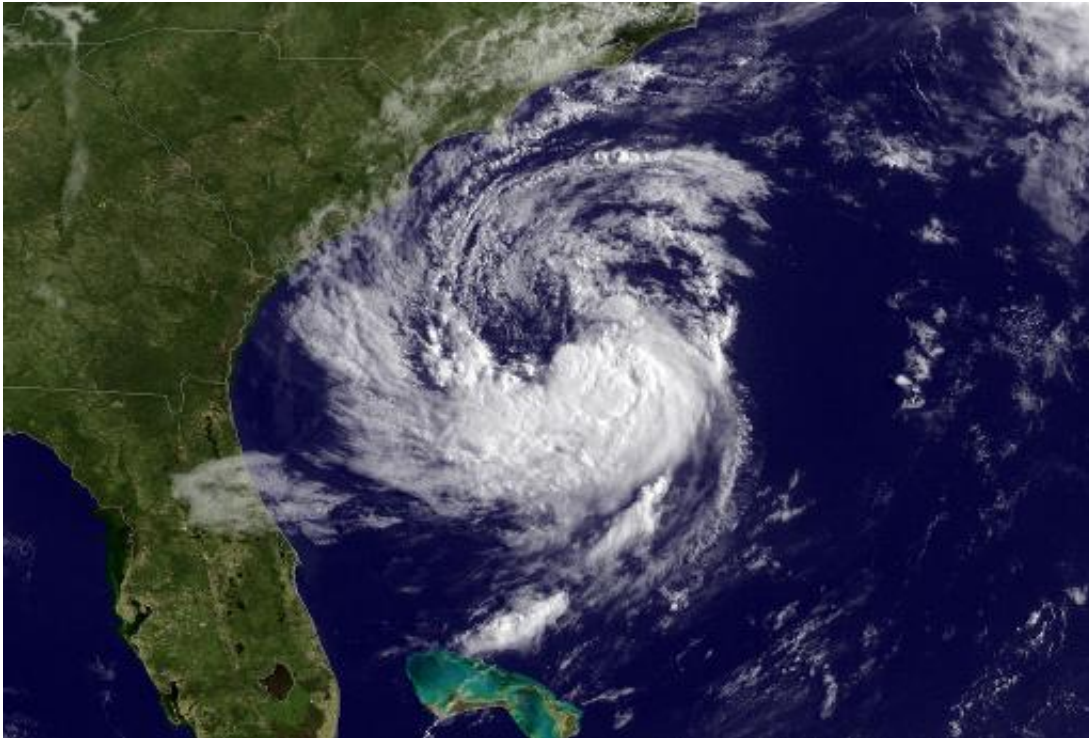


# Forecasters warn of tropical storm as Ana nears US southeast

May 8 2015, by Kerry Sheridan

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This NOAA satellite image shows subtropical storm Ana, expected to move toward the southeastern US over the next 48 hours, on May 8, 2015

It's not even hurricane season yet but forecasters on Friday issued the year's first tropical storm warning for Ana, which threatens to rain on Mother's Day in the southeastern United States.

With wind speeds topping 45 miles (75 kilometers) per hour, Ana is

currently a [subtropical storm](#) and is expected to scale up to a [tropical storm](#) later Friday as it gains strength off North and South Carolina, the National Hurricane Center said.

Ana is not expected to reach hurricane force by the time its winds and rain start lashing the coast late Saturday and early Sunday, which is Mother's Day in the United States.

Forecasters generally do not start naming big storms in the Atlantic until [hurricane season](#) begins on June 1.

But early-arriving storms are not all that uncommon, said hurricane expert James Franklin from NOAA's National Hurricane Center.

"It is unusual but it is not extraordinarily unusual," Franklin said, noting that there have been 23 cyclones in the month of May since records began in 1851.

Ana is the earliest subtropical cyclone in 12 years. Another one, also named Ana, appeared in April 2003.

As a [subtropical cyclone](#), Ana is a kind of hybrid storm, getting some of its energy from the warm water and some from the temperature contrast with the upper part of the atmosphere, Franklin said.

It is expected to blow toward the US coast over the next two days, lashing parts of North and South Carolina with up to six inches (15 centimeters) of rain Saturday and Sunday.

"In terms of the hazards that we are looking at, it is not going to be a major wind event," Franklin said.

"We also don't expect very much in terms of storm surge," he added.

Swells of one to two feet (30-60 centimeters) are forecast for Cape Hatteras, North Carolina as well as parts of South Carolina, with the possibility of some flooding at high tide.

Franklin said the primary threat to human life will be rip currents, which can form near beaches and are dangerous to swimmers.

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