

A tropical cyclone is a rotating, organized system of clouds and thunderstorms that originates over tropical or subtropical waters and has a closed low-level circulation. Tropical cyclones rotate counterclockwise in the Northern Hemisphere. They are classified as follows:

Tropical Depression A tropical cyclone with maximum sustained winds of 38 mph (33 knots) or less.

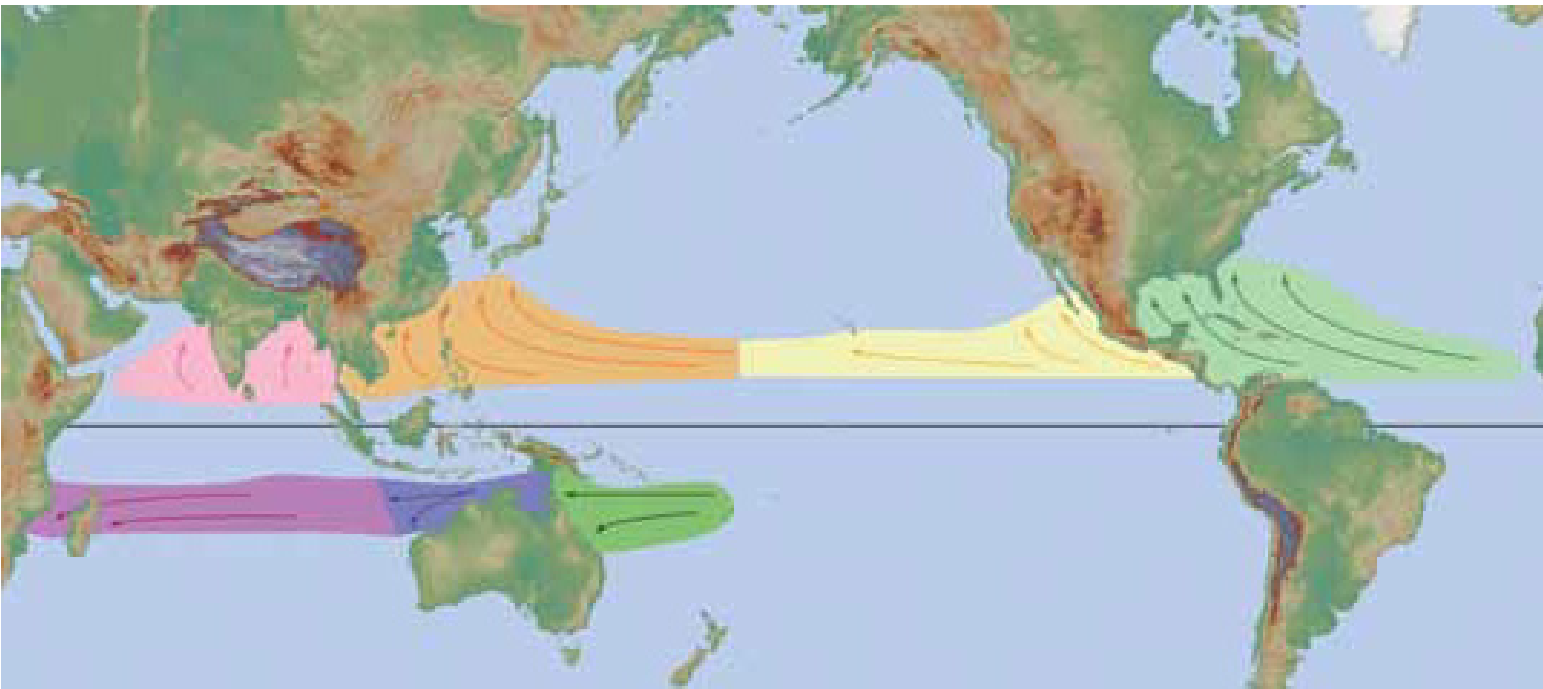
Tropical Storm A tropical cyclone with maximum sustained winds of 39 to 73 mph (34 to 63 knots).

Hurricane A tropical cyclone with maximum sustained winds of 74 mph (64 knots) or higher.

In the western North Pacific, hurricanes are called typhoons; similar storms in the Indian Ocean and South Pacific Ocean are called cyclones.

Major Hurricane A tropical cyclone with maximum sustained winds of 111 mph (96 knots) or higher, corresponding to a Category 3, 4 or 5 on the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale.

Tropical cyclones forming between 5 and 30 degrees North latitude typically move toward the west. Sometimes the winds in the middle and upper levels of the atmosphere change and steer the cyclone toward the north and northwest. When tropical cyclones reach latitudes near 30 degrees North, they often move northeast.

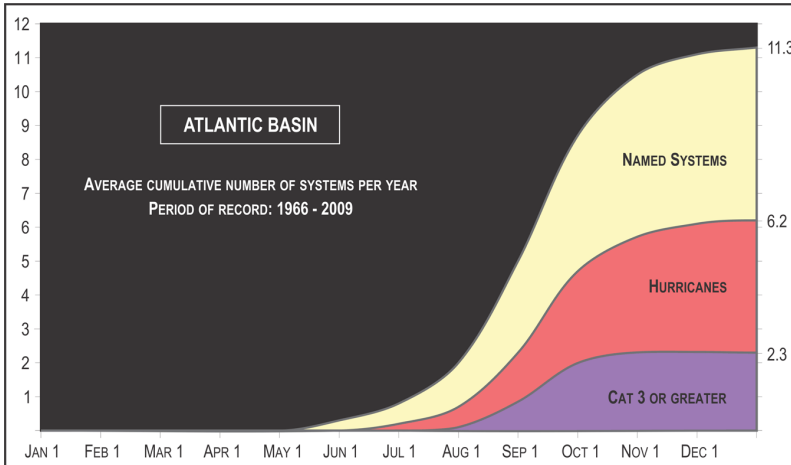


Tropical Cyclone formation regions with mean tracks. Source: <https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/climo/>

Atlantic & Eastern Pacific Climatology

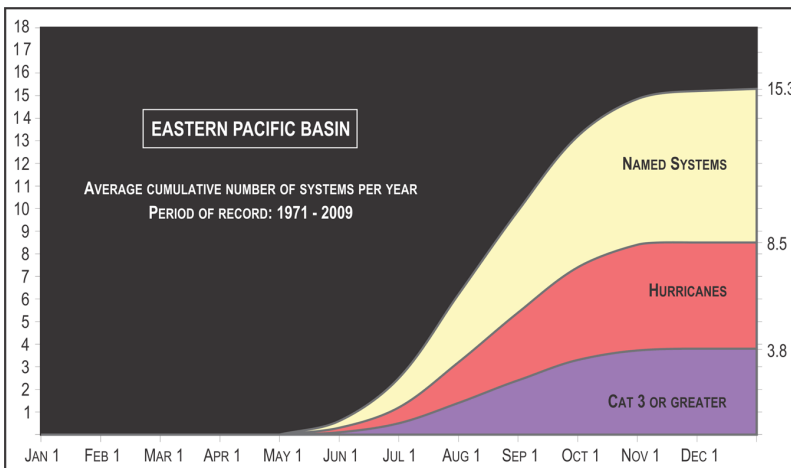
The Atlantic hurricane season runs from June 1st to November 30th, and the Eastern Pacific hurricane season runs from May 15th to November 30th. The Atlantic basin includes the Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea, and Gulf of Mexico. The Eastern Pacific basin extends to 140°W.

The following figures and tables describe the progress of a typical hurricane season in terms of the total number of tropical systems and hurricanes produced throughout the year in the Atlantic and East Pacific basins.



The average cumulative number of Atlantic systems per year, 1966-2009.

Source: <https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/climo/>



The average cumulative number of Eastern Pacific systems per year, 1971-2009.

Source: <https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/climo/>

In the figures, curves represent the average cumulative production of all named tropical systems, all hurricanes, and those hurricanes which were Category 3 or stronger in those basins.

For example, by the beginning of September in an average year we would expect to have had four named systems, two of which would be hurricanes and one of which would be of category 3 or greater in strength.

The tables on the next page list benchmark dates when a given number of tropical systems, hurricanes, or category 3 storms should have been generated.



Progress of the average Atlantic season (1966-2009).

Date upon which the following number of events would normally have occurred.

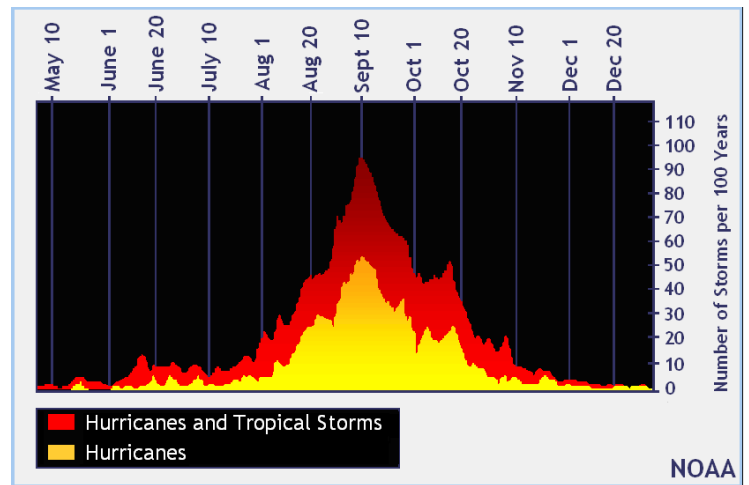
No.	Named Systems	Hurricanes	Category 3 or Greater
1	July 9	August 10	September 4
2	August 1	August 28	October 3
3	August 13	September 9	-
4	August 23	September 21	-
5	August 31	October 7	-
6	September 8	November 23	-
7	September 16	-	-
8	September 24	-	-
9	October 4	-	-
10	October 19	-	-
11	November 23	-	-

Progress of the average eastern Pacific season (1971-2009).

Date upon which the following number of events would normally have occurred.

No.	Named Systems	Hurricanes	Category 3 or Greater
1	June 10	June 26	July 19
2	June 25	July 14	August 19
3	July 5	July 29	September 20
4	July 14	August 12	-
5	July 22	August 26	-
6	July 30	September 9	-
7	August 7	September 24	-
8	August 15	October 15	-
9	August 24	-	-
10	September 1	-	-
11	September 10	-	-
12	September 19	-	-
13	September 28	-	-
14	October 11	-	-
15	November 5	-	-

The official hurricane season for the Atlantic Basin (the Atlantic Ocean, the Caribbean Sea, and the Gulf of Mexico) is from 1 June to 30 November. As seen in the graph at right, the peak of the season is from mid-August to late October. However, deadly hurricanes can occur anytime in the hurricane season.



Source: <https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/climo/>

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