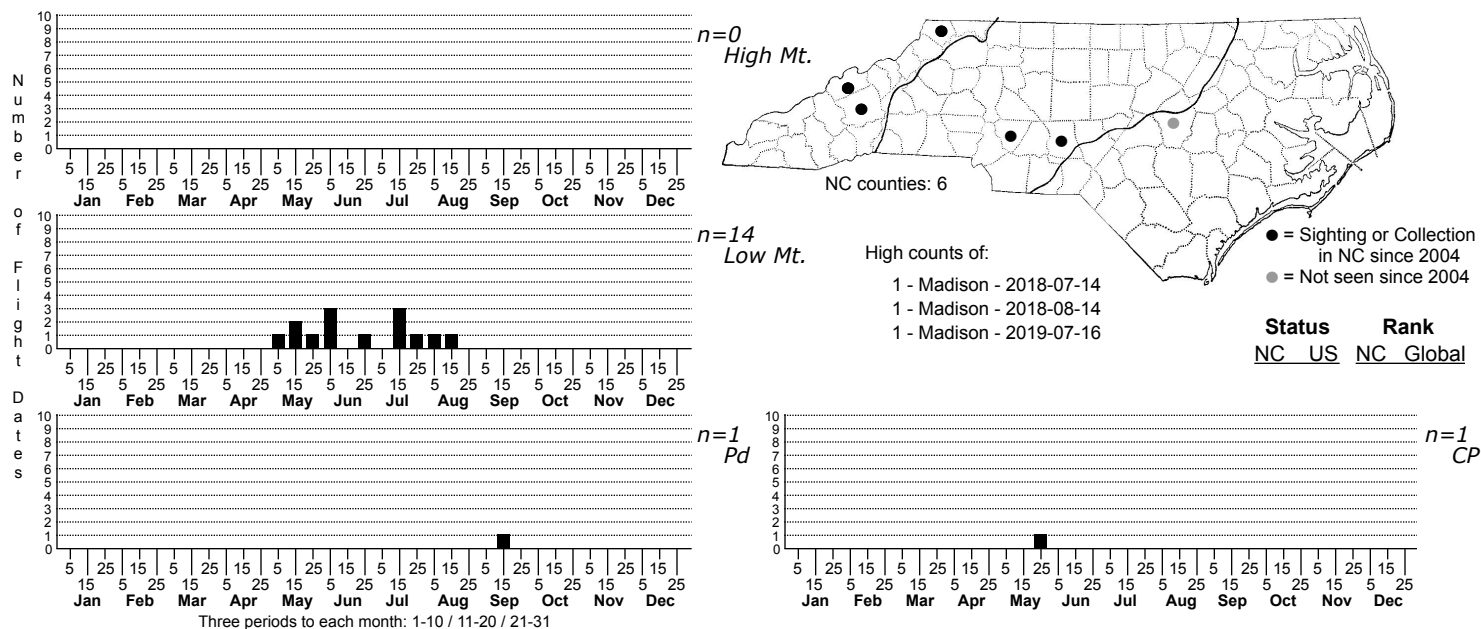


## *Filatima pseudacaciella* Dusky-backed Filatima Moth



FAMILY: Gelechiidae SUBFAMILY: Gelechiinae TRIBE: Gelechiini

TAXONOMIC\_COMMENTS: The genus *Filatima* contains around 80 species that are primarily Holarctic in distribution, with the greatest diversity in semiarid areas of the western United States and Mexico. Their larvae are leaf tiers that feed primarily on legumes, but also exploit a variety of other vascular plants.

### FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Chambers (1872)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: The following description is based in part on that of Chambers (1872, p. 107). The head varies from gray to purplish brown, and the antenna and palp are dark purplish-brown. The latter has a prominent brush and is often streaked and flecked with white. The ground color of the forewing is dark purplish brown, and streaked and flecked with white and ochreous scale patches. The costa has extensive white scaling along its length that is often organized as two or three irregular whitish blotches that are most evident at about one-third the wing length. Just interior to these, there is a region with varying levels of light chocolate-brown dusting that often extends onto the thorax. At about three-fourths the wing length, there is a whitish costal spot with an opposing whitish spot on the inner margin (often faint). The cilia are grayish silvery, with a rather distinct dark marginal line at their base. The hindwing is pale ochreous-brown, and the legs are dark purplish-brown, with whitish bands and annulations. This species is superficially similar to *F. serotinella*, but has extensive white blotching and dusting along the costal margin.

DISTRIBUTION: *Filatima pseudacaciella* is found in eastern North America from the New England states and adjoining areas of extreme southern Canada (Ontario; Quebec) southward to North Carolina and Mississippi, and westward to eastern Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Illinois. As of 2021, we have records from the Piedmont and lower elevations in the mountains.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults have been observed from March through October in areas from outside of North Carolina, with most between April and August. The adults generally become active after Black Locust has fully leafed out locally. As of 2021, our records extend from mid-May through mid-September.

HABITAT: Local populations are strongly dependent on Black Locust, which naturally occurs as a minor element in many hardwood forest communities in North Carolina. Black Locust is more frequently seen today along roadsides, in early successional forests, and in other sunny, disturbed habitats.

FOOD: Larvae feed almost entirely on Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), although there is one record of them using Bristly Locust (*Robinia hispida*; Robinson et al., 2010).

OBSERVATION\_METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights, and larvae can be found within leaf ties of Black Locust during the summer months.

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 have scattered records throughout the Piedmont and lower mountains, but additional information is needed on the distribution and abundance of this species before we can assess its conservation status.