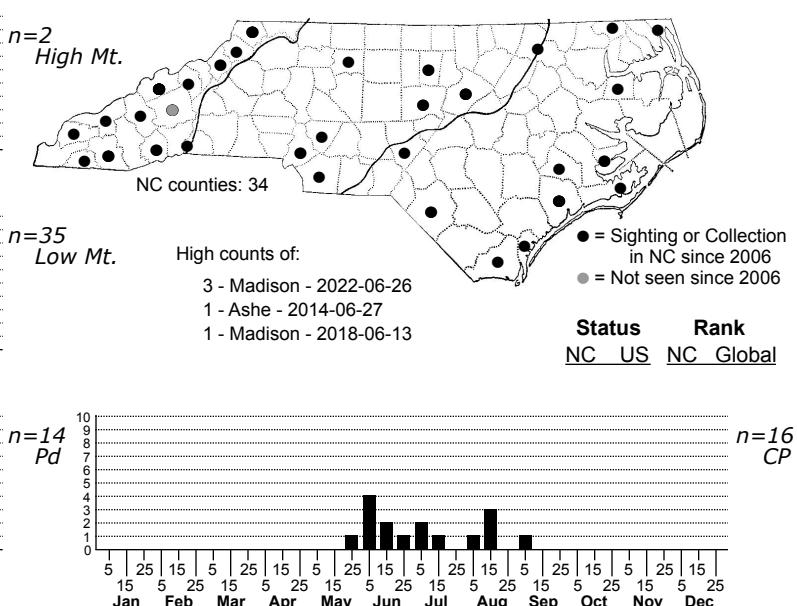
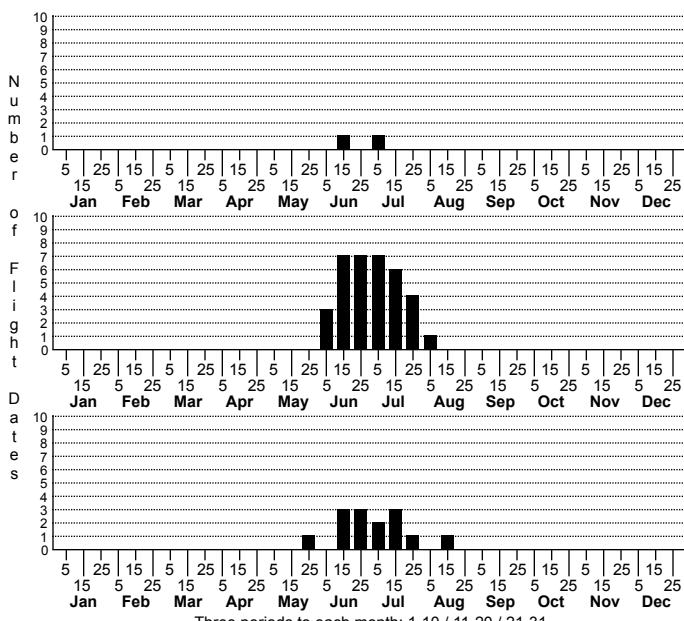


# Dichomeris flavocostella Cream-edged Dichomeris



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: Covell (1984; as *Trichotaphe flavocostella*); Beadle and Leckie (2012)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Hodges (1986)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Loeffler (1994)

ID COMMENTS: *Dichomeris flavocostella* is rather boldly marked with a creamy-yellow to orangish-yellow region that fills most of the subcostal portion of the wing, along with two large, brownish-black to blackish marks on the remainder of the wing. The first extends from near the wing base along the inner margin. It gradually widens near the middle of the wing, then smoothly curves inward and terminates on the inner margin at around three-fourths the wing length. The second is a semi-oval mark that fills most of the apical third of the wing. The two marks meet at around three-fourths the wing length and are partially separated by a creamy-yellow tooth that tapers to a fine tip just beyond the middle of the wing. A small black spot is usually centered within the tooth. The outer fringe is grayish-brown with a series of diffuse, cream-colored patches along the base, while the thorax and legs are predominantly dark brown to blackish. The hindwing is yellowish gray.

The first and second segments of the labial palp are light orange on the ventral margin, and the dorsal surface of the second segment has a prominent tuft. The third segment is light orange with a brown apex (Hodges, 1986). The frons is pale orange, while the vertex and occiput are metallic grayish-brown medially and pale-orange more dorsally. The antenna is mostly brown, but with light orange on the first or second segments.

*Dichomeris flavocostella* is morphologically similar to both *D. fistuca* and *D. inserrata*, but in the latter two the basal dark mark is more irregular and less smoothly rounded, while the creme-colored tooth is blunter and less acutely angled.

DISTRIBUTION: *Dichomeris flavocostella* is widely distributed in eastern North America, including much of the eastern US, and southern Canada from Manitoba eastward to Prince Edward Island. In the US the range extends from Maine westward to Minnesota and northeastern North Dakota, and southward to eastern Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia and South Carolina. As from 2025, we have records from all three physiographic provinces.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults have been documented from April through August throughout the range, with a seasonal peak in activity in June and July. As of 2025, our record extend from late-May through early September.

HABITAT: Loeffler (1994) reported that this was the most common species that she encountered in large or contiguous fields that were searched in Pennsylvania and Florida, and that it was rarely encountered in forests. It was also found in gravel bars along streams, which may have been an important goldenrod habitat before European colonization. Our records generally come from open areas, but are not associated with specific types of natural communities.

FOOD: The larvae feed on asters, goldenrods, and sunflowers (Hodges, 1986; Robinson et al., 2010). Loeffler (1994) conducted a comprehensive study of host use by this and other *Dichomeris* species in the Northeast that use goldenrods and asters and documented the following hosts: Tall Goldenrod (*Solidago altissima*), Cutleaf Goldenrod (*S. arguta*), White Goldenrod (*S. bicolor*), Early Goldenrod (*S. juncea*), Wrinkle-leaf Goldenrod (*S. rugosa*), White Panicle Aster (*S. lanceolatum*) and New England Aster (*S. novae-angliae*).

OBSERVATION METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights and the larvae can be found in leaf folds on goldenrods and asters.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR S4S5

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

COMMENTS: