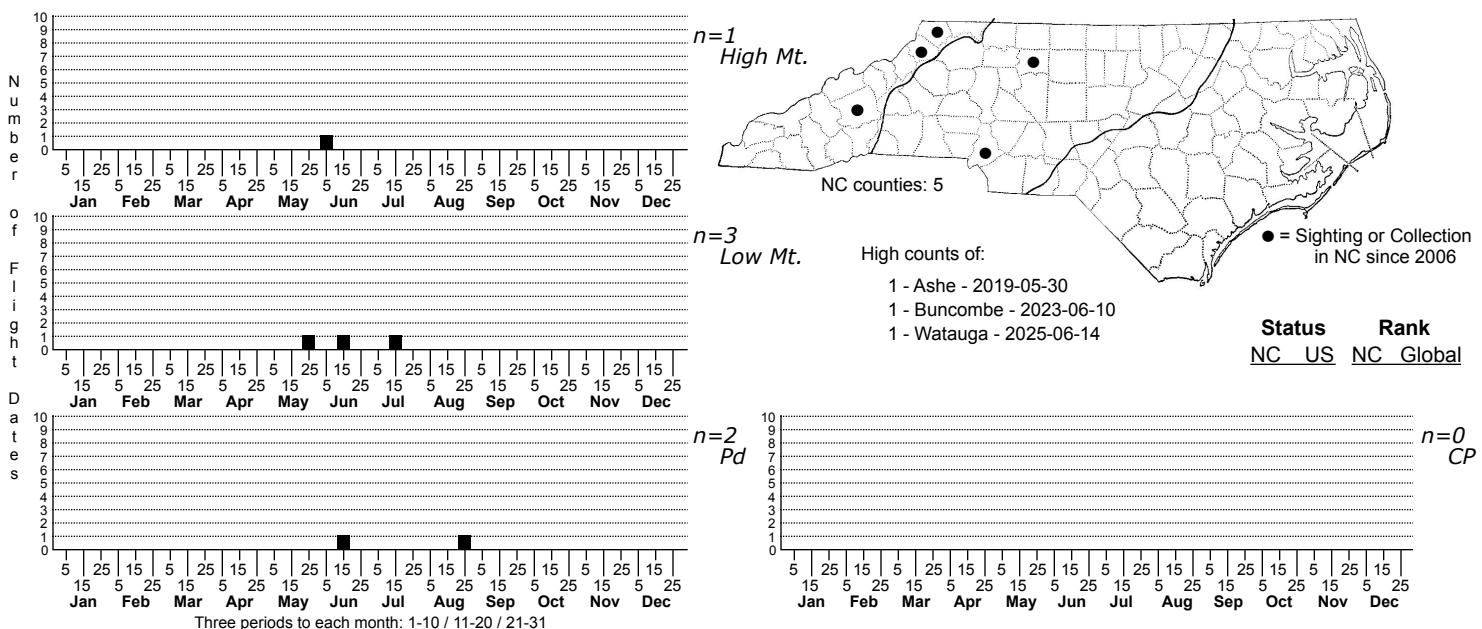


Menesta tortriciformella None



FAMILY: Depressariidae SUBFAMILY: Stenomatinae TRIBE:

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS:

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Duckworth (1964)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Braun (1915b)

ID COMMENTS: *Menesta tortriciformella* is a small moth with a blackish-brown forewing that has a short, white, transverse line near the middle of the wing and a white apical fringe. The following detailed description is based on that of Duckworth (1964). The face is white and the labial palp white with fuscous shading. The thorax is brown dorsally, with a grayish hue. The forewing is uniformly blackish-brown with greenish-violet reflections, with the only conspicuous mark being a short, transverse, white line below the costa at around two-thirds the wing length from the base. The apical cilia is usually brown at the base and white at the outer margin, but in some individuals the entire fringe is brown. The hindwing is a lighter brown, with the cilia brown and tipped with white apically. The legs are white but shaded anteriorly with fuscous, especially at the apex of the tibia and the apices of the tarsi. The hindtibia has conspicuously long hairs.

Menesta tortriciformella can be confused with *M. melanella*, but the latter has a large white spot near the middle of the wing that touches the costa, versus a short white line that does not reach the costa in *M. tortriciformella*.

DISTRIBUTION: *Menesta tortriciformella* occurs in eastern North America, including portions of southern Canada (Ontario; Quebec; New Brunswick; Nova Scotia) and much of the eastern US east of the Mississippi River, where it occurs from New Hampshire and Vermont southwestward to northern Florida, Georgia and Alabama, and westward to Mississippi, Tennessee, western Kentucky and Illinois. Isolated records are also known from eastern Texas and Minnesota. This species is absent or rare in most of the southeastern Coastal Plain. As of 2025, all of our records are from the Piedmont and Blue Ridge.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults have been found from April through August in different areas of the range, with a seasonal peak in May through July. As of 2025, our records range from late-May through late-August.

HABITAT: Local populations are commonly found in open woods along forest edges and other open habitats.

FOOD: The larvae appear to use several hosts, including those from different families of plants. The reported hosts include American Hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*), chestnut (*Castanea* sp.), American Hazelnut (*Corylus americana*) and Tall Blackberry (*Rubus villosus*) (Braun, 1915b; Robinson et al., 2010; Eiseman, 2024).

OBSERVATION METHODS: The adults are often seen resting on the upper surfaces of leaves during the day; they do not appear to be strongly attracted to lights.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS:

STATE PROTECTION:

COMMENTS: We have only six records as of 2025, which may reflect the fact that the adults are not strongly attracted to lights.