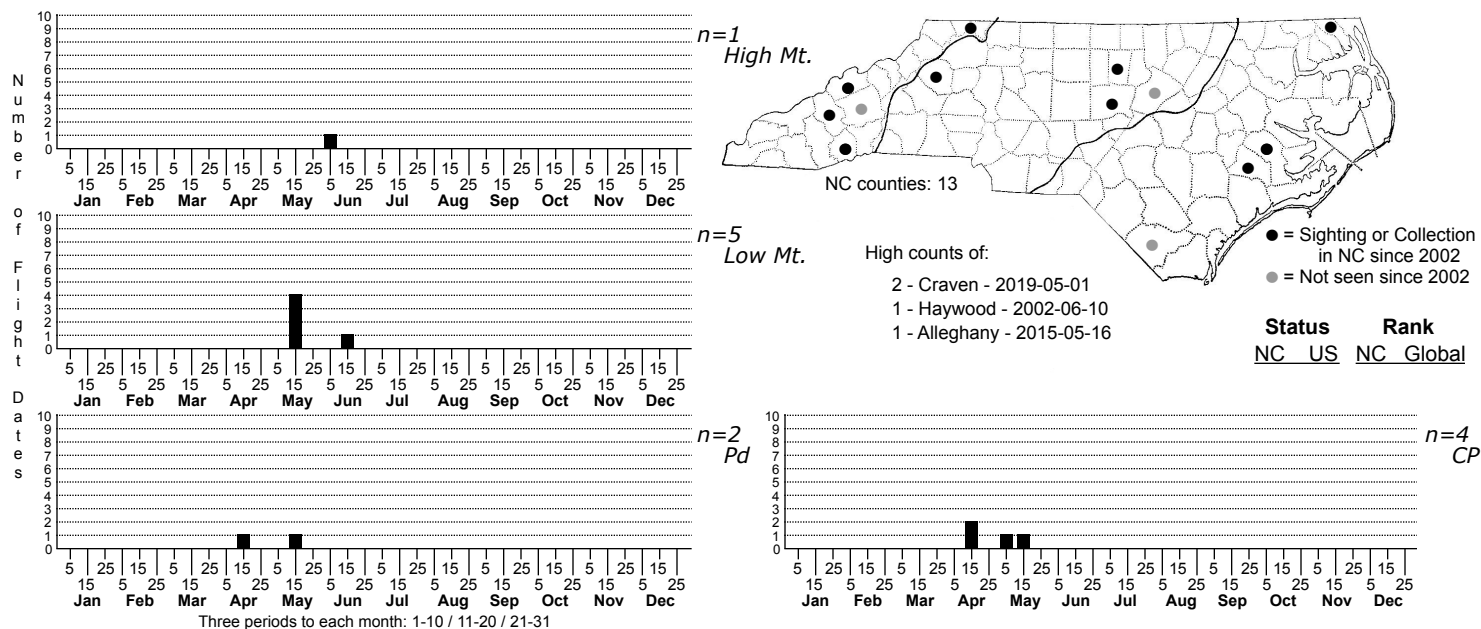


Adela caeruleella Southern Longhorn Moth



FAMILY: Adelidae SUBFAMILY: Adelinae TRIBE: [Adelini]

TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS: *Adela* is a small genus of moths, and most are noteworthy for having exceptionally long antennae. There are 11 described species in North America.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Leckie and Beadle, 2018.

ONLINE PHOTOS: MPG; BugGuide; BAMONA.

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Powell (1969)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Powell (1969)

ID COMMENTS: *Adela caeruleella* is easy to recognize based on the very elongated antenna, and a mixture of purplish, bronzy or greenish-purple coloration on the thorax and forewing. The upper head is reddish tan, and three indistinct metallic reddish striae are usually evident on the apical third of the wing. The males have an extremely long antenna that is three times or more as long as the forewing and darker near the base. Females have a shorter antenna (about 1.5 times the length of the forewing), with a thick layer of purplish black scales on the basal half that contrasts with the lighter and thinner apical half.

DISTRIBUTION: *Adela caeruleella* is widespread in eastern North America from southern Quebec, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, south and southwestward to northern Florida, the Gulf Coast states, and central Texas. It is apparently absent from most of the Mississippi Valley and New England and vicinity. This species occurs statewide in North Carolina.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Local populations are univoltine. The adults are generally on the wing during the bloom of spring wildflowers, typically during March in Florida, and from April through June as one progresses further north. As of 2019, records for North Carolina are from mid-April in the Coastal Plain to June in the higher elevations of the Blue Ridge.

HABITAT: The habitats are poorly documented and include both urban areas and relatively intact forested sites.

FOOD: The life history of the larval stages is unknown, as are the host plants. The adults have been found nectaring on a variety of vascular plants, including members of the Apiaceae, Asteraceae, and an assortment of other families. However, it is uncertain whether these are used as host plants for the larvae.

OBSERVATION_METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights. They also visit flowers on warm spring days, and are commonly encountered resting on woodland vegetation. They sometimes aggregate on wildflowers, particularly members of the Apiaceae and Asteraceae, where it is not uncommon to find two or more adults on the same inflorescence.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR [S4]

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

COMMENTS: This species is seemingly secure in North Carolina with scattered records across the state.