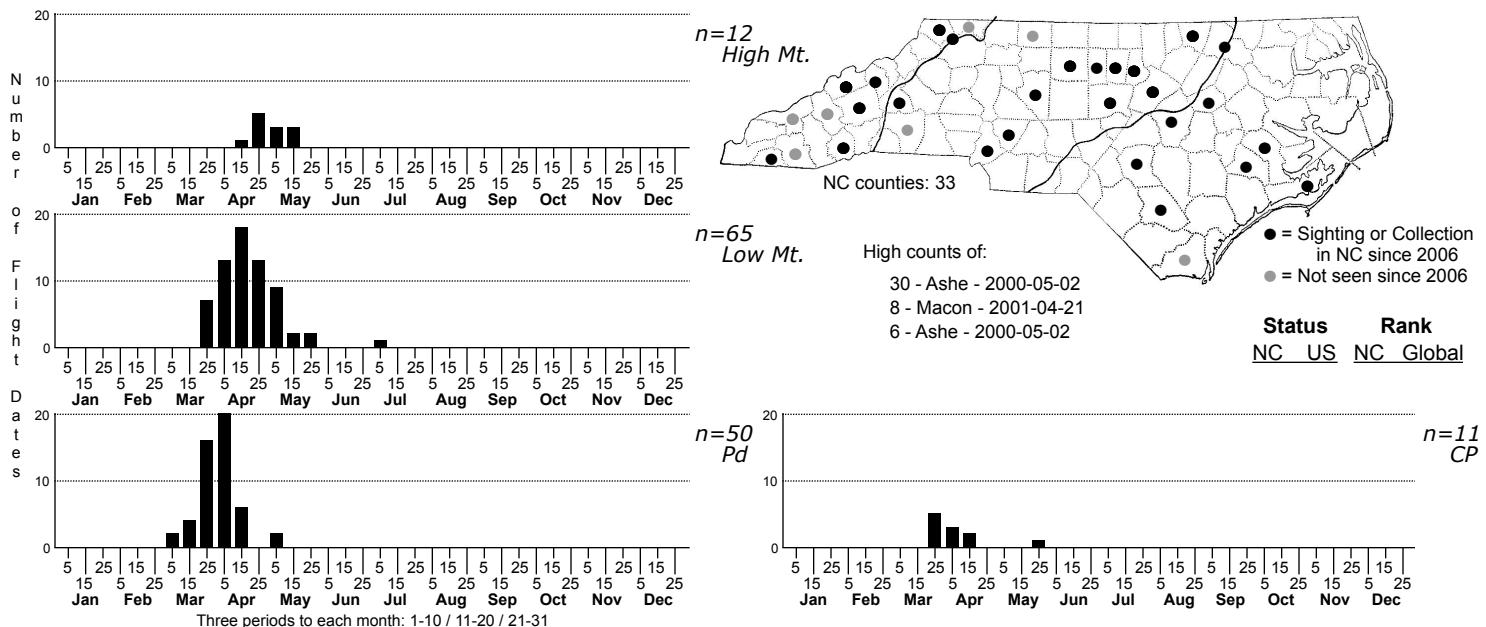


# *Achatia distincta* Distinct Quaker



FAMILY: Noctuidae SUBFAMILY: Noctuinae TRIBE: Orthosiini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: A monotypic genus found across most of eastern North America and throughout North Carolina. The genus is not closely related to other known genera but the species was included in *Morrisonia* by Forbes (1954).

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

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1954), as *Morrisonia distincta*

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

ID COMMENTS: Slightly similar to *Morrisonia latex* but smaller and more distinctly marked. Look for the black bar running between the white antemedian and postmedian lines. Sexes are similar.

DISTRIBUTION: This species is abundant in the Mountains and common in the Piedmont. Records from the Coastal Plain appear to be restricted to the floodplains and slopes along brownwater rivers.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Univoltine, it is on the wing early in the spring, from March into May

HABITAT: All of our records come from forests dominated by hardwoods, including wet, mesic, and fairly dry sites. We have no records, however, from Longleaf Pine, Peatland, or Maritime habitats despite the intensive surveys that have been conducted in them within North Carolina.

FOOD: Larvae are polyphagous, feeding on a very wide range of woody plants. Wagner (2005) lists apple (*Malus*), ash (*Fraxinus*), birch (*Betula*), blackberry (*Rubus*), blueberry (*Vaccinium*), cherry (*Prunus*), hop-hornbeam (*Ostrya*), maple (*Acer*), oak (*Quercus*), tupelo (*Nyssa*), *Viburnum*, walnut (*Juglans*), and witch-hazel (*Hamamelis*). In North Carolina, we have a feeding record from Shagbark Hickory (*Carya ovata*).

OBSERVATION METHODS: Adults are readily attracted to light but we have no records from bait.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G5 SNR [S4S5]

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

COMMENTS: Although we only have a relatively small number of records for *Achatia*, this is probably due to its early spring flight. This species otherwise appears to secure in the state, since it is widespread at least across the western two-thirds of the state; occupies a wide range of hardwood habitats; and feeds on a very wide variety of host plants.