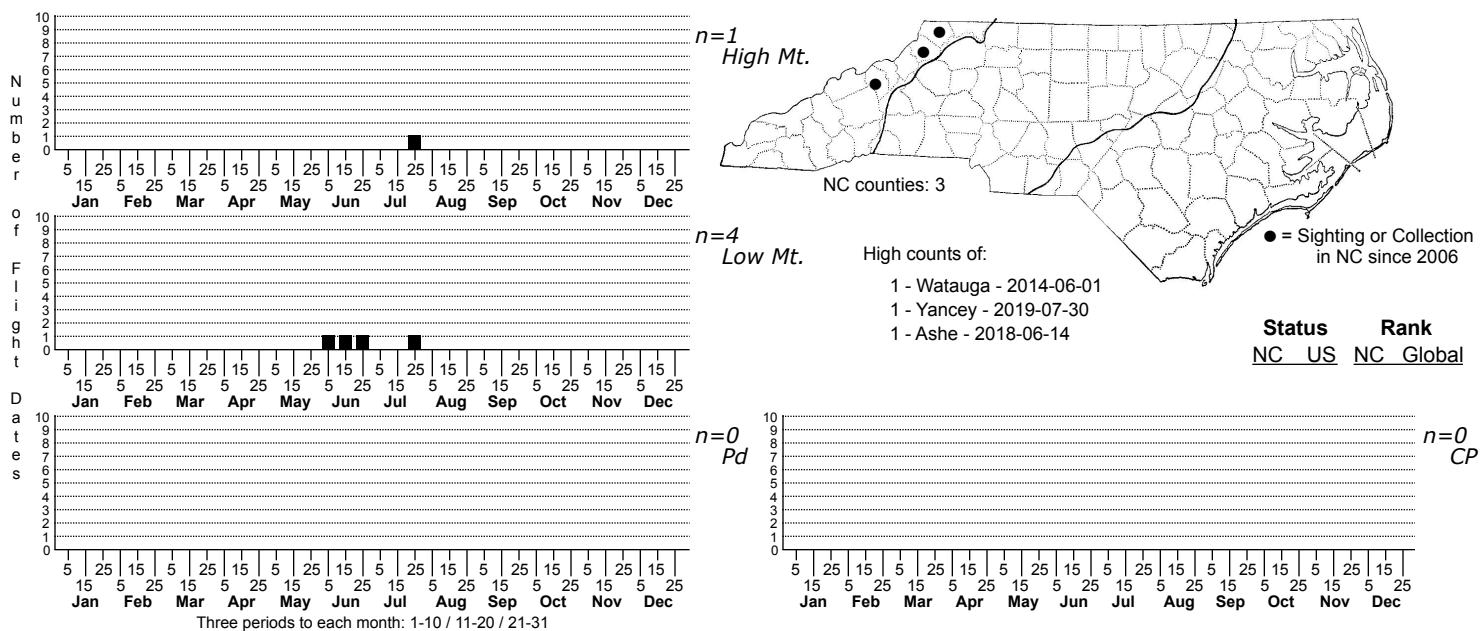


Olethreutes exoletum Wretched Olethreutes



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: Beadle and Leckie (2012)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: This species is distinctive among our *Olethreutes* in having a forewing that is uniformly olive gray to brownish-tan with no markings except a diffuse band of brownish-gray to blackish shading from the base of the inner margin to the mid-costa, and a conspicuous dark apical spot (Gilligan et al., 2008). The forewing ground is usually finely reticulated with darker scaling, and the head and thorax are concolorous -- except that the thorax has a tuft of blackish scales on the posterior margin and a scattering of blackish scales on the anterior edge. The costa has a dark patch near the middle and a series of similar marks that progressively decrease in size towards the apex. The palps are brownish-tan with darker tips, and the hindwing varies from olive gray to brown.

DISTRIBUTION: *Olethreutes exoletum* is found almost exclusively in eastern North America in areas with cool climates. In Canada it occurs from Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick westward to southern Ontario, with apparent geographic isolates in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. In the US, specimens have been found from Maine westward to Wisconsin and Minnesota, and southward to eastern Kansas, Missouri, southern Ohio, Northern Virginia and western North Carolina. As of 2024, our records are restricted to lower and higher elevation sites in the Blue Ridge. Populations in North Carolina may reflect a group that is disjunct from those in the main range to the north.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults have been observed from May through September in different areas of the range, with a seasonal peak typically in June and July. As of 2024, our records are from early-June through late-July.

HABITAT: Local populations are typically restricted to sites where gooseberries abound.

FOOD: The larvae appear to specialize on gooseberries (*Ribes* spp.) (Heinrich, 1926; Schaffner, 1959; Brown et al., 2008).

OBSERVATION METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights. More information is needed on host use and the larval 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 is rare to uncommon in North Carolina and is restricted to the Blue Ridge where populations appear to be disjunct from those in the main range to the north.