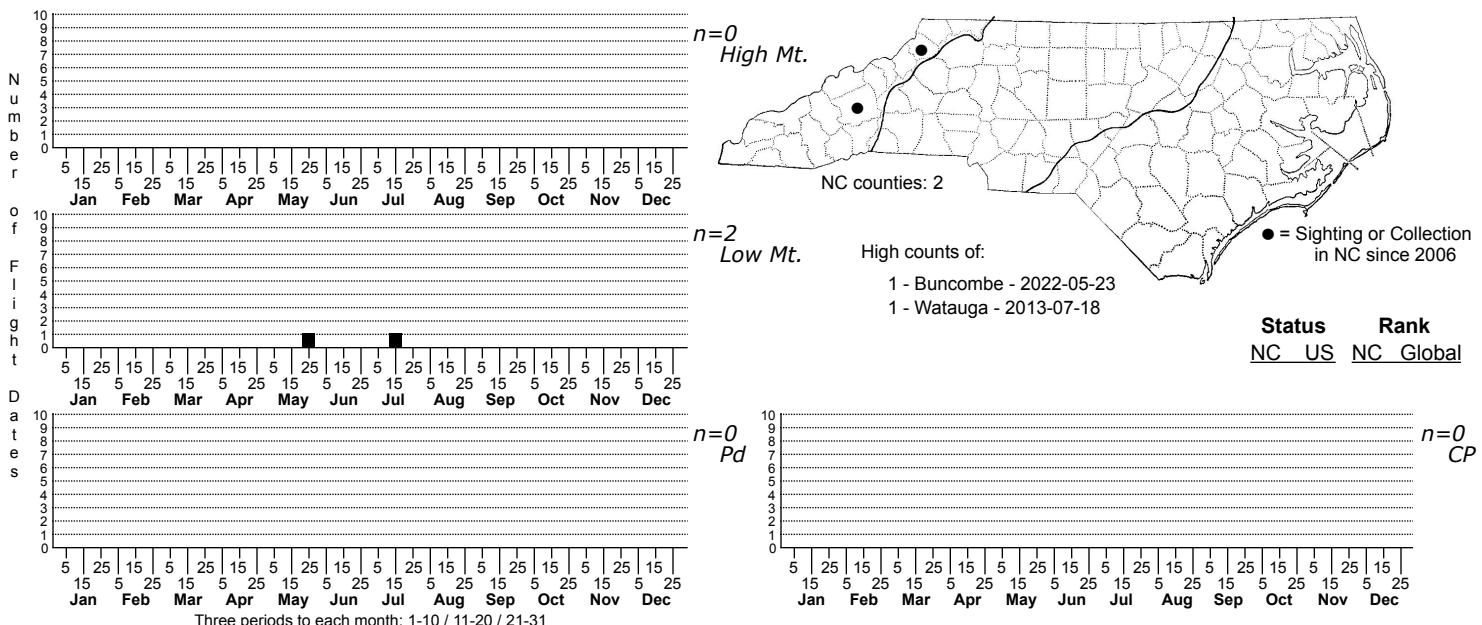


Stathmopoda aenea No common name



FAMILY: Oecophoridae SUBFAMILY: Stathmopodinae TRIBE: [Stathmopodinae]

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS:

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Braun (1918)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Braun (1918)

ID COMMENTS: This is a small moth with a white-tipped antenna and a golden-brassy forewing with a dark spot at the base. The following description is based on that of Braun (1918), who collected specimens from the Cincinnati area. The labial palp and face are pale buff, while the head is yellowish, but slightly purplish opalescent or brownish in the female. The basal segment of the antenna is yellowish and the stalk dark brown, except for the last six or seven segments that are white. The antenna of the male has long, sparse cilia in the basal half, with short cilia in the apical half. The thorax is purplish opalescent, and the forewing dark golden-brassy, but darker towards the apex. A velvety dark-brown spot is present at the base of costa that is surrounded by opalescent purple, which gradually fades into the ground color. The purplish opalescence is less noticeable in the female. The hindwing is brownish brassy. The hind tibia is bright yellow, with the upper edge and spines orange-tinged, and the apex black, while the hind tarsi is blackish above, with whorls of yellowish spines. The abdomen is concolorous with the hindwing at the base, but becomes dark-brown towards the tip. The anal tuft of the male is yellowish.

< i > Stathmopoda aenea < /i > is superficially similar to *< i > S. elyella < /i >*, but has a larger brown spot at the base of the wing, a white-tipped antenna (uniformly yellowish-brown in the latter), and lacks a conspicuous dark brown to light fuscous longitudinal streak on the forewing.

DISTRIBUTION: *< i > Stathmopoda aenea < /i >* is found in eastern North America where it has been found in southern Canada (Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland) and in the US in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Maryland, Pennsylvania, southern Ohio, northern Michigan, West Virginia and North Carolina. As of 2025, we have only two records and both are from the Blue Ridge.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults have been found from April through September in different areas of the range, with a seasonal peak commonly in June and July. As of 2025, our two records are from late-May and mid-July.

HABITAT: Local populations are associated with fern-rich woodlands.

FOOD: The larvae feed on the sori and spores of ferns (Braun (1918); Microleps.org). The reported hosts include the New York Fern (*< i > Amauropelta noveboracensis < /i >*), Lady Fern (*< i > Athyrium filix-femina < /i >*), Silvery Spleenwort (*< i > Deparia acrostichoides < /i >*) and Glade Fern (*< i > Diplaziopsis pycnocarpa < /i > = < i > Homalosorus pycnocarpos < /i >*). Larvae have also been found using Christmas Fern (*< i > Polystichum acrostichoides < /i >*), but the unusual phenology for the adult emergence suggests that this could be an undescribed species (Microleps.org).

OBSERVATION METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights and the larvae can be found feeding on fern sori.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR [S2S3]

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

COMMENTS: This appears to be an uncommon species that is relatively rare in North Carolina where it appears to be disjunct from the main range farther north. It appears to reach its southernmost range limit in the southern Appalachians.