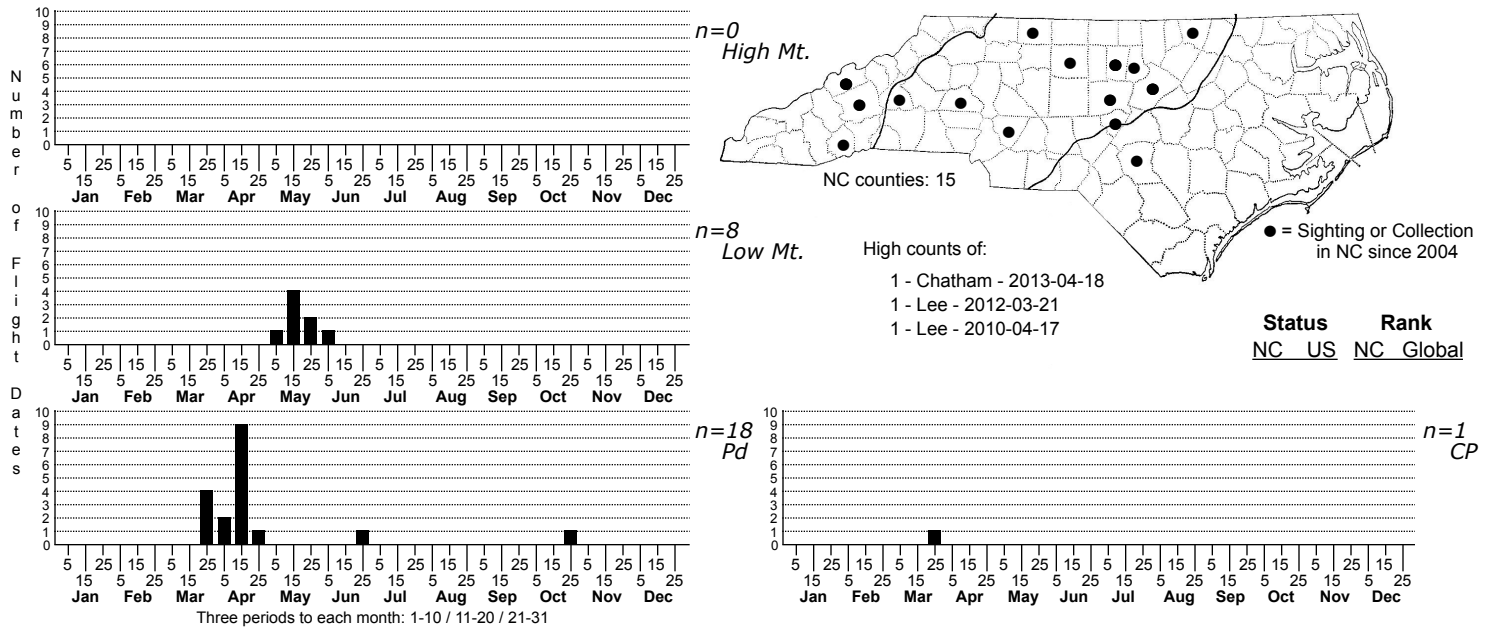


Prionoxystus macmurtrei Little Carpenterworm Moth



FAMILY: Cossidae SUBFAMILY: Cossinae TRIBE: [Cossini]

TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS: One of three members of the genus in North America, two of which are found in North Carolina. Very similar in appearance to members of the genus *Acosus*, though no species in that genus occurs in the southeastern U.S. It is among the largest of the "micro-moths."

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984); Beadle and Leckie (2012)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1923)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Packard (1890)

ID COMMENTS: Subtly sexually dimorphic. The forewings of the female are brownish to smoky gray, marked by variable black, transverse lines, and are noticeably translucent. The hindwings are largely unmarked gray and also translucent. Males have more attenuated forewings that show a pattern similar to that of the female, though it is typically more lightly marked. The hindwings of the male show a straighter outer margin and may show pale orange or yellow in the median area. As with *P. robiniae*, *P. macmurtrei* has a thick abdomen, broad thorax, and disproportionally small head.

DISTRIBUTION: All of our records come from the Piedmont

FLIGHT COMMENT: Appears to be univoltine, with all of our records coming from March to May

HABITAT: Our records come from fairly nondescript locations, including building lights in towns. One comes from a Piedmont monadnock and two others come from habitats associated with artificial reservoirs.

FOOD: The larvae bore into the wood of deciduous trees (Forbes, 1923; Craighead et al., 1950; Covell, 1984; Heppner, 2007; Robinson et al., 2010). The reported hosts include maples (*Acer*), chestnuts (*Castanea*), ashes (*Fraxinus*) and oaks, including Northern Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*).

OBSERVATION_METHODS: Females are attracted to lights to some extent, males far less so. Since the mouthparts of the adults are rudimentary, they do not feed and consequently do not come to bait or visit flowers.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G4 [S3S4]

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

COMMENTS: Forbes (1923) noted that this species is quite rare in collections. That agrees with our records, which are few and far between in North Carolina. However, the records do not indicate any significant degree of habitat specialization and the scarcity of this species may be more apparent -- representing sampling problems -- than real. More information is needed on their distribution, host plant and habitat preferences in North Carolina before their conservation status can be accurately assessed.