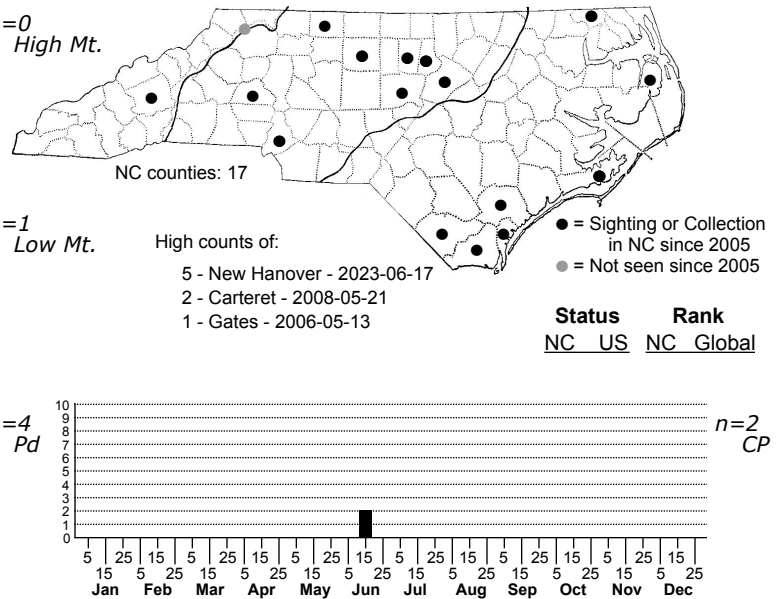
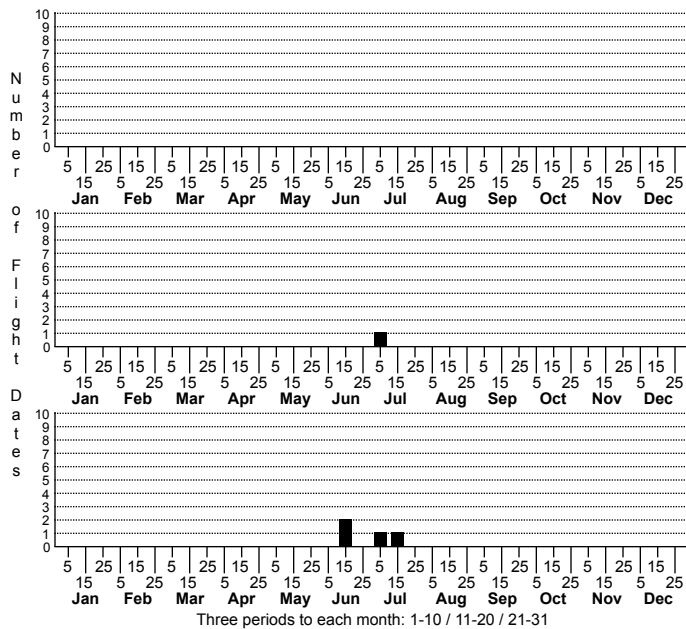


# *Homaledra octagonella* Octagonal Casemaker Moth



FAMILY: Pterolonchidae SUBFAMILY: TRIBE:

TAXONOMIC\_COMMENTS: *Homaledra* is a small genus with only four recognized species that are found in the New World. Two apparently undescribed species are present in Florida (Hayden, 2018).

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Leckie and Beadle (2018)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: (Walsingham, 1882)

ID COMMENTS: This species was originally described from the octagonal cases (Walsingham, 1882), and we are unaware of any formal description of the adults. The head is smooth and shiny white above. The antenna is light tan with a white base, and slightly longer than the forewings. The thorax and ground color of the forewing are creamy white to dull white. The thorax often has a faint dark zone down the mid-line, and the forewing is peppered throughout with dark brown to blackish specks. Two elongated, longitudinal spots are present on the forewing that are just inside the inner margin. The first is at one-half the wing length and the second just before the wing tip. The forewing is narrow and pointed and often has a faint burnished appearance at the tip. There is a series of fine black spots on the apical third that extend from the costa around the termen to the inner margin. The hindwing is narrowly lanceolate and light brown, and the fringe on both wings dull white to light brown. The legs are whitish, and the foreleg has slightly darkened tips.

DISTRIBUTION: *Homaledra octagonella* is found in the southeastern US from central Texas eastward across the Gulf Coast states to Florida, then northward to eastern Tennessee and North Carolina.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults have been observed from March through September in areas outside of North Carolina, with a seasonal peak in June and July. As of 2021, our three adult records are from June and July. It occurs statewide in North Carolina, except for perhaps the highest elevations in the mountains.

HABITAT: The feeding ecology of this species is poorly documented, but the larvae have been reported to feed on lichens on oak trees (BugGuide). The larvae have been found in variety of other settings, including on the leaves of several species of unrelated hardwoods such as Black Cherry and Swamp Redbay. It is uncertain whether they use these as hosts, or are simply wandering in search of pupation sites or other food resources.

FOOD: The larvae have been reported to feed on lichens which grow on oak trees (BugGuide), but additional observations are needed to confirm this and better document host use. Among the plants we have found larval cases on in North Carolina are Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*), American Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), Hairy Sunflower (*Helianthus hirsutus*), Southern Magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*), Blackgum (*Nyssa sylvatica*), Swamp Redbay (*Persea palustris*), Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*), White Oak (*Quercus alba*), Willow Oak (*Q. phellos*), Live Oak (*Q. virginiana*), and Northern Highbush Blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*).

OBSERVATION\_METHODS: The adults occasionally visit lights, but most records are based on the distinctive cases that are often found on vegetation.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR [S4S5]

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

COMMENTS: This species appears to be widespread and common in the state, even though it appears to reach its northern range limit in North Carolina.