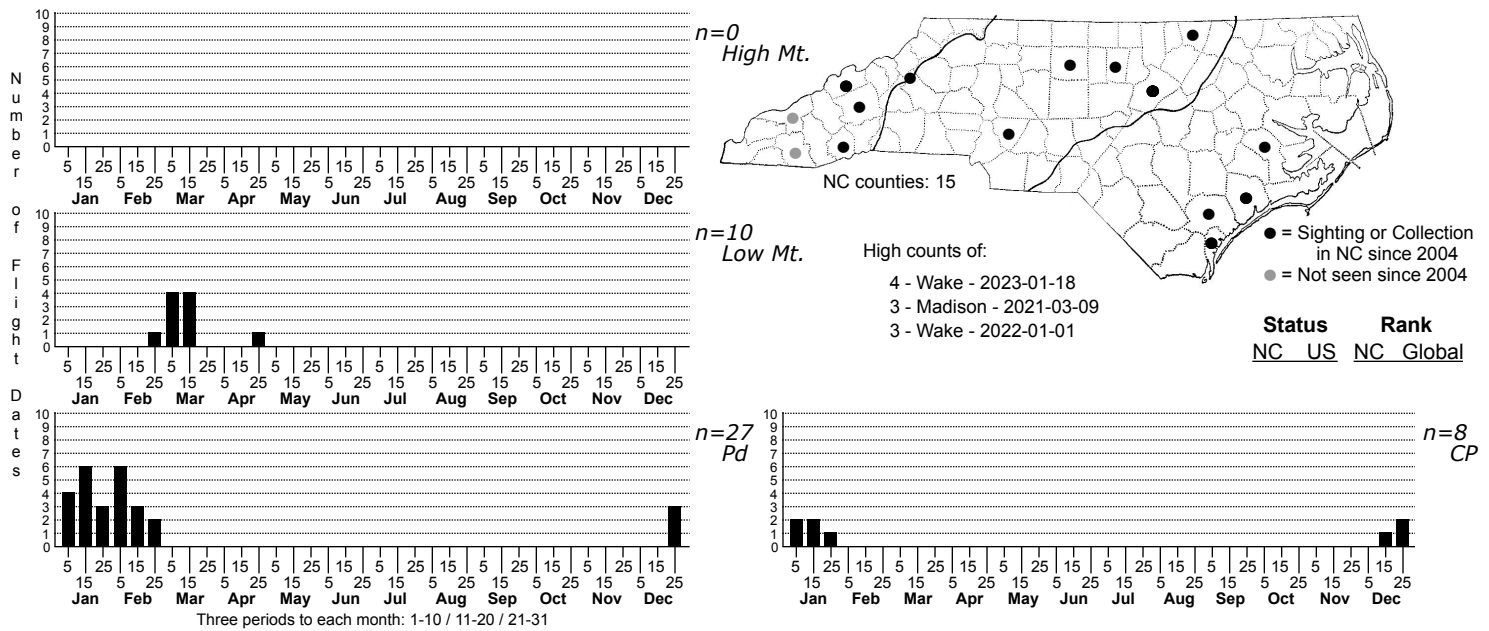


Feralia major Major Sallow



FAMILY: Noctuidae SUBFAMILY: Amphipyriinae TRIBE: Psaphidini

TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS: An isolated genus with 7 species worldwide, 1 palearctic, the other 6 nearctic, with 3 occurring in North Carolina.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984); Beadle and Leckie (2012)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1954); Poole (1995)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Maier et al. (2011); Wagner et al. (2011)

ID COMMENTS: This spectacularly patterned moth is perfectly camouflaged for life among the moss and lichen dominated pine forests across the state. *Feralia major* is similar in pattern to *F. jocosa* and *comstocki* but typically shaded with black on the forewings. The hindwing is green along the outer margin, which is diagnostic, especially in green forms of the species that lack the black shading. *F. comstocki* can also have a green marginal band on the hindwing but compared to *F. major*, the basal forewing line is quite different. In the Coastal Plain this is the only *Feralia* and the black form dominates, we have seen one green form from New Hanover County. Although recorded from the mountains, we have not seen the specimens and do not know which form(s) are there. Sexes are identical.

DISTRIBUTION: Possibly occurs statewide, although we have no records from much of the state.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Single brooded, flying only in late winter and early spring. In the Coastal Plain this species is active in late December and early January

HABITAT: North Carolina records range from xeric, coastal sandhills dominated by Longleaf Pines, to Piedmont reservoir shorelines, where Loblolly is the most common species of pine, to Cove Forests in the Mountains, where White Pine is typically the most common species of pine.

FOOD: Probably associated with hard pines, particularly Shortleaf, Virginia and Pond (and maybe Pitch). Wagner et al (2011) also list White Pine but that seems unlikely to be a major foodplant in North Carolina. We have, however, no actual caterpillar sightings in North Carolina. If they feed in the upper parts of Pond Pine in the Coastal Plain, finding caterpillars is unlikely. Definite foodplant choices in the wild are needed.

OBSERVATION_METHODS: Comes to light but no records from bait.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G5 [SU]

STATE PROTECTION: Has no legal protection, although permits are required to collect it on state parks and other public lands.

COMMENTS: We have few records for this species, probably due to its late winter flight period. However, it occupies a wide range in North Carolina and is associated with common host plants; it is therefore likely to be secure within the state, although more surveys of adults or larvae in order to determine its actual distribution, abundance, and habitat associations.