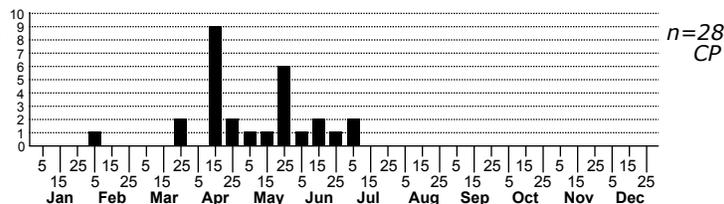
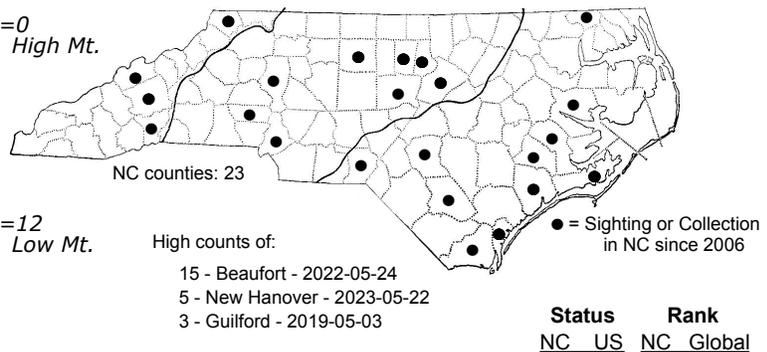
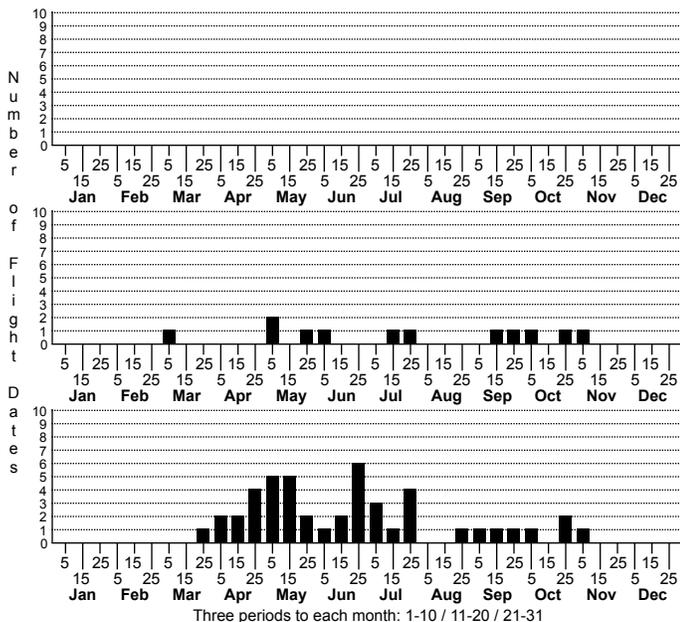


# *Episimus tyrius* Maple Tip Borer Moth



FAMILY: Tortricidae SUBFAMILY: Olethreutinae TRIBE: Olethreutini  
 TAXONOMIC\_COMMENTS:

**FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:**

**ONLINE PHOTOS:**

**TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS:** Heppner (1994)

**TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:**

**ID COMMENTS:** *Episimus tyrius* is an easily distinguished species that has a wavy whitish wash along the basal half of the inner margin, a concavity below this that is filled with dark reddish-brown scales, and a large reddish-purple region that covering most of the basal three-fifths of the wing on the costal half. The outer portion is washed with orangish-yellow and the ocellus has two or three short dark-brown dashes. The following description is based in part on that of Heinrich (1923a).

The labial palp is reddish-purple, while the head is reddish-purple in front and ochreous white above. The thorax is whitish with the anterior margin reddish-purple and with a scattering of lead-colored to reddish-brown spots behind. The inner margin of the forewing has a wavy, longitudinal, whitish, basal band with a scattering of lead-colored to reddish-brown spots. The band is a continuation of the coloration on the thorax. The band terminates just beyond one-half the wing length, and has a concavity at around two-fifths that is filled with dark reddish-brown scales. Below this on the costal half is a large reddish-purple region that covers most of the basal three-fifths of the wing.

The outer two-fifths of the wing is orangish-yellow centrally, with reddish-purple broadly distributed from the subterminal region inward to beyond the center of the wing. The apical half of the costal has a series of metallic-gray, oblique lines that project towards the outer margin and are interspersed with short, white lines. The ocellus has two or three very short longitudinal dark-brown dashes. These are followed by a transverse metallic-gray bar, and an adjoining white bar. The outer margin and fringe are variably washed with a mixture of orangish-yellow and reddish-purple scales, while the hindwing is brown to purplish-brown with a whitish wash along the basal two-thirds of the costal margin.

**DISTRIBUTION:** *Episimus tyrius* is found in the eastern US, with the range extending from New Hampshire southwestward along the Atlantic Seaboard to southern Florida, and westward across the Gulf Coast states to Louisiana and eastern Texas. The range extends northward from Mississippi and Alabama through Tennessee, western Kentucky, southern Illinois and southern Indiana. This species occurs statewide in North Carolina, but appears to be absent from higher-elevation sites in the Blue Ridge.

**FLIGHT COMMENT:** Local populations appear to be multivoltine in North Carolina and elsewhere in the range. The adults have been found during every month of the year, and in most areas of the range the adults have prolonged flight periods. As of 2025, our records extend from early-February to early-November.

**HABITAT:**

**FOOD:** The larvae are polyphagous and have been reported to feed on maples (*Acer*), cherries (*Prunus*), holly (*Ilex*), *Magnolia* and bayberry (*Morella*) (Mizell and Short, 1992; Heppner, 1994; Brown et al. 2008). The specific species that are used include Florida Maple (*Acer floridanum*), Red Maple (*A. rubrum*), Silver Maple (*A. saccharinum*), Loblolly Bay (*Gordonia lasianthus*), Carolina Laurel Cherry (*Prunus caroliniana*) and Cherry Laurel (*P. laurocerasus*). Heppner (1994) questioned whether reports of this species using American Holly (*Ilex opaca*), Sweetbay Magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*) and Common Waxmyrtle (*Morella cerifera*) were valid and encouraged further study. As of 2025, we have rearing records for larvae in North Carolina using Red Maple, Swamp Loosestrife (*Decodon verticillatus*) and Loblolly Bay.

**OBSERVATION\_METHODS:** The adults are attracted to lights, and the leaf folds can be found on maples and other hosts.

**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:** This species primarily uses maples as hosts and appears to be secure within the state.