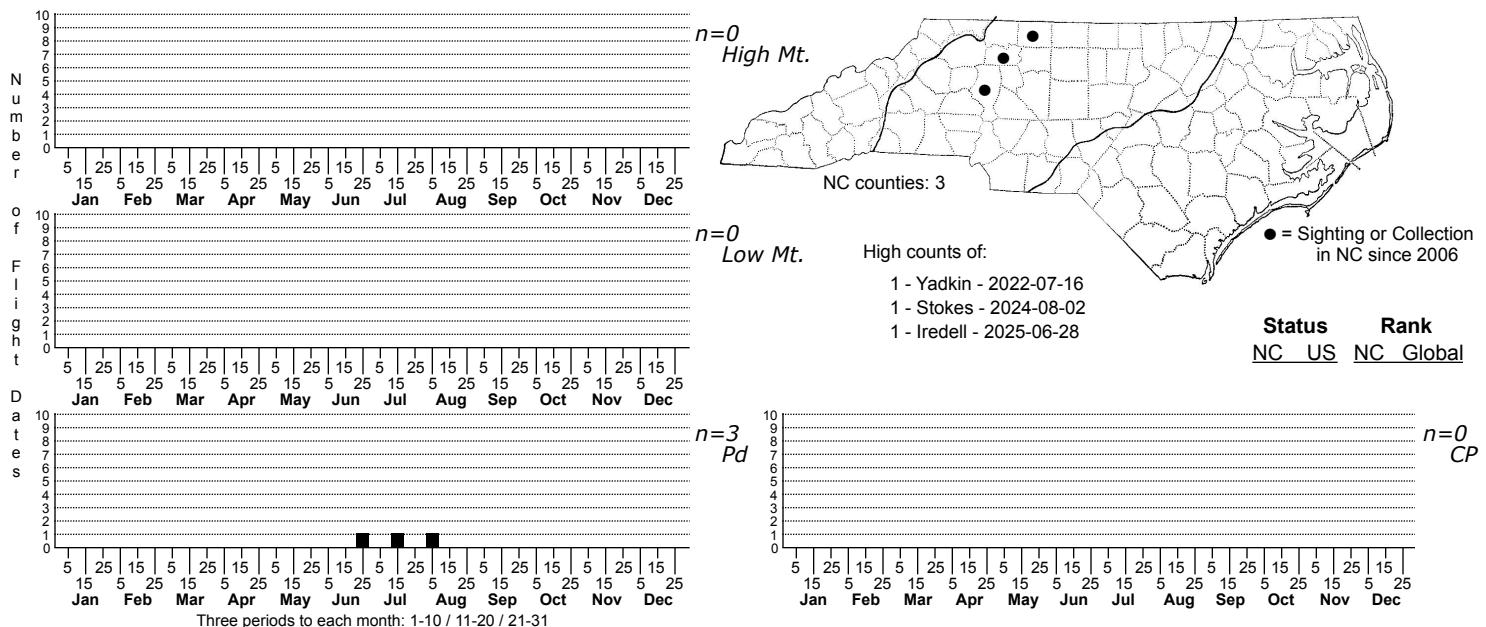


Scythris sinensis None



FAMILY: Scythrididae SUBFAMILY: TRIBE:

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: The genus *Scythris* is a member of the Family Scythrididae, whose members display a diversity of genital structures that is probably unsurpassed within any other family in the Lepidoptera (Landry, 1991). The extraordinarily diversity in genital morphology in the males of many taxa reaches such extremes that it is easy to recognize species, but difficult to delineate higher taxa. There are around 44 currently recognized species for the Nearctic region. North America has 14 described species, including 10 species of *Scythris*. Most are drably colored moths that superficially resemble one another. Landry (1991) found at least 300 undescribed species in North American collections alone based on genitalic differences, and estimated that there could be as many as 400 and 500 species of scythridids In North America. Many of these are in arid regions of the US.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: *Scythris sinensis* is an introduced species that is native to Asia and the East Palearctic, but has since spread to Europe and North America. The adults are easily recognized by their largely purplish-black bodies, except for a bright orange abdomen and two sharp orange or bright yellow spots, with one at around one-fourth the wing length from the base and the other near the outer margin. The spots can be completely absent in specimens of the spring generation, but present in the summer generation (Sattler 1971). As of 2025, we have a cluster of records from the north-central Piedmont.

DISTRIBUTION: *Scythris sinensis* is native to Asia and the East Palearctic, but is now common in Europe and the eastern US. It was first discovered in the US in Pennsylvania in 2011 (Landry et al., 2013), and has since rapidly spread to many other states. As of 2025, it has been documented from Minnesota, Iowa and Nebraska eastward to the New England states, and southward to southern Illinois, Kentucky, Virginia and North Carolina. There are also records from Ontario and Quebec, and at least one record from Oregon.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Please refer to the flight charts.

HABITAT: This species is commonly found in urban and rural settings in disturbed habitats.

FOOD: Larvae feed on members of the Chenopodiaceae, including Spear Saltbush (*Atriplex patula*) and Lamb's-quarters (*Chenopodium album*). Both of these are widespread introduced weeds in North America (Landry et al., 2013).

OBSERVATION METHODS:

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS:

STATE PROTECTION:

COMMENTS: This is an introduced species that feeds on another introduced species and is not of conservation concern.