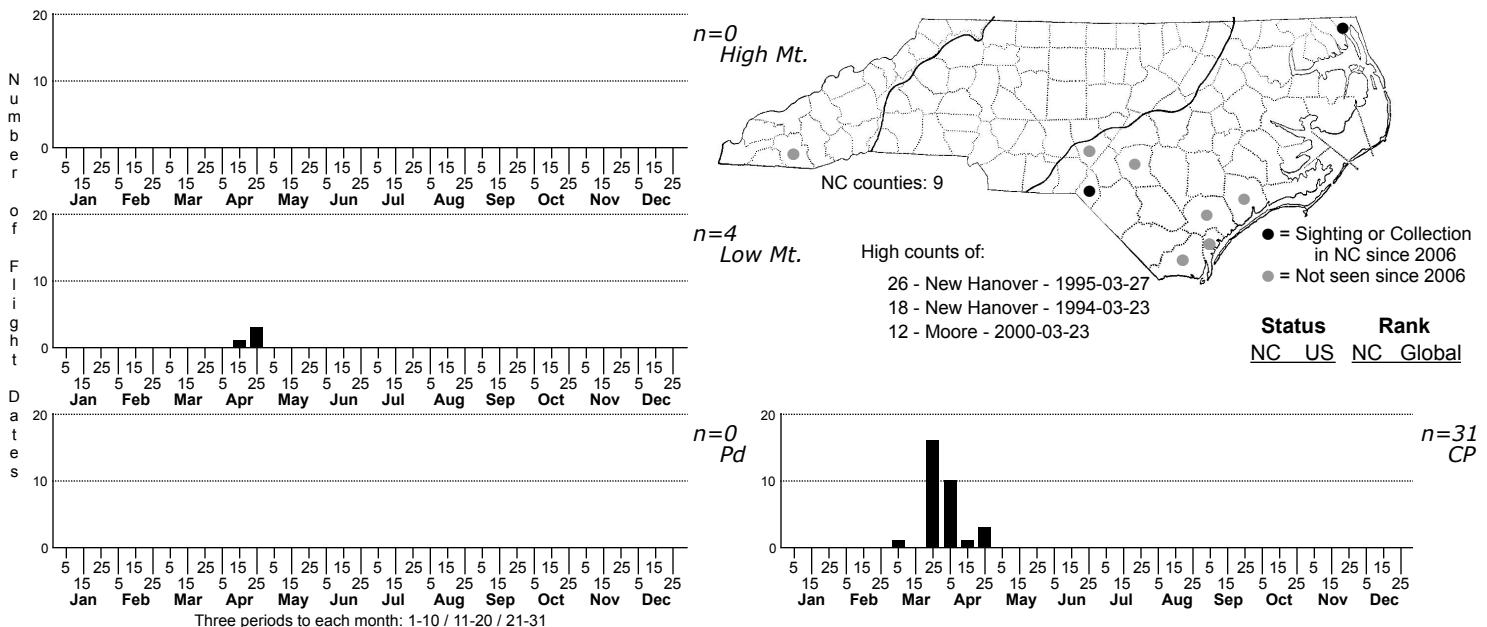


Feltia manifesta Obvious Dart



FAMILY: Noctuidae SUBFAMILY: Noctuinae TRIBE: Noctuini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: One of 18 species in this genus that occur in North America (Lafontaine, 2004), seven of which have been recorded in North Carolina. *Feltia manifesta* was previously included in the genus *Trichosilia*, which Lafontaine (2004) treats as a subgenus within *Feltia*. Nine other species are included in this subgenus, of which only *Feltia geniculata* occurs in North Carolina.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1954; as *Agrotis manifesta*); Lafontaine (2004)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Crumb (1956); Lafontaine (2004)

ID COMMENTS: A medium-sized Noctuine, with fairly broad forewings that range from fawn-brown to gray. The antemedian and postmedian lines are usually sharply marked and contrastingly black, as are the reniform and orbicular spots. Hind wings are a fairly dark fuscous. As noted by Lafontaine, the gray form is similar in appearance to *Eucoptocnemis dapsilis*, which occurs in the same habitats in the southern part of our Coastal Plain. However, the two species do not overlap in flight period, with *manifesta* flying in the spring and *dapsilis* flying in the fall (see Lafontaine for a description of other morphological differences).

DISTRIBUTION: Most of our records come from the Coastal Plain, including the Northern Coastal Plain, at least in maritime dune habitats, and more widely in the Southern Coastal Plain, including the Fall-line Sandhills. It also occurs in at least the southern part of the Mountains, but its distribution in that region needs to be further documented.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Flies in the late winter to early spring

HABITAT: The majority of our records come from xeric sandy habitats, including Maritime Dry Grasslands, Coastal Fringe Sandhills, aeolian sandridges, and Xeric Sandhill Scrub. This is consistent with the habitat description given by Lafontaine (2004), who also mentions records from limestone barrens. While our montane records are not associated with limestone, they come from dry ridges dominated by oak-hickory forests.

FOOD: Host plants appear to be unrecorded in the wild, but Crumb (1956) reared larvae on White Clover (<i>Trifolium repens</i>). This suggests that they feed on forbs but the actual host species needs to be determined by field observations.

OBSERVATION METHODS: Comes well to blacklights. Whether they also come to bait is unknown.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G4 S3S4

STATE PROTECTION: Listed as Significantly Rare by the Natural Heritage Program. That designation, however, does not confer any legal protection, although permits are required to collect it on state parks and other public lands.

COMMENTS: This species appears to be a narrow habitat specialist, at least in the Coastal Plain. Recent discoveries have extended its known range within the state, however, which reduces its apparent conservation status. We recommend that it now be taken off NHP's Significantly Rare list and placed on the Watch List instead.