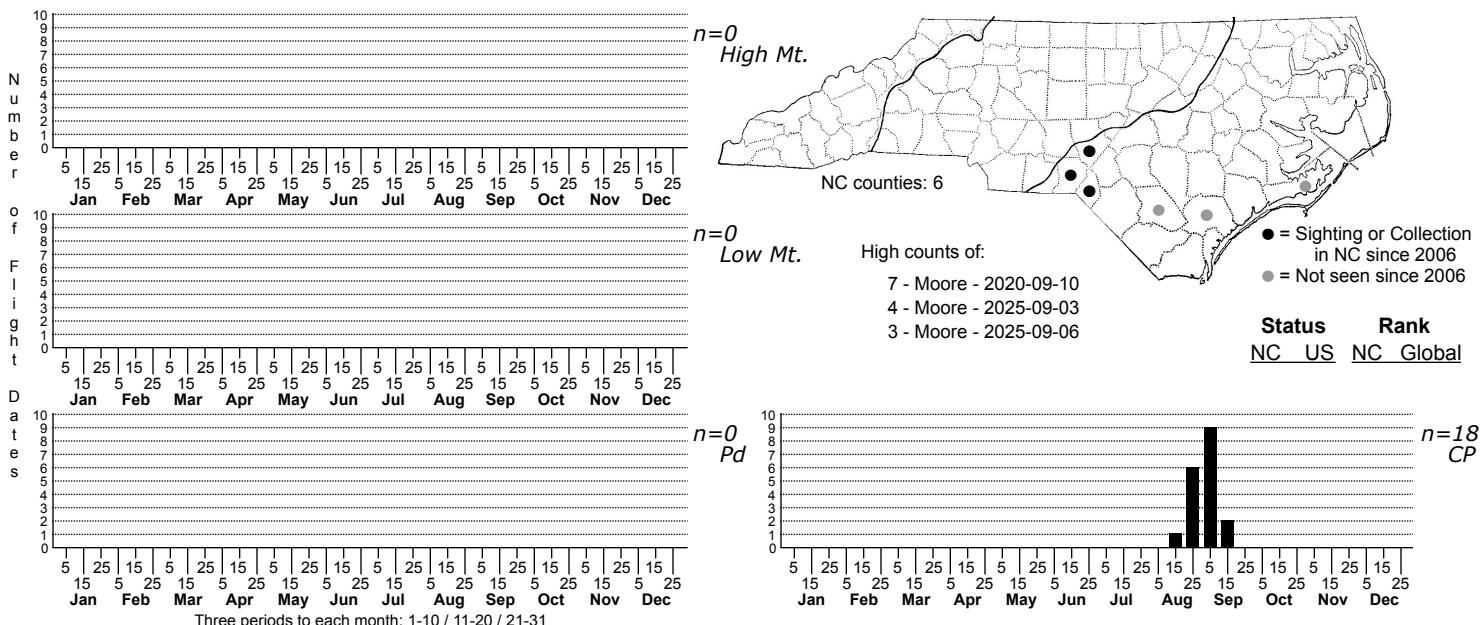


Epiblema alba None



FAMILY: Tortricidae SUBFAMILY: Olethreutinae TRIBE: Eucosmini
TAXONOMIC COMMENTS:

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS

FIELD GUIDE TO ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Wright and Gilligan (2021).

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION. IMMATURE STAGES: *Wright and Gahan*

ID COMMENTS: This is a small, mostly white *<Epiblema>* with contrasting black marks. The following is based on the description by Wright and Gilligan (2021). The palps, frons, and vertex are white, while the antenna is white with a prominent black spot on the scape. The thorax is white with a black spot at the base of the tegula and two black spots on the mesothorax. The forewing is white with black marks that include two transverse lines in the basal area that extend from the inner margin to near the middle of the wing. A prominent sub-basal mark is also present that is sometimes fragmented and extends from the inner margin to near the middle of the wing. The middle area of the wing is predominantly white and often has transverse reticulations, while an obscure bar is often evident at the mid-costa -- along with a conspicuous pretornal mark that is sometimes fragmented. The ocellus is white with pinkish to grayish bars on the lateral margins and one or two black marks on the white central field. The costal strigulae are conspicuous, and the termen has a narrow salt-and-pepper colored band from the tornus to the apex. The fringe is mostly white, except for being black at the apex. The hindwing is pale brownish gray with a whitish fringe.

E. Epiblema alba and *E. separationis* are similar in being small (mean FWL = 5.1 vs. 5.2 mm) and predominantly white species, but differ in forewing maculation and genitalia (Wright and Gilligan, 2021). They can be distinguished by the fact that *E. alba* has prominent black sub-basal and pretornal marks on the forewing, whereas *E. separationis* only has a scattering of black dots on the wing.

DISTRIBUTION: *Epiblema alba* is currently only known from southern Alabama, Florida and North Carolina. As of 2024, all of our records are from the southern Coastal Plain, with most from the Sandhills.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Specimens that were examined by Wright and Gilligan (2021) were collected from mid-July through mid-September. As of 2024, our records extend from late-August and early-September, which suggests a very brief flight period in North Carolina.

HABITAT: This species is typically found in sandy, xeric habitats. Our specimens mostly come from fire-maintained habitats in the Sandhills, including upland TurKey Oak and Longleaf Pine communities.

FOOD: The larval host plants are undocumented, but Bo Sullivan noted that *Chrysopis mariana* was growing at all three sites where *alba* was collected in 2020 (Wright and Gilligan, 2021). Additional studies are needed to determine if this is a host.

OBSERVATION METHODS: The adults are attracted to UV-lights.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR SNR [S2S3]

STATE PROTECTION.

COMMENTS: Populations in North Carolina are mostly restricted to the Sandhills and appear to be a major disjunct group from more southern populations in Florida and southern Alabama. More information is needed on its flight periods, distribution and host plants before we can accurately assess its conservation status.