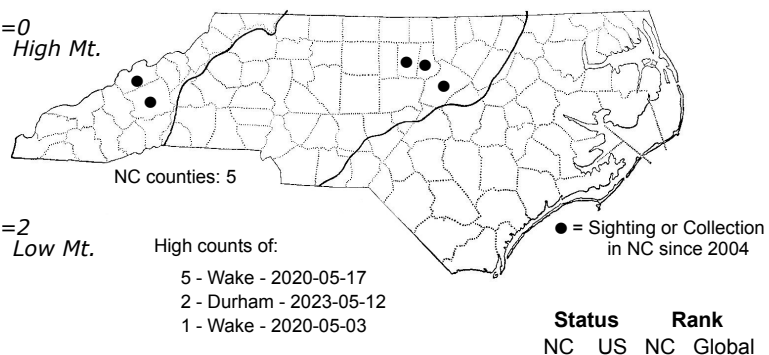
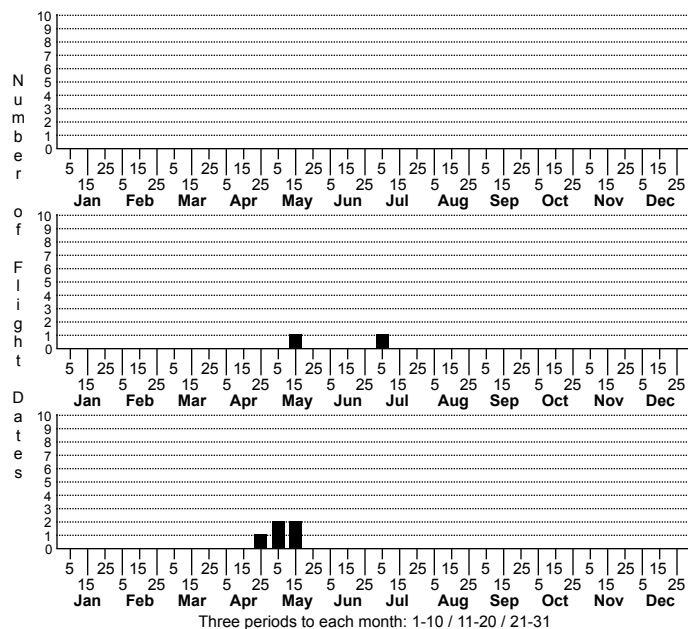


Melanocinclis sparsa No common name



FAMILY: Cosmopterigidae SUBFAMILY: TRIBE:
 TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS:

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:
 ONLINE PHOTOS:
 TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS:
 TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: This is a tiny moth with three dark, diffuse bands on the forewing. The antenna has annulations on the basal two-thirds, and brown and whitish barring on the apical third. The following is based primarily on the description by Hodges (1978). The head is yellowish white. The labial palp is whitish with a brown base, and with three or four brownish rings or blotches along its length. The antenna shaft has alternating brown and yellowish gray annulations on the basal two-thirds. Beginning at the tip and moving basally, the apical third has three relatively long yellowish-white sections that alternate with shorter dark brown sections. The thorax is mottled brown and pale yellowish gray. The tegula is brown at the base and apex, and yellowish white medially. The forewing has a white ground color and is speckled with brownish black scales. It is overlain with three broad and rather diffuse brownish-black bands. The bands are posteriorly oblique, roughly equidistant, and extend from the costa towards the inner margin. The extent of development of the bands varies among individuals and with the amount of wear. They are sometimes incomplete or terminate before reaching the inner margin. The first begins on the costa at about one-fourth, the second just before one-half, and the third at about three-fourths the wing length. In addition to the three bands, a subterminal blotch of brownish-black scales is present between the third band and the cilia. It sometimes resembles a fourth band. The cilia are whitish, with a rather poorly develop line of dark scales that parallels the termen. The foreleg is mainly brown proximally, with alternating yellowish white and brown bands distally. The other two legs are similar, but with less brown proximally. The abdomen is yellowish gray above, with more yellowish white towards the sides. The hindwing is very narrow with light gray to buff fringe. Hodges (1978) noted that individuals lose many of the dark-tipped scales as they age, particularly on the distal part of the forewing, and become very pale. Fresh specimens are relatively dark.

DISTRIBUTION: *Melanocinclis sparsa* in found in the eastern US, but the range is poorly documented due to the scarcity of records. Adults have been found at scattered localities in Arkansas, Oklahoma, Mississippi, South Carolina, southern Alabama, eastern Tennessee, North Carolina, and the District of Columbia. As of 2021, our one site record is from Wake Co. in the Piedmont.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Adults in local populations appear to have a very brief flight period that is most commonly during May. Records from outside of North Carolina are from May, June, August. As of 2021, we have records from a single site in the Piedmont from 3-17 May.

HABITAT: The preferred habitats are undocumented.

FOOD: The hosts (if any) are unknown.

OBSERVATION_METHODS: The few records to date are for adults that were attracted to lights.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR [SU]

STATE PROTECTION:

COMMENTS: This species appears to be rare throughout its range, but it is uncertain is this reflects true rarity, or the fact that the adults are not strongly attracted to collecting lights.