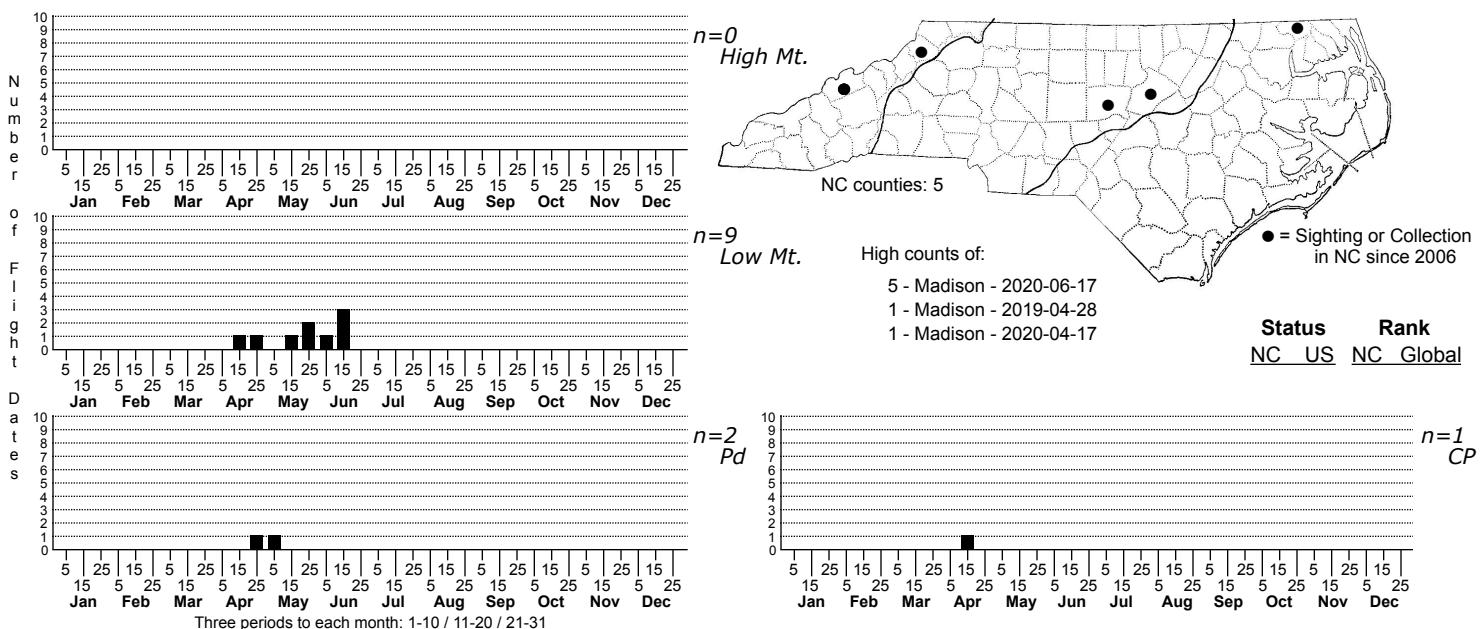


Coleotechnites coniferella Conifer Coleotechnites



FAMILY: Gelechiidae SUBFAMILY: Gelechiinae TRIBE:

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: The genus *Coleotechnites* includes 49 very small species that occur in North America. Most species are specialists on conifers and tend to feed on a single genus of host plant. Many of the *Coleotechnites* species have almost identical genitalia that are not very useful in delineating closely related forms (Freeman, 1960; 1965). Freeman (1960) noted that host plants and the mining characteristics often provide the most reliable way to identify closely related species.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: The following is based in part on the description by Kearfott (1907a) and Forbes (1923). The head is opalescent-white and the antennae whitish with brown annulations. The labial palp is pale cinereous, and the third joint is ringed with black at the base and tip. The thorax is whitish, and often marked with three small black dots on the posterior dorsal margin. The forewing ground is dirty white to ocherous and dusted with varying levels of light fuscous to darker brown scales. There are three equally-spaced blackish dots with raised scales along the inner margin at about one-fourth, one-half, and three-fourths. There are also three oblique dark, wide, streaks. The first begins on the costal at about one-fifth and slants towards the first scale tuft on the inner margin. The second begins on the costa at about one-half and extends to near the middle of the wing before deflecting rearward and ending below the third raised scale tuft. Both streaks have an extensive zone of whitish scales with darker dusting behind them that accentuates the dark streaks. A small subcostal dot is also usually evident immediately posterior to the first dark streak. The third streak begins on the costa at about three-fourths and has a broad base that narrows as it curves rearward. The posterior margin is lined by a narrow white fascia that acutely angles towards the apex before continuing to the dorsal margin. The apex and fringe are dusted with gray and a series of five or more dark dots are often present around the wing tip. The hindwing and fringe is light brown, and the legs are blackish with white annulations.

DISTRIBUTION: *Coleotechnites coniferella* is widely distributed in North America, including the West Coast states and a few other scattered localities in the West. In the East, it is most common in the northeastern states and adjoining areas of southern Ontario and Quebec, westward to Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Scattered populations have been found in Oklahoma, Louisiana, Alabama, and North Carolina.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Adults have been found from May through July in areas outside of North Carolina, with most in June and July. As of 2021, our records extend from mid-April from near the coast through mid-June in the lower mountains.

HABITAT: The larvae feed on pines and local populations can be found in pine or mixed pine-hardwood forests throughout the state.

FOOD: The hosts are poorly documented. The larvae feed on pines (Forbes, 1923), including Jack Pine (*Pinus banksiana*) in Canada (Prentice, 1966), but the specific host species that are used in North Carolina are undocumented.

OBSERVATION METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights. We have much to learn about the larval life history of this and other *Coleotechnites* species in the Southeast, so we encourage observers to search for the larvae of these and other pine feeders.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR S2S4

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.