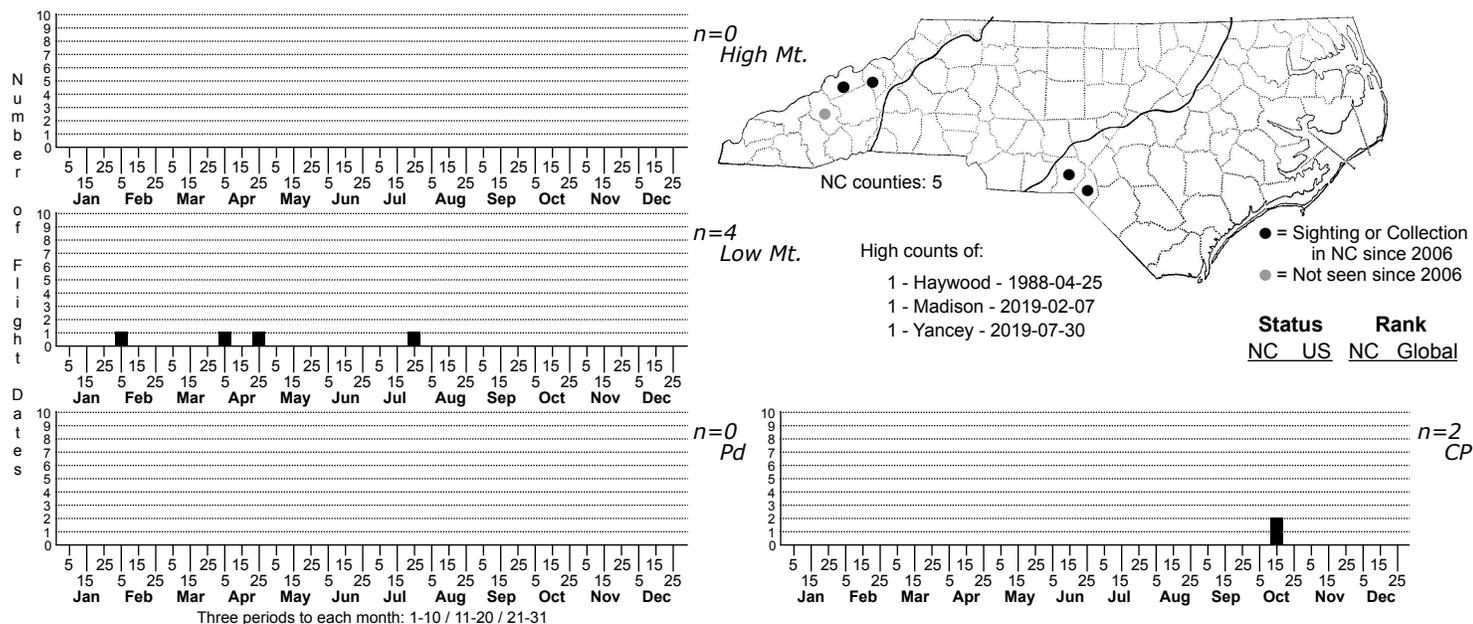


## *Acrolepiopsis incertella* Carrionflower Moth



FAMILY: Acrolepiidae SUBFAMILY: [Acrolepiinae] TRIBE: [Acrolepiini]

TAXONOMIC\_COMMENTS: The genus *Acrolepiopsis* includes 37 species that are distributed in most areas of the world, including 18 species in the Palearctic region (Landry, 2007). There are six species in North America, including three in North Carolina.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Landry (2007)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Landry (2007)

ID COMMENTS: *Acrolepiopsis incertella* and *A. heppneri* are two closely related forms that can only be reliably identified using genitalia or molecular markers (DNA barcoding). The following is a general description that applies to both and is based on that of Landry (2007). Both of these species have erect scales on the vertex. The labial palps are upcurved and extend to the top of vertex, with the third segment longer than the second. The palps, head, thorax and forewing are all brown, while the dorsum of the antenna is mostly brown with some whitish coloration along the sides. The most conspicuous mark on the forewing is a white, triangular mark on the inner margin at around one-half the wing length. Individuals normally rest with the wings folded so that the two marks form a larger triangular mark when viewed from above. A few small white dots are usually present along the inner margin just before and after the triangular mark. The only other conspicuous mark is a subterminal black spot that can vary from being conspicuous to missing altogether. The hindwing and fringe are brown, with a tendency to phase into brownish-white on the basal half. The outer portions of the legs are brown to dark-brown and have a few whitish tarsal spots on the joints.

DISTRIBUTION: *Acrolepiopsis incertella* is widely distributed in eastern North America with the range extending from New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Ontario southward to the Carolinas, and westward to Mississippi, western Tennessee, Michigan, Illinois and northwestern Iowa. There is at least two records for northern Florida that may be a disjunct population. Delineating the range has been hampered by the fact that the adults are not strongly attracted to lights, and need to be dissected for identification. As of 2025, we have two disjunct groups, with one in the Sandhills and a second in the Blue Ridge.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults have been observed from March through October in different areas of the range. As of 2025, our very limited records based on dissections range from early-February through mid-October, with the February records presumably being an overwintering adult.

HABITAT: The adults are generally associated with forest or forest edges where greenbriers are present.

FOOD: Larvae feed on greenbriers (*Smilax* spp.), with Smooth Carrion-flower (*S. herbacea*) and Bristly Greenbrier (*S. hispida* = *S. tamnoides*) the reported host plants (Landry, 2007; Beadle and Leckie, 2018; BugGuide; microleps.org). As of 2025, we do not have any feeding records in North Carolina.

OBSERVATION\_METHODS: The adults appear to be only weakly attracted to lights (Landry, 2007).

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR SNR [S2S4]

STATE PROTECTION:

COMMENTS: Documenting the distribution and abundance of this species has been hampered by the fact that the adults do not appear to be strongly attracted to lights and require dissection for accurate identification. Additional work is needed before we can accurately assess the conservation status of this species in North Carolina.