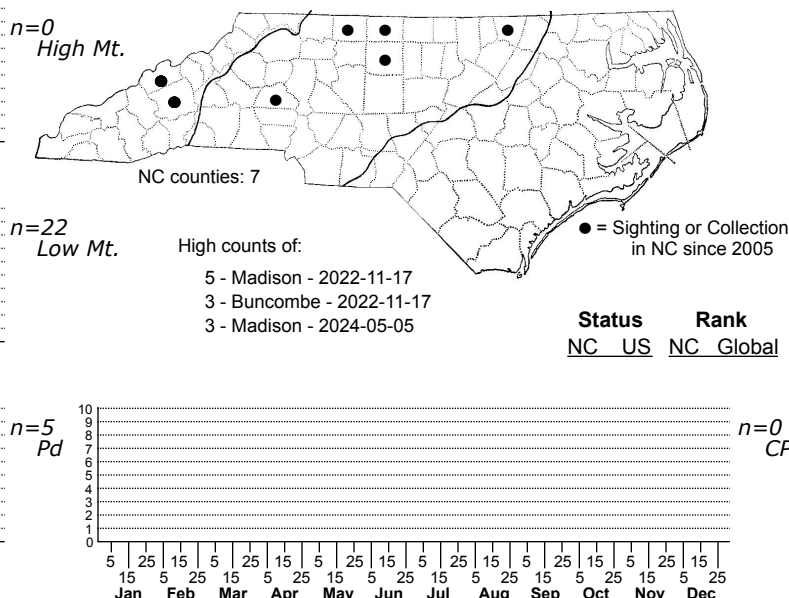
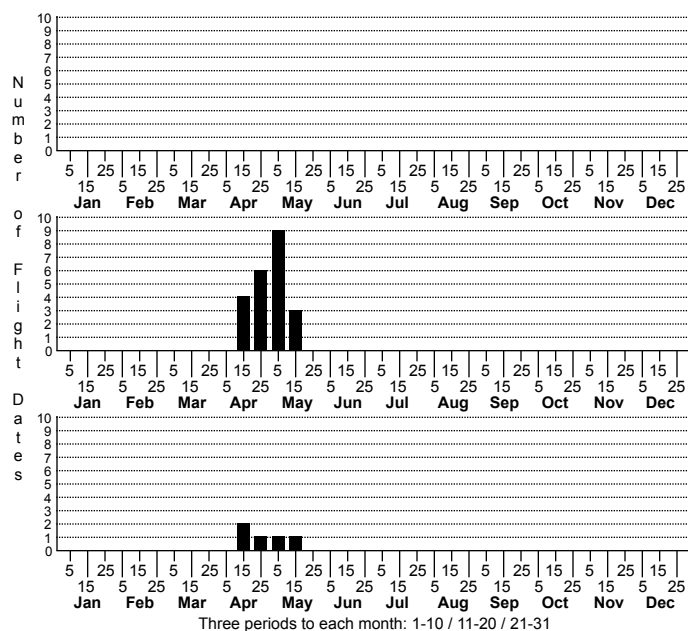


# *Retinia virginiana* Wenzel's Pitch-blister Moth



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

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1923)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: The following is based in part on descriptions by Busck (1914) and Forbes (1923). The labial palp, face, and head are light whitish yellow, while the antenna is reddish white with a thin longitudinal black line anteriorly. The thorax is predominantly pale orange, but often shaded with whitish blotching in the front. The forewing ground is light rusty orange and is overlain heavily with thick yellowish-silvery or pearly-white transverse lines. These tend to follow a highly sinuous path from the costa to the dorsal margin and vary in length. Some may fork or anastomize with adjoining lines and they frequently appear as double lines. The median area usually has two lines (often double) in close proximity and running roughly parallel to each other that are highlighted by the rusty orange ground on either side. A second set of lines is often well developed at around three-fourths. The cilia are whitish brown with an orange basal line cut with white. The hindwing is whitish and shaded with pale wood-brown, and the cilia are white. The abdomen is light brown above with each joint edged with white, while the legs are white with wide brownish bands.

DISTRIBUTION: *Retinia virginiana* is found in the eastern US from Maryland and southern Pennsylvania to as far west as southern Ohio and western Kentucky. From there the range extends southward through the Appalachian region and Piedmont to North Carolina, eastern Tennessee, and northern Alabama. As of 2022, our records are all from the Piedmont and lower elevations sites in the Blue Ridge.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Local populations throughout the range are univoltine with the adults emerging during the spring warm-up, typically in April and May. As of 2022, our records extend from mid-April through mid-May.

HABITAT: This species is restricted to sites with Virginia Pine. This species is typically found at sites with dry, nutrient-poor soils and is a common early successional species in the Piedmont and Blue Ridge where it often grows in dense stands following fires or land clearing operations.

FOOD: *Retinia virginiana* is a specialist on Virginia Pine (*Pinus virginiana*) and its geographic range closely parallels that of its host. Miller and Altmann (1958) noted that other pines that grow in the vicinity of Virginia Pine are never used as hosts. In North Carolina, Jim Petranksa has documented larvae in resin nodules on Virginia Pine.

OBSERVATION\_METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights and the resinous nodules are easy to spot on the host plant.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR [S3S4]

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

COMMENTS: Populations in North Carolina are near the southern limit of the range. The species appears to be locally common but patchily distributed throughout the Piedmont and Blue Ridge.