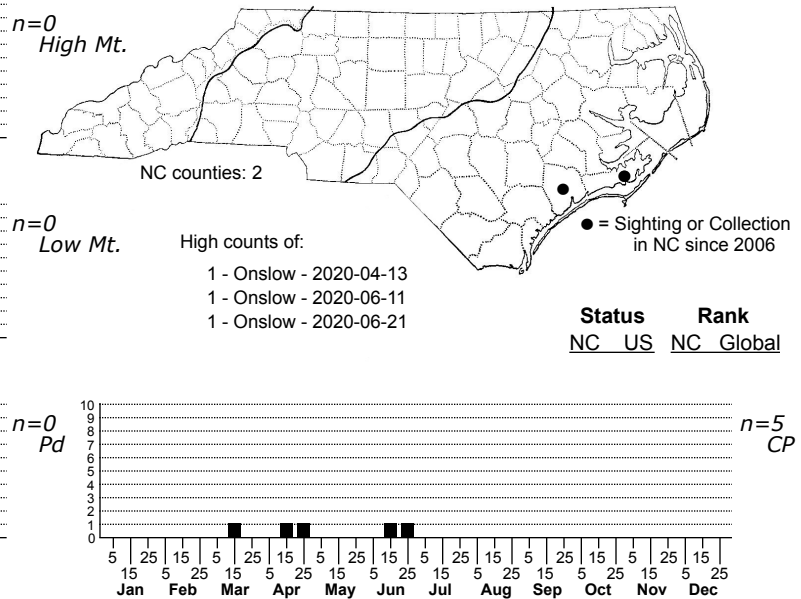
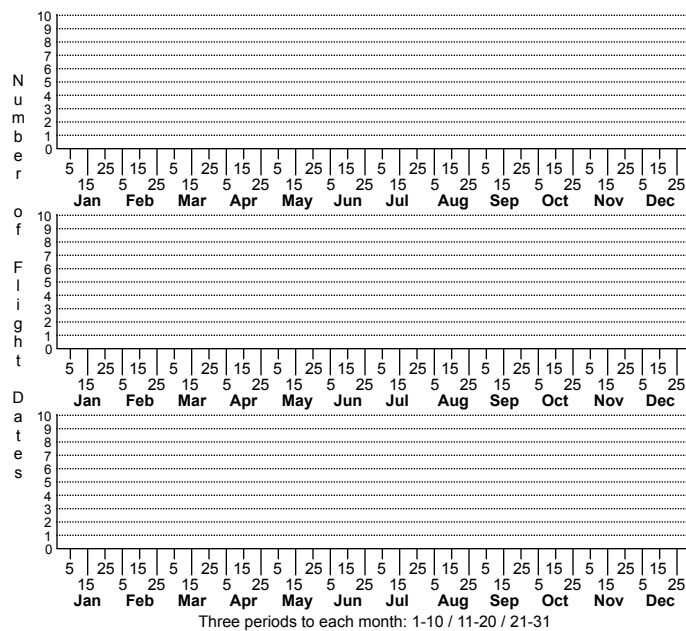


Dichomeris bipunctellus None



FAMILY: Gelechiidae SUBFAMILY: Dichomeridinae TRIBE:

TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS: *Dichomeris* is a large genus with several hundred species that occur throughout the world. Hodges (1986) recognized 74 species in North America north of Mexico, with 19 species groups. Most are leaf-tiers and they use a taxonomically diverse array of plant hosts, including members of 18 families of plants in North America. As of 2025, North Carolina has 35 documented species, and at least one undescribed species from the Sandhills.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Hodges (1986)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: Although it is not conspicuously marked, *Dichomeris bipunctellus* is distinctive due to its overall light grayish-orange color, two blackish spots near the middle of the wing, and labial tufts that project forward. When a resting individual is viewed from above, the dark spots form a characteristic square pattern on the wings.

In this species the labial scale tufts, head, thorax and forewings are more-or-less unicolorous and grayish-orange, although the scale tuft, frons, vertex, and occiput tend to be more yellowish-gray. The posterior margin of the thorax has three faint dark-brown dots, with one at the apex and the others to either side. The antenna has a dark-brown scape and a shaft with alternating pale yellowish-gray and darker grayish-brown rings.

The forewing ground color is marked with numerous dark-brown flecks and faint longitudinal streaks. The first of the two prominent dark-brown spots occur at two-thirds the length of the cell, and the second at the end of the cell, with each having several white scales around the margin (Hodges, 1986). The outer margin of the forewing has a series of dark-brown spots that extend around the apex, and the fringe is unicolorous with the ground color of the wing. The hindwing is pale yellowish-gray, while the legs are grayish-brown and become progressively lighter towards from front to back.

Dichomeris bipunctellus might be confused with *Limnaecia phragmitella*, but the latter has a different wing shape and lacks the prominent scale tuft on the second segment of the labial palp that projects forward.

DISTRIBUTION: *Dichomeris bipunctellus* is mostly found in coastal communities from Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Maine southward along the Atlantic Seaboard to central Florida, and westward along the Gulf Coast to Louisiana and adjoining areas of southeastern Texas. As of 2025, all of our records are from coastal communities where *Morella* is present.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Please refer to the flight charts.

HABITAT: Our records come from the Tidewater area, including a residential area located close to a sound and a pocosin located a few miles from the coast. Waxmyrtles seem to be the most likely host plants at those sites.

FOOD: Larvae have been reared on Myricaceae, including Sweet-fern (*Comptonia peregrina*), Sweet-gale (*Myrica gale*) and Northern Bayberry (*Morella pensylvanica*; Hodges, 1986). Hodges also suspected that Common Waxmyrtle (*Morella cerifera*) and other members of this family would be used in the South. As of 2025, we do not have any feeding records for North Carolina.

OBSERVATION_METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR S3S4

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

COMMENTS:

March 2026

The Moths of North Carolina - Early Draft