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NEWS, 5A

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FLORIDA HURRICANE SEASON FORECAST

Calmer with a 30% chance of calamity

An aerial view reveals destroyed beachfront homes in the aftermath of Hurricane Nicole in Daytona Beach on Nov. 11, 2022. RICARDO ARDUENGO/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

WeatherTiger
Ryan Truchelut
Guest columnist

Over the last ten years, WeatherTiger's seasonal forecasts have the highest skill of any group between March and June, and just barely lag NOAA's predictions in July. We focus on landfall and impact expectations, because our goal at WeatherTiger is to provide objective, accurate forecasts that are useful and useable.

Unlike the government's secret UFO stash of grainy videos of reflections, mirages, Michael Bay lens flares, and swamp gas reflected off the planet Venus, one thing credulous Mulders and skeptical Scullys can agree on is that the skies in 2025 were a bit less dark due to a coast-to-coast lack of U.S. hurricanes.

For those who have understandably Neuralyzed themselves to expunge memories of the last decade, 2017 through 2024 brought an unprecedented 10 major hurricane landfalls to the Gulf Coast, including six in Florida, which collectively tallied over $600 billion in damage.

Then, as suddenly as they arrived, they vanished, with zero close encounters of the Cat 3 kind (or any category) in 2025.

But can we remain alone in the universe in 2026? With lukewarm sea surface temperatures in the Atlantic and the arrival of a massive El Niño in the Pacific, WeatherTiger's forecast models continue to predict paranormal activity, in the sense that below average overall activity and fewer than usual U.S. hurricane landfalls are the most probable outcome.

But what's driving that prediction, and how much can we trust the (forecasting) authorities, anyway? It's time to explain some aerial phenomena.

Here's how many major hurricanes and tropical storms to expect in 2026

Before digging in, an introduction for new readers, or re-introduction for

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Coffee chain opens new location

DeonTay Smith
Panama City News Herald
USA TODAY NETWORK

MARY ESTHER – 7 Brew Coffee has announced its newest location at 490 Mary Esther Blvd.

The popular coffee stand continues its expansion in the Florida Panhandle. It seems to be gaining more and more popularity. The Greater Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce announced the new opening on Facebook.

7 Brew was founded in 2017 as a trailer truck with an espresso machine. The ownership decided to turn the truck into a coffee shop in Fayetteville, Arkansas. The shop now has more than 350 locations in over 30 states.

The stand also has another Fort Walton Beach location at 799 Beal Parkway.

In addition to coffee, 7 Brew features energy drinks, shakes, smoothies, teas, lemonades and a wide variety of blended drinks.

"We're redefining the drive-thru experience with a purpose-driven culture and deliciously imaginative drinks like you've never tasted before. Revolutionary experiences with people are why we exist and why we will continue to exist," the 7 Brew website says.

Those interested in joining the 7 Brew Coffee team in Fort Walton Beach should apply at 7crew.7brewcareers.com

Panama City Beach Chamber of Commerce, and Bay Arts Alliance representatives tour 7 Brew Coffee, a new drive-thru coffee shop in Panama City on May 21, 2025.
TYLER ORSBURN/NEWS HERALD

Genevieve Gallagher was infected with vibrio vulnificus after swimming in Santa Rosa Sound off Pensacola Beach, on July 27.
PROVIDED BY GENEVIEVE GALLAGHER

Deadly Vibrio season starts; 5 infected

Anne Geggis
Lakeland Ledger
USA TODAY NETWORK

File this under, "Florida is trying to kill you."

It's rare, but be warned. Vibrio vulnificus, the horrific infection nicknamed the "flesh-eating" bacteria that disproportionately affects the Sunshine State, is entering its most active season, from June to September, and this year's cases already are outstripping what was counted by this time last year.

The infectious disease, caused by a naturally occurring bacterium in brackish, warming water, is both waterborne and foodborne. A rare infection leading to the disease was found in Miami-Dade County in the latter half of April—the fifth counted this year—according to the Florida Department of Health. Its cause was not immediately known. But other cases have popped up this year in Hillsborough, Lee, Palm Beach and St. Johns counties, compared to the three cases counted by this time in 2025.

What is Vibrio vulnificus?

Experts expect the so-called flesh-eating disease caused by this bacterium will become more common as oceanic temperatures continue to warm,

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