935, Audrey, Betsy, Camille, Gilbert, Andrew, Wilma, and more -- and give the hurricane strike records from 1901 to 2005 at thirty locations around the Gulf. They extend the New Orleans hurricane strike record back to the middle of the nineteenth century, providing key insight into comparisons of storm activities during the two centuries. An epilogue summarizes the destructive 2008 hurricane season, including storms Dolly, Gustav, and Ike. Plentiful maps, charts, tables, graphs, and photos, along with anecdotal observations and an informative text, make *Hurricanes of the Gulf of Mexico* a captivating and useful volume for Gulf residents, storm trackers, or anyone fascinated by the weather.

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