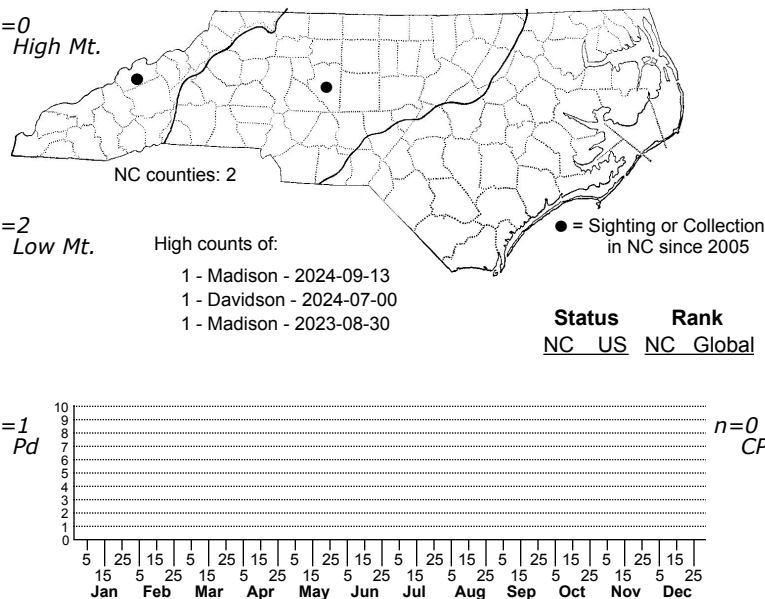
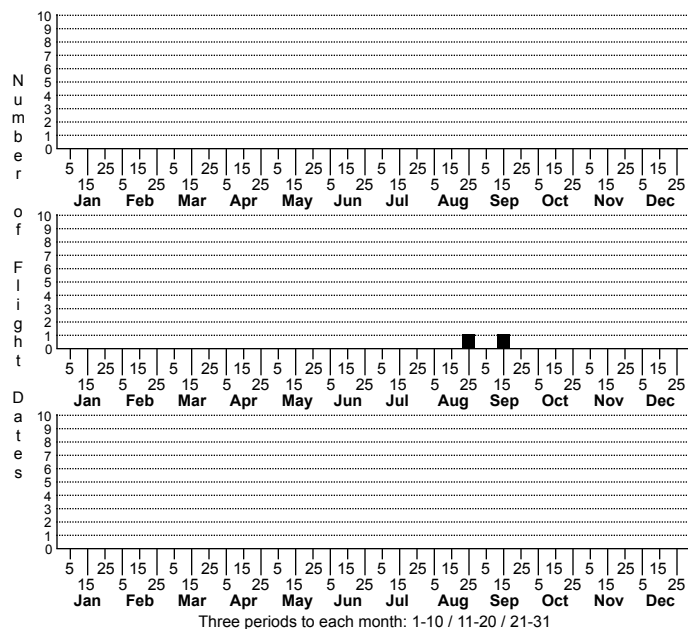


Olethreutes furfuranum Woolly-backed Moth



FAMILY: Tortricidae SUBFAMILY: Olethreutinae TRIBE: Olethreutini

TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS: *Olethreutes* is a large genus with over 130 recognized species worldwide. North America has around 80 recognized species, with at least 37 species occurring in North Carolina. Some species are very difficult to identify due to interspecific similarities in color and forewing pattern and only subtle differences in genitalia (Gilligan et al., 2008). In many instances, knowledge of the host plant is essential for a confident determination. All of the Nearctic species are leaf-tiers or leaf-rollers on deciduous trees and shrubs.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: *Olethreutes furfuranum* is a dull greenish-gray to greenish-tan moth that shows little contrast between the fascial markings and the dark lustrous-gray interfascial areas (Gilligan et al., 2008). In addition, the medial fascia is darker at the costa. The head, thorax, and the fascial and interfascial areas of the forewing are more-or-less concolorous -- with a greenish-gray, greenish-tan or tan ground color that is dusted with varying levels of black scales. The terminal segment of the palp is black and the posterior portion of the head tuft often has a patch of blackish scales. The thorax has a blackish scale tuft, and has two or three lines of dark scales that run from side-to-side, with the first two often forming an oval. The medial fascia, postmedial bar, and other marks on the forewing are margined with a line of light pale scales, and the areas between these have a mixture of blackish and silvery-gray scales. The medial fascia is noticeably darker near the costa, and the fringe is heavily dusted with black scales. The hindwing is medium to dark brown.

This species generally resembles *O. permundana* in patterning, but the latter has forewings that are more boldly contrasting, that lack greenish-gray coloration, and that lack substantial black dusting. In addition, the narrow black lines on the thorax that are present on *O. furfuranum* are not present on *O. permundana*. Worn specimens of both species may require dissection for a positive identification.

DISTRIBUTION: *Olethreutes furfuranum* occurs throughout most of the eastern US and in adjoining areas of southern Ontario and Quebec. In the US, the range extends from Maine southward to northern Florida, and westward to eastern Texas, eastern Oklahoma, Missouri, Illinois, and southern Michigan. As of 2024, we have only two site records, with one each from the Piedmont and a lower-elevation site in the Blue Ridge.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults have been observed from April through September in different areas of the range. As of 2024, our two site records are from July and mid-September.

HABITAT: The habitats are poorly documented. Our one record with locality data was from a semi-wooded residential neighborhood in the Blue Ridge.

FOOD: The reported hosts include a commercial blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus*), but native *Rubus* species are also likely used (MacKay, 1959; Miller, 1979; Robinson et al., 2023).

OBSERVATION_METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights. More information is needed on the preferred habitats, hosts and life history in North Carolina and elsewhere.

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: This species appears to be uncommon in North Carolina, but more information is needed on its host plants, habitats, and life history before we can accurately assess its conservation status.