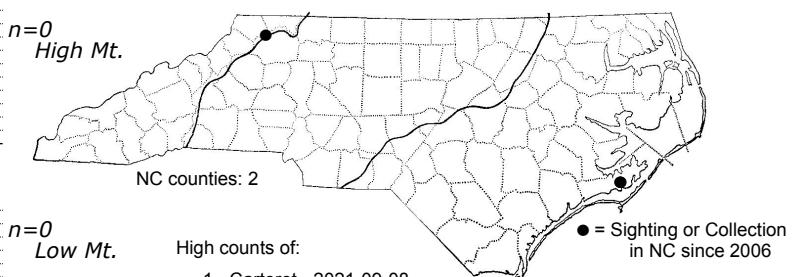
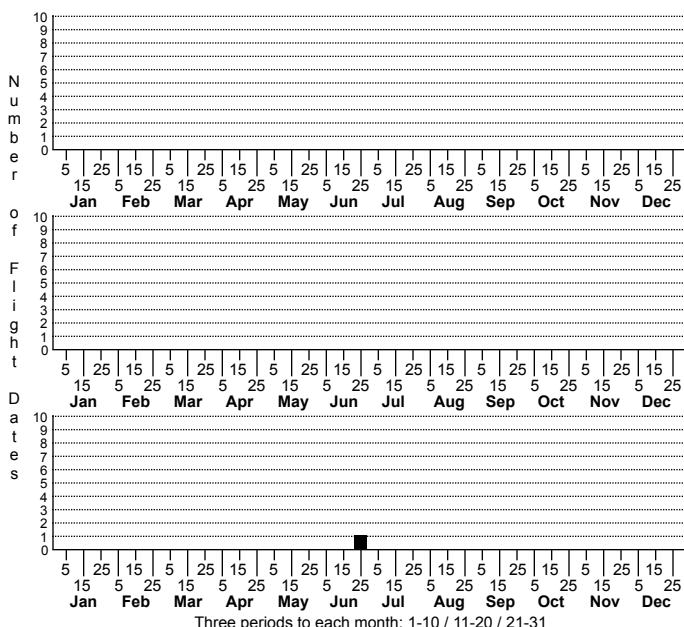


Prostomeus brunneus Guava Caterpillar Moth



High counts of:
 1 - Carteret - 2021-09-08
 1 - Carteret - 2023-09-30
 1 - Carteret - 2019-02-27

Status **Rank**
 NC US NC Global

n=3
CP

FAMILY: Gelechiidae **SUBFAMILY:** Anacampsinae **TRIBE:**
TAXONOMIC COMMENTS:

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Busck (1903a)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: <i>Prostomeus brunneus</i> is a rather distinctive gelechiid that has an overall reddish-brown color and distinctive labial palps that resemble pipe cleaners of sorts with densely packed scales. The following description is primarily based on the description by Busck (1903A).

The head and thorax are dark brown, and the antenna is dark reddish brown with white annulations. The labial palp varies from light brown to reddish-brown and is mottled with areas of dark-brown and black scales. The apical third of the terminal segment is black, and the base is noticeably narrower than the adjoining segment.

The ground color of the forewing is light straw colored, but is mostly obscured by an overlay of reddish brown scales. Dark purplish brown scales are present at the wing base and narrowly along the costa from around the basal fourth to the apical third. Similar purplish brown scales occur narrowly along the dorsal margin and there is a prominent purplish-brown blotch just before the middle. A small, purplish brown spot is present at the end of the cell, and the terminal third of the forewing and fringe is heavily infused with dark brown scales. A row of dark brown spots is also present around the apex. The hindwing is dark steel gray and lighter towards the base, with the cilia being a shade lighter. The legs are light brown and annulated with black, except for the black tarsi with white at the tip of each joint.

DISTRIBUTION: There are only a few scattered records for this seemingly uncommon species. The range appears to be largely restricted to the southeastern US and Cuba. Specimens have mostly been taken in coastal communities from North Carolina to southern Florida, and westward to Louisiana. As of 2025 we have only four records from Carteret and Wilkes counties.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Although data is limited, the adults appear to be on the wing from February through September depending on the locality. As of 2023 our very limited records extends from late-February to late-September.

HABITAT: The habitat requirements are poorly documented, but maritime forests are known to be used in North Carolina.

FOOD: The host plants are undocumented.

OBSERVATION METHODS: The adults are attracted to UV lights.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR [S1S2]

STATE PROTECTION: Has no legal protection, although permits are required to collect it on state parks and other public lands.

COMMENTS: This species has been taken at Fort Macon State Park on three occasions, which suggest that a breeding population is present at this site.