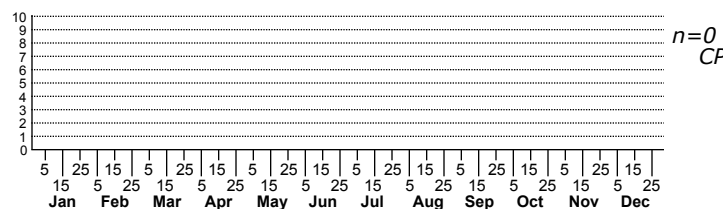
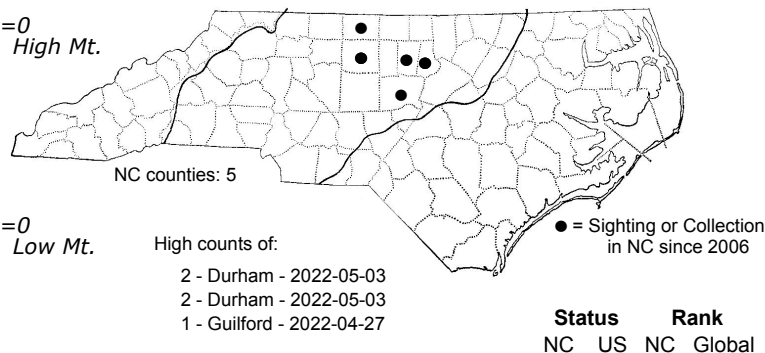
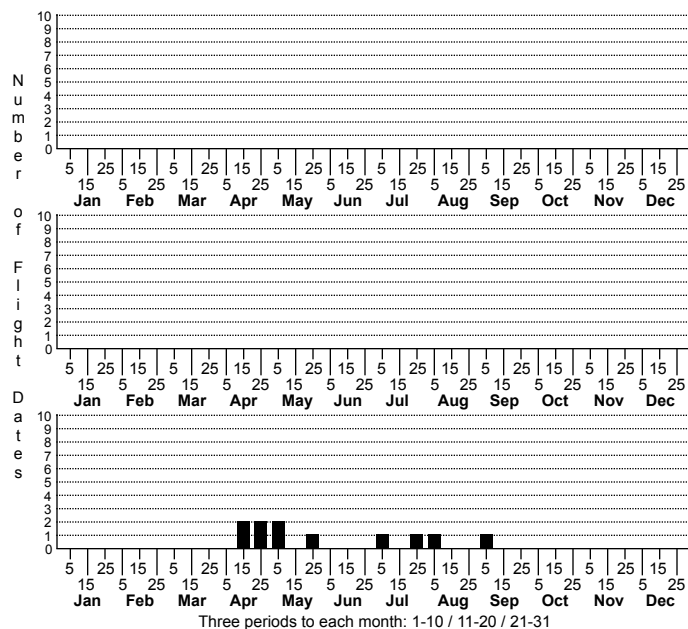


## *Dichomeris offula* None



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: *Dichomeris offula* is characterized by a dark-brown forewing that has light brownish-orange or light reddish-brown scales that form a diffuse patch on the distal half of the wing. Two small brownish-orange spots are usually evident just before one-half the wing length, while a third one occurs at around three-fourths but is often masked by the diffuse patch of light scales. The terminal fringe is dark-brown, and a row of five or six orangish spots are usually evident at the junction of the outer margin and fringe. The dorsum of the head is a dark grayish orange, but individuals commonly lose these scales with wear, which results in an orangish-yellow bald appearance.

The outer surface of first segment and the extreme base of second segment of the labial palp are mainly dark gray. The rest of the palp is pale yellow, except for a dorsal scale tuft that is yellowish-white. The third segment of the labial palp has dark-brown scales just before apex and some on inner surface (Hodges, 1986). The frons is shining grayish orange with a narrow row of brown scales in front of the eye, while the vertex and occiput are darker grayish orange above the eye, medium gray medially, and with shining yellow and lavender reflections. The antenna and thorax are dark-brown, while the legs are also predominantly dark-brown.

*Dichomeris offula* is most similar to *D. crepida*, but *D. crepida* has the light-colored scales on the forewing extending from the base of the wing in a streaked pattern. In contrast, the light-colored scales of *D. offula* are restricted to an area between one-half and three-fourths the wing length.

DISTRIBUTION: *Dichomeris offula* is found in the eastern US and in adjoining areas of southern Canada (Manitoba; Ontario; Quebec; Nova Scotia). There are also records from British Columbia and Alberta that may represent an undescribed western form. In the US the range extends from Vermont and New York southwestward mostly through the Appalachian region and Piedmont to North Carolina. A southern cluster of populations that appear to be disjunct from the main range occurs in southern Alabama, Mississippi, western Tennessee, southern Louisiana and eastern Texas, and there is one record from Michigan. As of 2025, all of our records are from the northeastern Piedmont.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults have been documented from March through October in different areas of the range, with a seasonal peak from May through August. Local populations in North Carolina probably produce two broods annually. As of 2025, our records for adults are from mid-April through late-May, and from early-July through early-September.

HABITAT: Two records come from the edge of bottomland pools or marshes.

FOOD: The only documented host as of 2025 is for a larva using a native aster (*Symphotrichum* sp.) found by Jeff Niznik in the Piedmont of North Carolina.

OBSERVATION\_METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights; more information is needed on host use and the larval ecology of this species.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR S2S3

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