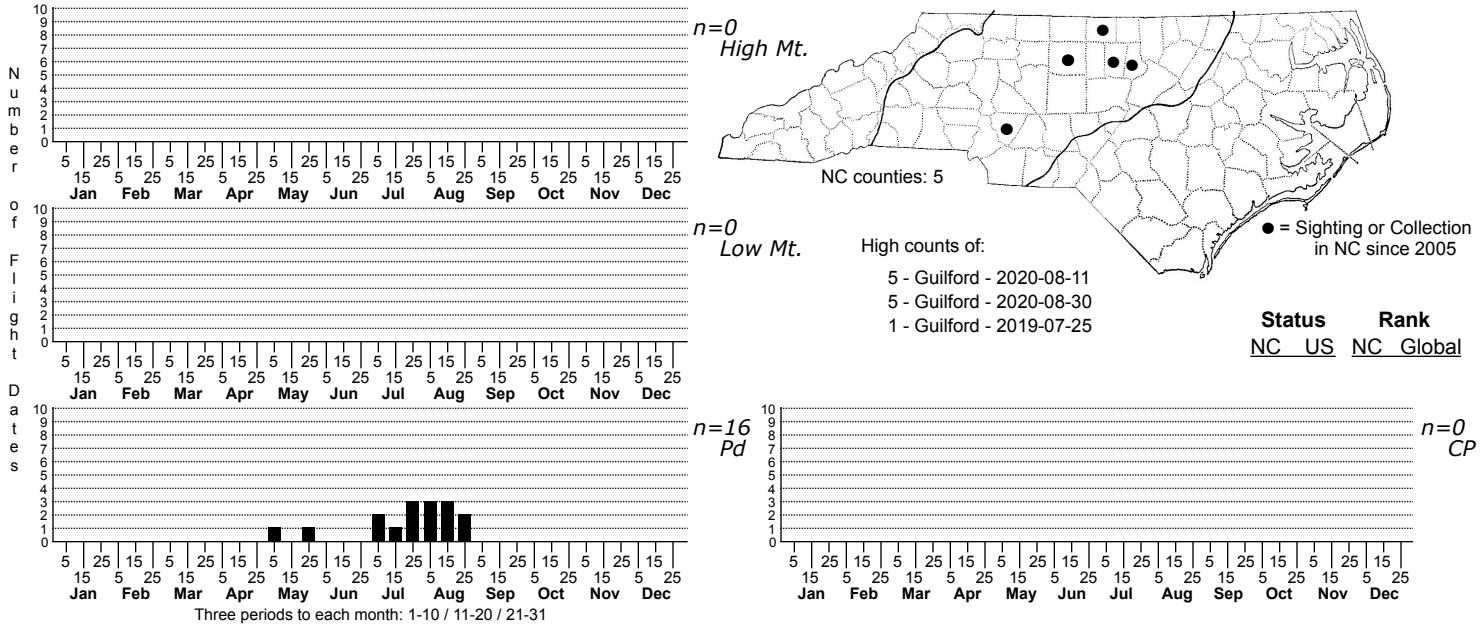
Pelochrista milleri None



FAMILY: Tortricidae SUBFAMILY: Olethreutinae TRIBE: Eucosmini
TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS: Pelochrista is a large Holarctic genus of tortricids with around 75% of the 226 described species being native to North America (Wright and Gilligan, 2017). The highest species richness occurs in the western half of North America. The genus has a long and confusing taxonomic history, with many of the species formerly placed in the genus Eucosma. Gilligan et al. (2014) conducted a comprehensive phylogenetic analysis of Pelochrista, Eucosma, and related genera and redefined the genus Eucosma and Pelochrista based on differences in female genitalia. The great majority of Pelochrista species are known only from adults, which likely reflects the fact that the larvae of most species bore into stem bases and roots and are concealed from view. Members of the Asteraceae are the likely hosts for most species (Wright and Gilligan, 2017), but much work need to be done to identifying the hosts.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:
ONLINE PHOTOS:
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Wright (2007); Wright and Gilligan (2017)
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: The following description is based on that from Wright (2007) and Wright and Gilligan (2017). The lower frons is pale tan, and the scales of upper frons and vertex gray-brown with pale apices and bases. The labial palp has a brown to tan outwardly and the third segment is brown and often with a pale tan apex. The antenna is grayish brown. The thorax is concolorous with the head and the legs are brown to pale tan with dark tarsal annulations.

The forewing ground color is dark gray to grayish-brown with fine white reticulations. It is overlain with dark brown markings that contrast weakly with the ground. The dark sub-basal patch is present at around one-third the wing length that is roughly triangular-shaped and extends from the inner margin to the middle of the wing. Beyond this is a moderately broad median band that extends obliquely from near the middle of the costa to the subtornal region. The band is usually divided into two patches, with the costal patch about twice the length of the pretornal patch. The terminal fifth of the wing typically has and a much narrower narrow band that fades near the costa. All of the dark markings are thinly edged with white, and usually more so on the outer margins. The ocellus is concolorous with the ground color but clearly discernible, and the distal one-half of the costa has well-defined white strigulae that alternate with darker marks, along with a dark apical spot. The fringe is gray brown with lighter apices, and the hindwing is uniformly gray brown with a paler fringe.

Wright and Gilligan (2017) note that there are several Eucosmini that resemble P. milleri in general forewing appearance, including P. fiskeana and P. womonana, but they differ from P. milleri in genitalia. Pelochrista fiskeana differs in having a sub-basal fascia (patch) that is chevron-shaped and complete or nearly complete, and a median fascia (band) that is less contrasting and complete rather than being divided into two distinct patches. Pelochrista womonana is generally similar, but the dark patches on the forewing are more irregular and poorly delineated, and the white strigulae are more prominent.

DISTRIBUTION: Wright and Gilligan (2017) found that this species is broadly distributed in eastern North America but not well represented in collections. They documented specimens from Manitoba, Quebec, Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Virginia. As of 2022, we have only three site records and all are from the Piedmont.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Wright and Gilligan (2017) identified specimens that were collected from 18]une to 28 August. As of 2022, our records extend from early July through late August.

HABITAT: The adults are associated with openings and partially shaded sites where herbaceous vegetation is present. As of 2022, our records are all from semi-wooded residential neighborhoods.

FOOD: The only host record is for a larva that was found boring in the roots of Jerusalem Artichoke (Helianthus tuberosus) was reared to adulthood (Wright and Gilligan, 2017).

OBSERVATION_METHODS:

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS:

STATE PROTECTION:

COMMENTS: