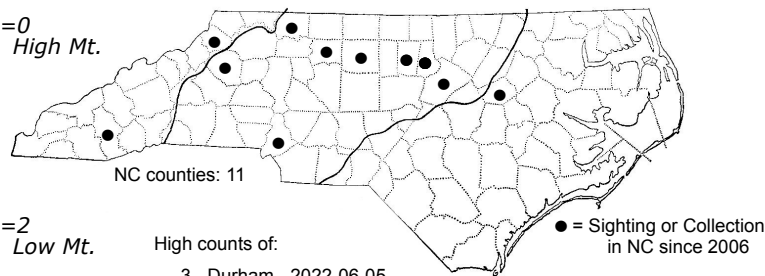
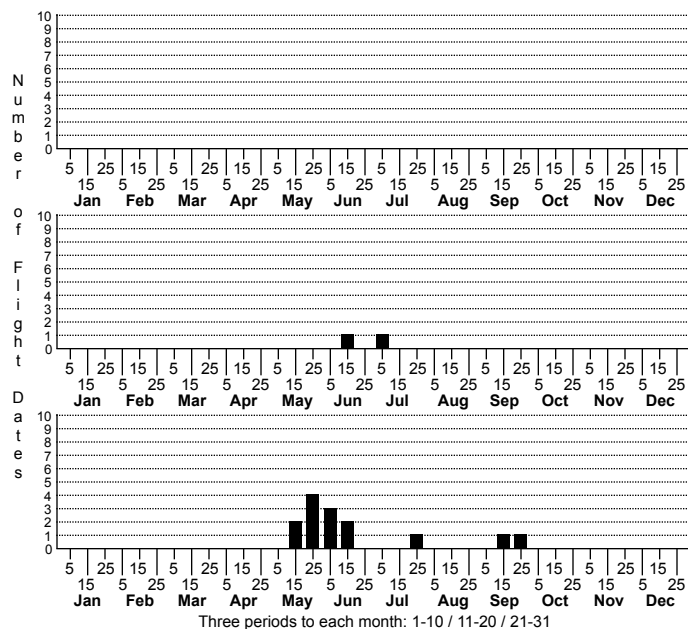


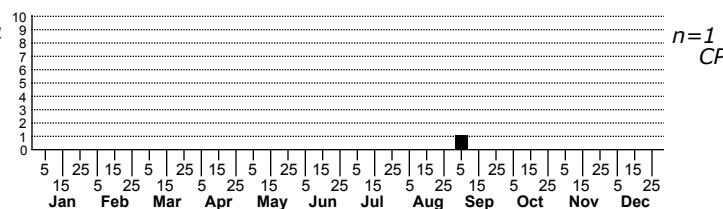
Dichomeris laetitia None



High counts of:

- 3 - Durham - 2022-06-05
- 1 - Guilford - 2019-06-19
- 1 - Wake - 2015-07-24

Status Rank
NC US NC Global



FAMILY: Gelechiidae SUBFAMILY: Dichomeriinae 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: *Dichomeris laetitia* is best identified by the forewing patterning that consists of a brownish-yellow ground color that is overlain by two conspicuous marks. The first is a broad, dark-brown to blackish-brown, angulated blotch that extends from just before the wing base along the inner margin, then turns inward at about one-third the wing length and terminating near the center. The blotch approaches, but does not touch, the inner margin. The second is a less well-defined, grayish band that fills the subterminal region of the wing. A small, faint, dark-brown spot is also often evident between these two marks at the end of the cell, but is often entirely missing (Hodges, 1986). The hindwing tends to be uniformly light brown with a slightly lighter-colored fringe.

The labial palp is mainly dark-brown with a well-developed, dark-brown, dorsal scale tuft of similar color that becomes narrowly off-white apically. The frons is dark-brown in front of the eyes, while the vertex and occiput are pale gray (Hodges, 1986). The antenna and thorax are predominantly pale yellowish-gray, while the legs are mostly dark grayish-brown.

D. laetitia can be confused with *D. furia*, but the latter has a somewhat different-shaped dark mark on the wing base that touches the inner margin, a yellowish-orange scale tuft on the labial palp (versus brown), and a more conspicuous subterminal band that is dark brown to nearly black rather than light gray. It also resembles *D. bilobella* and *D. setosella*, but these two have a triangular-shaped bulge on the basal blotch that reaches the inner margin, along with heavy dark dusting on the distal half of the forewing.

DISTRIBUTION: *Dichomeris laetitia* is found throughout much of the eastern US from southern Pennsylvania and Maryland westward to Illinois and Missouri, and southward to eastern Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and central Georgia. As of 2025, we have records from all three physiographic provinces, with most from the Piedmont and only one from the western Coastal Plain.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Adults have been documented from May through October in different areas of the range, with a seasonal peak in May through July. As of 2025, our records extend from mid-May through late-September, with most records from May and June.

HABITAT: Several of our records are from riparian habitats, including bottomland forests and marshes or shoreline habitats. Several other records are from semi-wooded residential neighborhoods.

FOOD: As of 2025, the larval host plants are undocumented.

OBSERVATION_METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights, and have occasionally been found resting on vegetation during the day.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR S2S3

STATE PROTECTION:

COMMENTS: This species appears to be uncommon in the state.