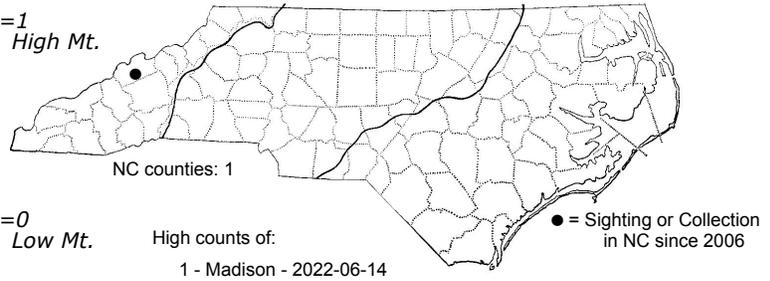
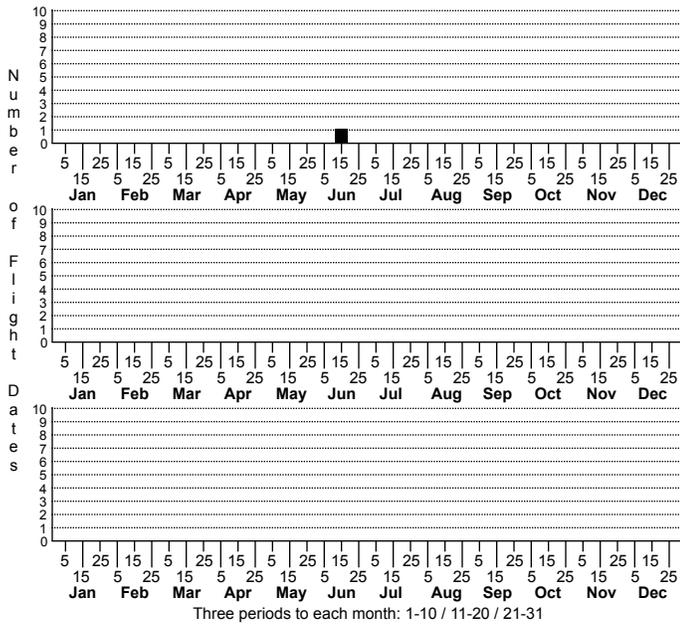
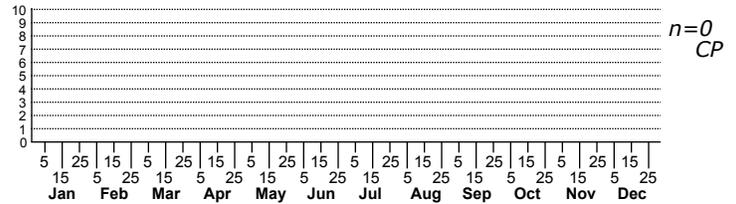


*Polix coloradella* Skunk Moth



Status		Rank	
NC	US	NC	Global



FAMILY: Oecophoridae SUBFAMILY: TRIBE: Oecophorini  
 TAXONOMIC\_COMMENTS:

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:  
 ONLINE PHOTOS:  
 TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS:  
 TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: *Polix coloradella* is a strikingly marked moth that has patterning that is reminiscent of that of a Striped Skunk. Most of the body is a rich dark-chocolate brown except for contrasting white lines and patches. The head is white above, while the thorax is dark brown centrally with a white line on each side. The forewing is also dark-brown except for a white streak that begins near the wing base on the inner margin. The white streak continues narrowly along the inner margin to near one-half the length of the wing, then angles inward and terminates before reaching the center of the wing. The line often expands to form a triangular spot at the point where it angles inward, and before narrowing towards the center of the wing. Specimens from the eastern US generally conform to this pattern, but those from western North America can deviate substantially.

DISTRIBUTION: *Polix coloradella* is broadly distributed across North America in cool, mesic, forested habitats. The northern part of the range includes Alaska and most of southern Canada from British Columbia eastward to New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. It extends southward from the Pacific Northwest to central California, and through the Rocky Mountain states to Colorado and northern New Mexico. In the eastern US the range extends from the Dakotas eastward through the Great Lakes region to the New England states, and southward through the Appalachian region to Pennsylvania, West Virginia and southeastern Kentucky. As of 2025, we have a single record from Madison County that is the southernmost record for the eastern US.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults have been observed from April through August in different areas of the range, with a peak in June and July. As of 2025, our one record is from mid-June.

HABITAT: Local populations are generally found in both deciduous and coniferous forests in cool climates. Our one record as of 2025 was from a mesic hardwood forest in the Blue Ridge.

FOOD: The larva commonly feed within decaying wood and cankers that are caused by fungi on pines, Douglas fir, alders, hawthorns and apples. They also feed within fungal bodies that are on dead wood, or immediately below tree bark where the fungal body is attached. (Yothers, 1942; Hodges, 1974; Lawrence and Powell, 1969; Powell and Opler, 2009). As of 2025, we do not have any host records for North Carolina.

OBSERVATION\_METHODS: The larvae are attracted to lights and have been reared from fungal bodies and cankers that were maintained indoors.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR [S1S3]

STATE PROTECTION:

COMMENTS: As of 2025, we have a single record of this species from a rich hardwood slope in the Blue Ridge. This appears to be the southernmost record for this species in the eastern US.