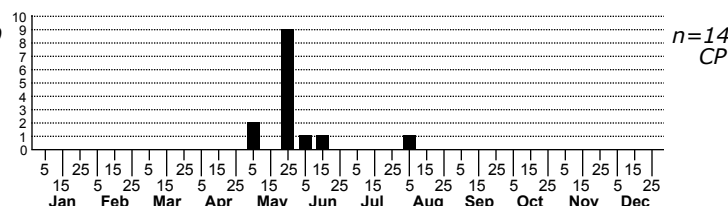
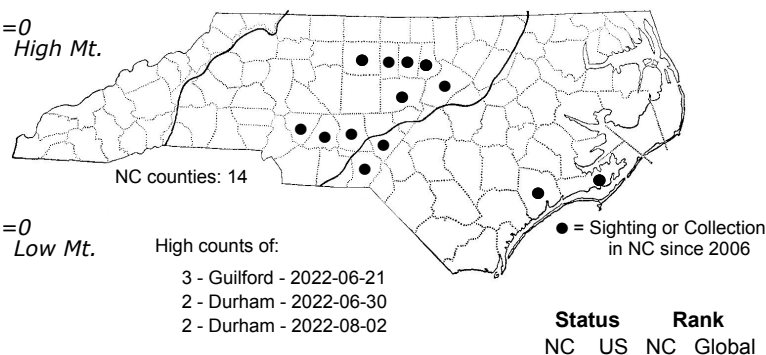
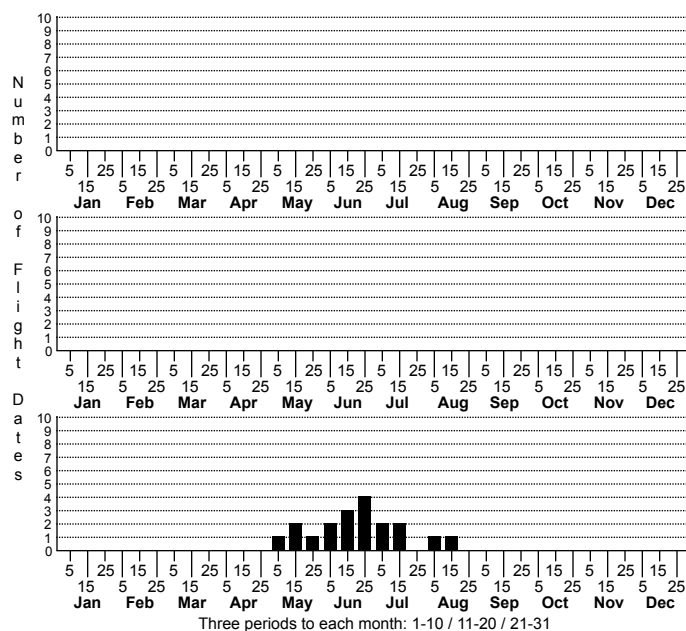


Dichomeris kimballi Kimball's Dichomeris



FAMILY: Gelechiidae SUBFAMILY: Dichomerinae 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 kimballi* has a rather non-descript forewing that is mottled with brown, grayish, and pale yellowish-gray scale patches. The overall color of fresh specimens is pale brownish-gray, while worn specimens are often lighter. The costa has a slender, diffuse, dark spot on the costal margin near the middle that widens inward. The most conspicuous mark is a well-defined, pale, subterminal line at around four-fifths the wing length that has an outward projecting tooth near the middle. A thin, white terminal line is also usually present, with the area between the two lines filled with dark-gray to blackish scales. A pair of small, dark spots that are margined with white scales are present at the middle of the wing, along with a similar, single spot at three-fourths.

The outer surface of the first and second segments of the labial palps are dark-brown, and there is a dorsal scale tuft on the second segment that has the apices of the scales off-white. The third segment is dark brown near the base and before the apex, with the middle region a uniformly pale-gray color. The frons, vertex, and occiput are mostly shades of gray, while the shaft of the antenna has alternating pale-gray and dark grayish-brown rows of scales (Hodges, 1986). The legs are grayish-brown with a few lighter tarsal rings. The hindwing is brown and has a prominent concolorous fringe.

Dichomeris inversella is often confused with *D. kimballi*. Hodges (1986) described *D. kimballi* as having a more washed-out appearance, which we interpret as having a paler and grayer ground color. The best field mark is that *D. kimballi* has a slender, dark-gray spot on the costal margin that widens inward. It occurs just beyond the middle of the wing and between the pair of dark spots at the middle of the wing, and the single spot at three-fourths, that are usually visible in this species. In *D. inversella*, the costal margin is more-or-less uniformly dark gray from the base to the apex. In addition, the area between the subterminal line and outer margin is darker than the remainder of the wing in *D. kimballi*, but much less so in *D. inversella*. The third segment of the labial palp is also useful, with *D. inversella* having a white segment except for an incomplete, dark ring below the tip. In contrast, the third segment of *D. kimballi* is dark at the tip and base, with a gray area in between.

DISTRIBUTION: *Dichomeris kimballi* is most common in the Piedmont and Coastal Plain of the eastern US, with spotty records outside of these areas. The range extends from Rhode Island, New Jersey and southeastern New York southward to southern Florida, and westward to Louisiana, east-central Texas, eastern Oklahoma, and southern Illinois. As of 2025, most of our records are from the eastern Piedmont and in coastal areas in the central Coastal Plain.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults have been observed from January through September in Florida and from April through October elsewhere. As of 2025, our records extend from early-May through mid-August, with a seasonal peak in May and June.

HABITAT: Our records come from both fairly open, dry-to-xeric sites, including barrier islands and sand ridges, but also from fairly wet areas, including pond and lakeshores, and streamheads in the Fall-line Sandhills.

FOOD: The host plants appear to be undocumented, although Hodges (1986) speculated that oaks or hickories would be likely hosts.

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: