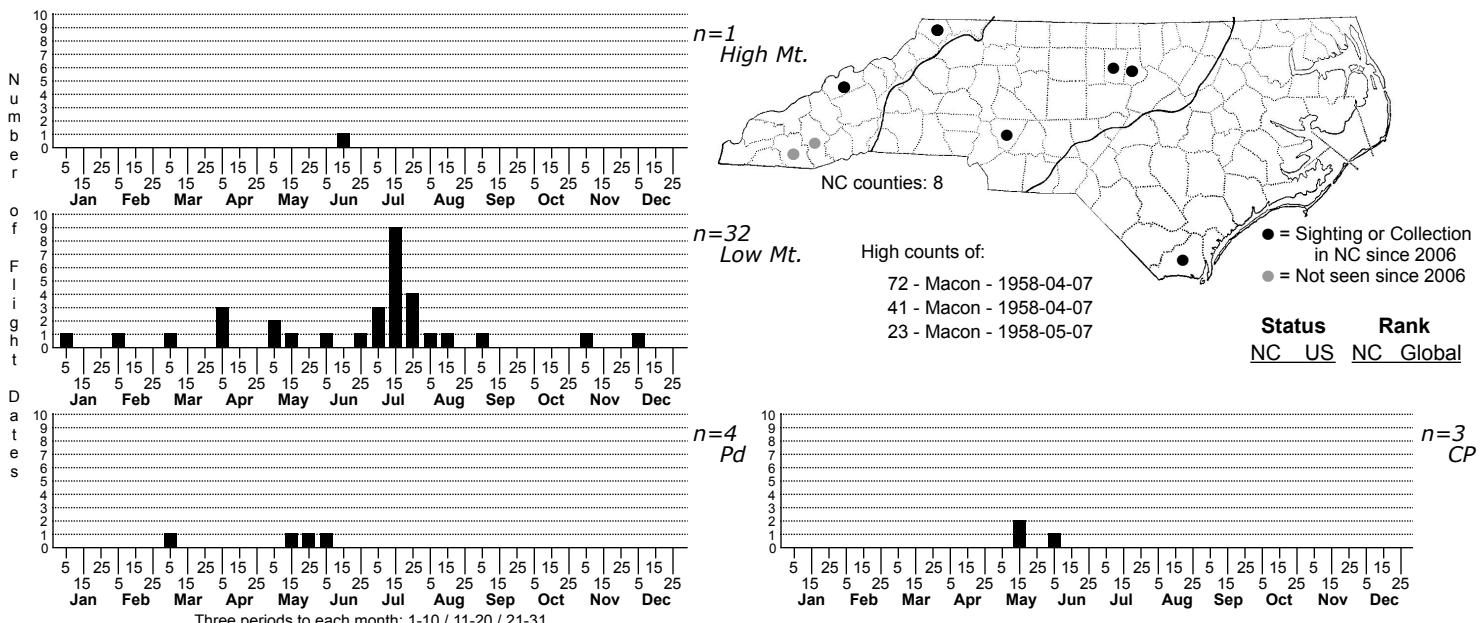


Chionodes sevir None



FAMILY: Gelechiidae SUBFAMILY: Gelechiinae TRIBE: Gelechiini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: The genus *Chionodes* is the most species rich genus of gelechiid moths in the Western Hemisphere, with 187 recognized species. Our knowledge of the diverse array of species in North America is largely due to the monumental work of Hedges (1999), who spent decades working on the group and described 115 new species (Powell and Opler, 2009). Many exhibit substantial variation within species and have drab coloration, typically with brown, dark gray, or blackish patterning on the forewings. These can only be confidently identified by examining secondary sexual characteristics and/or the genitalia of one or both sexes. Others are more boldly marked and can be identified by wing patterning. Many of our state records are based on Hedges (1999) database of over 19,000 specimens that he examined from major collections in the US. These include North Carolina specimens that he collected mostly from Highlands, and from a few other areas within the state.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Hedges (1999)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: The head and thorax vary from yellowish gray to dark gray. The first and second segments on the labial palp are mottled with dark gray, pale yellow, or orange gray scales, while the third segment is mainly black with irregularly scattered pale yellow scales. The dorsal surface of the antenna is dark gray to blackish, with alternating pale yellow and grayish black bands. The forewing ground color is light gray to grayish black with darker markings. A wide, posteriorly oblique, dark blackish band is present that begins on the costa at about one-fourth the wing length. The band terminates before reaching the inner margin, and tends to broaden inwardly. A pale yellow to yellowish gray spot is present on the costa at three-fourths that sometimes connects to a faint, thin, grayish to yellowish gray fascia. A large, dark blotch or irregular band often fills the area immediately anterior to the spot and fascia. The apical fifth of the wing that is posterior to the fascia is blackish. The dorsal surface of the abdomen is medium to dark gray, with the posterior margin of each segment is very pale yellow.

Chionodes sevir is most likely to be confused with *C. formosella* in eastern North America because the color patterns are similar. However, the costal spot at three-fourths the length of the forewing is white in *C. formosella*, and more subdued and yellowish gray or orangish gray in *C. sevir*. If in doubt, these species can be easily differentiated from each other using genitalia.

DISTRIBUTION: *Chionodes sevir* occurs from Massachusetts southward to Florida, and westward to eastern Kentucky, the southern Appalachians, Mississippi, and as an apparent isolate in southwestern Texas. As of 2021, all of our records are from the Blue Ridge Mountains.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Hedges (1999) reported the flight season as being from early April to late September, with a seasonal peak in July. As of 2021, we have records that extend from January through December, with a seasonal peak in July.

HABITAT: Our records are mostly from sites with mesic hardwood forests, including many records of Hedges (1999) from Highlands, NC.

FOOD: Hedges (1999) reported that *C. sevir* has been reared from *Quercus* species in the red oak group, but no details were provided.

OBSERVATION METHODS: The adults come to 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 host use, distribution, and abundance within the state to assess the conservation status of this species.