

NASA's GPM examines Category Four Hurricane Lester

August 31 2016, by Rob Gutro

NASA Peered into Category Four Hurricane Lester using instruments aboard the Global Precipitation Measurement mission or GPM core satellite as it continued tracking through the Eastern Pacific Ocean.

The GPM core observatory satellite flew over Hurricane Lester on August 29, 2016 at 7:21 p.m. EDT (2321 UTC). Lester had winds of about 132 mph (115 knots) so it was classified as a category four hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson [hurricane wind scale](#). Lester has started weakening but is still predicted to be a minimal hurricane with winds of about 75 mph (65 knots) when it starts passing to the northeast of Hawaii on September 3, 2016.

Rainfall derived from data collected by GPM's Microwave Imager (GMI) and Dual-Frequency Precipitation Radar (DPR) instruments show that the [powerful hurricane](#) contained extremely heavy rainfall. Rain was measured by GPM's radar (DPR) falling at a rate of greater than 7.1 inches (181 mm) per hour in the southern side of Lester's eye wall.

At NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland, data from GPM's Radar (DPR Ku Band) were used to show the 3-D structure of precipitation around the small eye of the category four hurricane. GPM is a joint mission between NASA and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency JAXA.

On Aug. 31 Lester was still over 1,100 miles from Hawaii, so there are no coastal watches or warnings in effect in association with Lester,

although there are warnings in Hawaii for Madeleine, which lies to the west of Lester.

At 5 a.m. EDT (2 a.m. PDT/0900 UTC) the eye of Hurricane Lester was located near 17.7 degrees north latitude and 137.5 degrees west longitude. Lester is moving toward the west near 12 mph (19 kph). NOAA's Central Pacific Hurricane Center said that Lester should move toward the west or west-northwest at about the same forward speed over the next two days. The estimated minimum central pressure is 948 millibars.

Maximum sustained winds are near 140 mph (220 kph) with higher gusts. Lester is a category 4 hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale. Some weakening is forecast during the next 48 hours, though Lester is anticipated to remain a strong [hurricane](#).

For updated forecasts on Lester, visit NOAA's National Hurricane Center website at: <http://www.nhc.noaa.gov>.

Provided by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center

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