

# The 2020 Atlantic hurricane season keeps raging with Hurricane Eta

The 28th named storm of an epic Atlantic hurricane season formed yesterday and is barreling toward Central America as Hurricane Eta today. That ties the record with 2005 for the most storms strong enough to earn a name in a single season.

This is also the 12th *hurricane* to form this season, which has only happened three times before, according to Phil Klotzbach, a research scientist in the Department of Atmospheric Science at Colorado State University.

## *2020 has been exceptionally active*

The World Meteorological Organization ran out of names on its alphabetical list in mid-September, with more than two months left in the 2020 season. That forced the agency to turn to Greek letters for storm names for just the second time in its history. But this is the first time Eta has been used since one storm went unnamed in 2005. (It wasn't spotted by the National Hurricane Center until a routine post-season review.)

High-resolution satellite imagery has made it easier for storm-trackers to identify storms that might not have been spotted 30 or 40 years ago, according to Klotzbach. But 2020 has still been exceptionally active, already clocking more than twice as many named storms compared to an average season.

This season's individual storms are also incredibly active, with some strengthening quickly over short periods of time. Eta is the fifth hurricane in a row to intensify rapidly this season. Rapidly intensifying storms like Eta are becoming more

common with climate change.

*Eta's Best Track file now shows it as a Category 2 hurricane with 100 mph sustained wind, making it the 9th storm this year, and 5th consecutive hurricane, to rapidly intensify.*

*Only one recent hurricane season, 1995, had more storms rapidly intensify with 10 total. [pic.twitter.com/IuHPFDoelx](https://pic.twitter.com/IuHPFDoelx)*

*– Tomer Burg (@burgwx) November 2, 2020*

The official hurricane season doesn't end until November 30th, so there's still time to break the 2005 record for most storms. "The odds certainly favor another storm or two forming in November," Klotzbach told *The New York Times* today. "The large-scale environment, especially in the Caribbean, is forecast to remain more conducive than normal for this late in the hurricane season."

Last month, Hurricane Delta became the record 10th named storm to make landfall in the US in a single season. 2020 also tied 2011 and 2017 for the record number of weather and climate disasters causing at least \$1 billion in losses.

Eta is expected to make landfall on the northeastern coast of Nicaragua as a major hurricane – perhaps as strong as a Category 4 – today. It could bring with it "life-threatening storm surge, catastrophic winds, flash flooding, and landslides," according to a 10AM ET advisory by the National Hurricane Center. If it lands as a Category 4 hurricane in Nicaragua, Klotzbach says it would be the strongest to slam into the country since Hurricane Felix, a Category 5 storm, in 2007. Felix was so devastating that the name – like Katrina and four others in 2005 – was retired after the end of the season.

<https://www.theverge.com/2020/11/2/21546117/hurricane-eta-2020-atlantic-season-records>