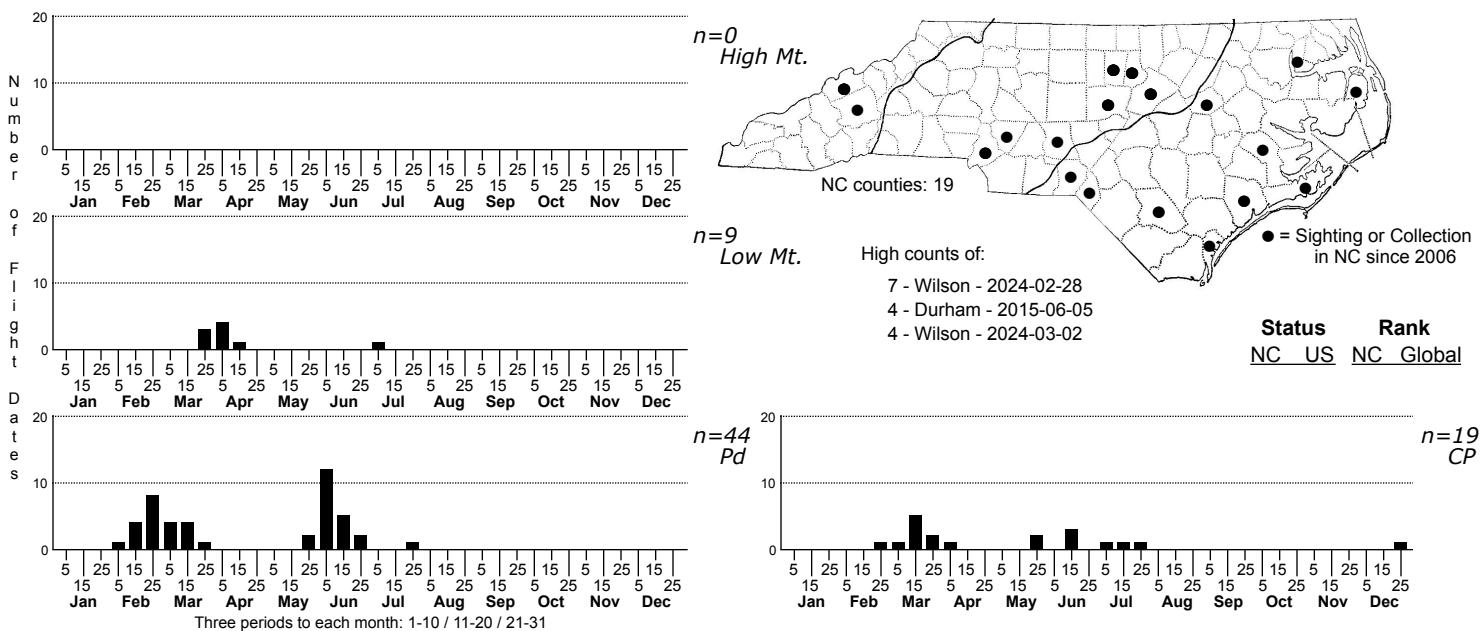


Rhyacionia rigidana Pitch Pine Tip Moth



FAMILY: Tortricidae SUBFAMILY: Olethreutinae TRIBE: Eucosmini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: The genus *Rhyacionia* is widespread in the Holarctic Region, ranging from Japan and Asia to the Caribbean Antilles and Mexico (Powell and Miller, 1978). There are 33 described species worldwide and 24 in North America. The larvae feed on the needles, buds, and growing tips of pines.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Powell and Miller (1978)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: The palps and head are light frosted gray, while the dorsum of the thorax is similar but slightly darker. The extreme base of the forewing is grayish, while most of the remaining basal one-fourth is mottled with red or reddish brown that forms a basal patch. The relatively dark basal patch is bordered by a lighter yellowish gray to grayish white median cross-band. The median band is often stepped, with the dorsal portion wider. Its maximum width is equal to or greater than that of the reddish basal patch. A dark reddish band at about three-fourths the wing length extends from the inner margin to near the middle of the wing, where it nearly joins a series of diffuse reddish blotches along the costal margin that extends from the posterior edge of the median pale band towards the apex. The apical fifth is usually heavily dusted with reddish scales. The fringe is dark gray and often has a thin, dark line extending around the termen. The hindwing is pale grayish brown with a paler fringe. The abdomen is shining light gray above, and the legs are gray to reddish brown with paler annuli.

DISTRIBUTION: *Rhyacionia rigidana* is found in the eastern US, central America, and the Caribbean. In the US the range extends from southern Maine to Florida, and westward to eastern Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Missouri, and Indiana. This species occurs statewide in North Carolina.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults are active year-round in Florida, and mostly from February through July in other areas outside of North Carolina. As of 2021, our records extend from late February through early July, with the first brood beginning in March. Local populations appear to be bivoltine, which is the case for most populations in areas outside of Florida (Miller and Neiswander, 1959).

HABITAT: Populations depend on yellow pines as host plants and are found in pine and mixed pine-hardwood forests statewide.

FOOD: The larvae feed on several members of the yellow pine group (Powell and Miller, 1978; Brown et al., 2008). The known hosts include Shortleaf Pine (*P. echinata*), Red Pine (*P. resinosa*), Pitch Pine (*P. rigida*), Loblolly Pine (*P. taeda*), and Virginia Pine (*P. virginiana*), as well as several non-native ornamental pines.

OBSERVATION METHODS: The adults come to lights.

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 occurs statewide and appears to be relatively secure.