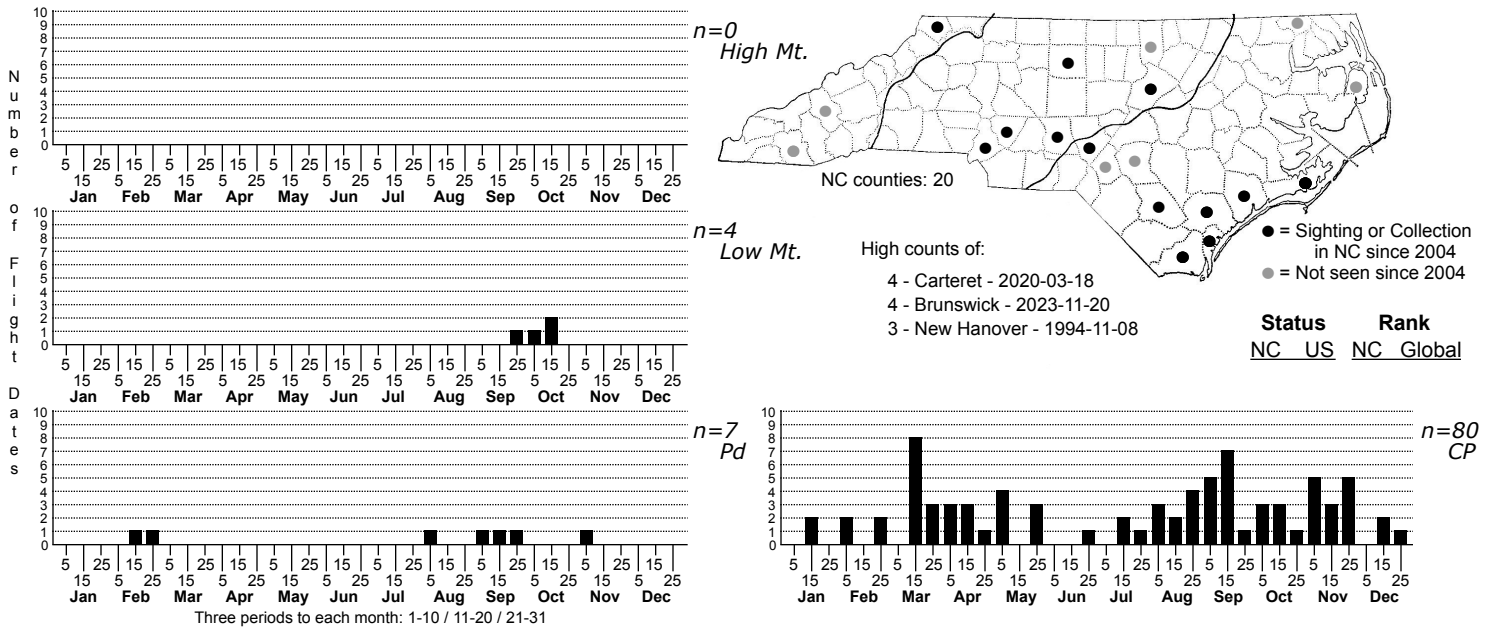


Agrotis malefida Rascal Dart Moth



FAMILY: Noctuidae SUBFAMILY: Noctuinae TRIBE: Noctuini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: One of twenty-three species in this genus that occur in North America north of Mexico (Lafontaine and Schmidt, 2010), seven of which have been recorded in North Carolina

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

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: A typical Dart, with a strong blackish claviform spot (Forbes, 1954). This spot strongly contrasts with the light brown ground color of the lower portion of the wing and is not preceded by a basal dash, as found in *Agrotis venerabilis* and *A. volubilis*. The orbicular is somewhat irregular but with an elongated extension; both the orbicular and reniform are distinctly darker than the dark shade that extends along the costa to the reniform. A small dark wedge may follow the reniform, similar but smaller than the mark found in *A. ipsilon*. The collar is blackish in this species, contrasting with the pale tegulae and thoracic crest. The hindwings are pure white in the males, but shaded with fuscous along the veins and towards the outer margin in the females. *A. venerabilis* and *A. volubilis* are similar but have a basal dash and more elongated claviform spots. *A. ipsilon* always has a long dark wedge beyond the reniform.

DISTRIBUTION: While most of our records come from the southeastern coastal plain, we also have scattered records from the Piedmont and low mountains. Possibly absent from higher elevations in the mountains.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Please refer to the flight charts.

HABITAT:

FOOD: Larvae are reported to feed on grasses and a variety of agricultural plants. Among the hosts listed by Pogue (2006) are clover, corn, cotton, onion, peas, and tomato. We do not have any feeding records in North Carolina.

OBSERVATION_METHODS:

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS:

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

COMMENTS: