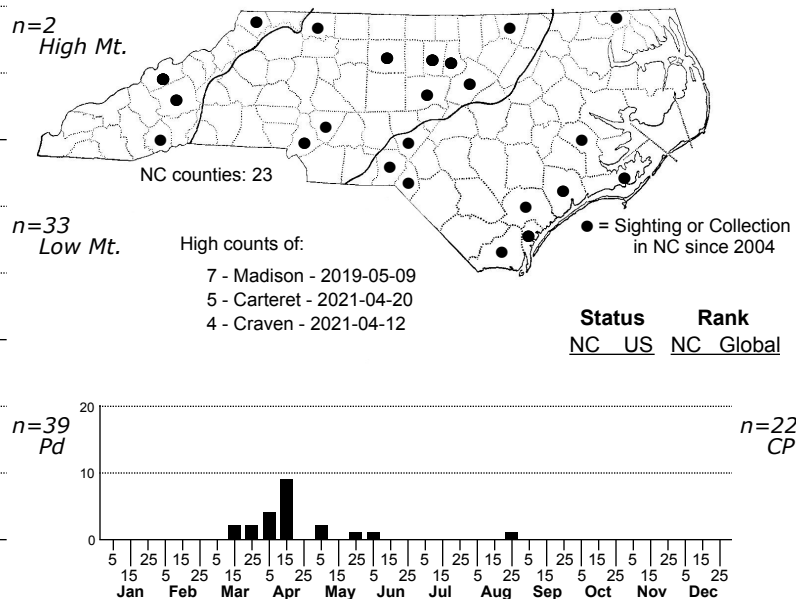
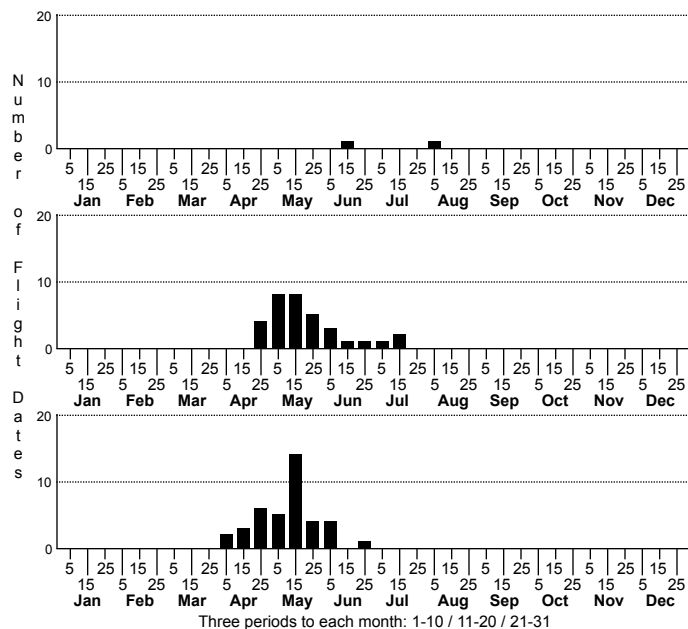


Decantha boreasella Reticulated Decantha Moth



FAMILY: Oecophoridae SUBFAMILY: Oecophorinae TRIBE: Oecophorini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: *Decantha* is a small genus with a largely holarctic distribution. There are currently seven recognized species, including four in North America.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Beadle and Leckie (2012)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Clarke (1941); Hodges (1974)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Forbes (1923)

ID COMMENTS: The following description is based primarily of that of Clarke (1941). The labial palp is white and overlaid and speckled with black. The antenna is checkered black and white. The head is black with a reddish luster, and mixed with white posterodorsally. The thorax and ground color of the forewing are shining golden, and the base of the tegula and collar are narrowly black. A black band occurs at the base of forewing, with the outer margin concave and edged with white. The remainder of the wing consists of a reticulated pattern of dark brown marks on a golden background. The dark marks consists of a triangular costal mark at about one-third the wing length, a more squarish costal mark at about two-thirds, a terminal costal mark near the apex, and a somewhat squarish or U-shaped mark on the inner margin at about one-half. These have white margins on one or both sides, and are interconnected by a line of white and/or black scales to form a reticulated pattern. The cilia are golden ochreous and often have dark scales at the base that spill over to the termen. The hindwing is dark fuscous and the cilia shining yellowish fuscous. The legs are black and annulated with white at the joints. The abdomen is fuscous. *Decantha boreasella* is similar to *D. stecia*, but the two differ in size (forewing length = 4.0-6.5 mm for *D. boreasella* versus 3.0-3.5 mm for *D. stecia*; Hodges, 1974). In addition, *D. stecia* is somewhat paler, has a black thorax (light golden in *D. boreasella*), and has less dark pigmentation on the inner half of the wing tip.

DISTRIBUTION: *Decantha boreasella* is found in eastern North America. The range includes southern Canada (Ontario; Quebec) and most of the eastern US from Maine to southern Florida, and westward to Minnesota, Kansas, Oklahoma, and eastern Texas. This species occurs statewide in North Carolina except for the higher elevations in the mountains.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Adults have been recorded from January through August in different areas of the range, As of 2020, our records extend from mid-March through early July. Populations appear to be univoltine in North Carolina, with a peak in activity from mid-March to mid-April in the Coastal Plain, and during May elsewhere.

HABITAT: The preferred habitats are unknown, but larvae are suspected of requiring dead pines for foraging. Most of our records are from partially wooded residential neighborhoods.

FOOD: Robinson et al. (2010) list pines (*Pinus* sp.) and a fern (*Polystichum* sp.) as hosts but the sources for these records are not known. The larvae are thought to feed on dead pines and burrow beneath bark (Forbes, 1923).

OBSERVATION_METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR [S4S5]

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

COMMENTS: This species is widespread across the state and seemingly secure.