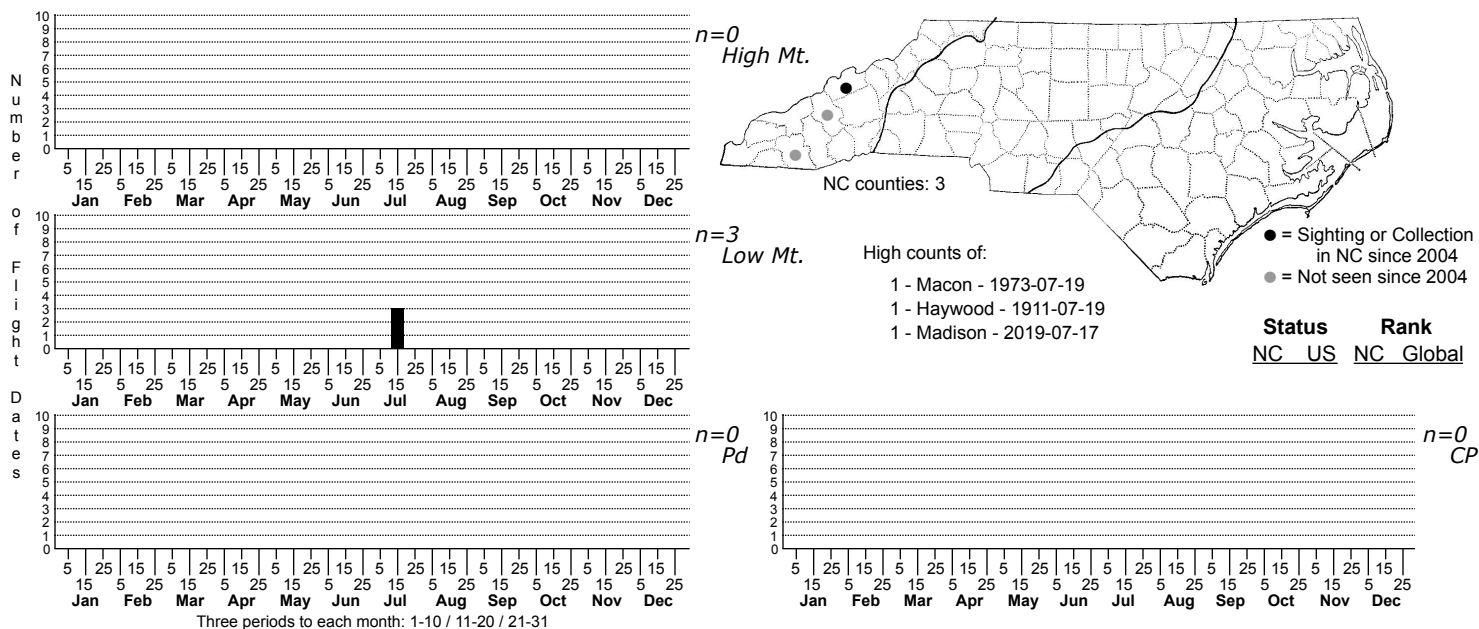


Pseudopostega quadristrigella No common name



FAMILY: Opostegidae SUBFAMILY: Oposteginae TRIBE: [Opostegini]

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: The genus *Pseudopostega* contains a group of very small leaf mining moths. The adults have a conspicuous head tuft, a large basal eye cap on the antenna, and relatively short and broad bodies and wings. There are 84 described species in the New World, with the majority of these occurring in tropical and subtropical regions. Nine species occur in the US, but only three are found in North Carolina and adjoining states. Davis and Stonis (2007) published a monograph on *Pseudopostega* species of the New World that is the authoritative work on this genus.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984; as *Opostega quadristrigella*)

ONLINE PHOTOS: MPG; BugGuide; BOLD

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Davis and Stonis (2007)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: *Pseudopostega quadristrigella* is a small, mostly white moth with a conspicuous head tuft, a large basal eye cap, and a short, broad wing. The forewing is typically white, but sometimes has a suffusion of scattered brownish scales over the distal half. A median, distally oblique, dorsal spot is usually present. The spot is yellowish to dark brown, irregularly shaped, and usually depressed along the dorsal margin. There are usually two or three subapical strigulae that vary from yellowish to fuscous brown, and two or fewer tornal strigulae (these are sometimes missing altogether). Specimens that lack the median dorsal spot and have a distal suffusion of scattered brownish scales may have only a single costal strigula. The terminal cilia are white, but sometimes become cream-colored along the dorsal margin. The hindwing is usually yellowish brown to cream colored both dorsally and ventrally. The cilia vary from cream to pale yellowish brown, but are occasionally white. This species closely resembles other *Pseudopostega* in the region (*P. albogaleriella*; *P. cretea*) and reliable identification requires examination of the genitalia.

DISTRIBUTION: *Pseudopostega quadristrigella* is widespread within the eastern and south-central USA from Maine to as far west as Oklahoma and Texas (Davis and Stonis, 2007). Populations appear to be rare in the Coastal Plain and Piedmont and there is an apparent disjunct population in South Dakota. As of 2019, all of our records are from lower-elevation sites in the Blue Ridge.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Davis and Stonis (2007) reported that adults are in flight from May to August, with the adults tending to fly earlier in the southern portions of the range. As of 2019, our records are all from July.

HABITAT: The habitat requirements are poorly resolved due to the complete lack of records for the larval stages and associated host plants. We have records from Highlands and Balsam, with both possibly from higher elevation sites.

FOOD: Robinson et al. (2008) reported that the larvae feed on *Ribes*, but there is no evidence to support this (Davis and Stonis, 2007). None of the nine *Pseudopostega* species that occur in North America has been reared and the host plants are unknown. The common name 'Gooseberry Barkminer Moth' has been inappropriately applied to this species. *Opostegoides scioterma* is a related form that mines *Ribes*, but European species of *Pseudopostega* are known to use many host species, including members of the Lamiaceae.

OBSERVATION_METHODS: The adults are attracted to UV and mercury-vapor lights.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR SU

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

COMMENTS: We currently do not have sufficient information on the distribution and abundance of this species to assess its conservation status within the state.