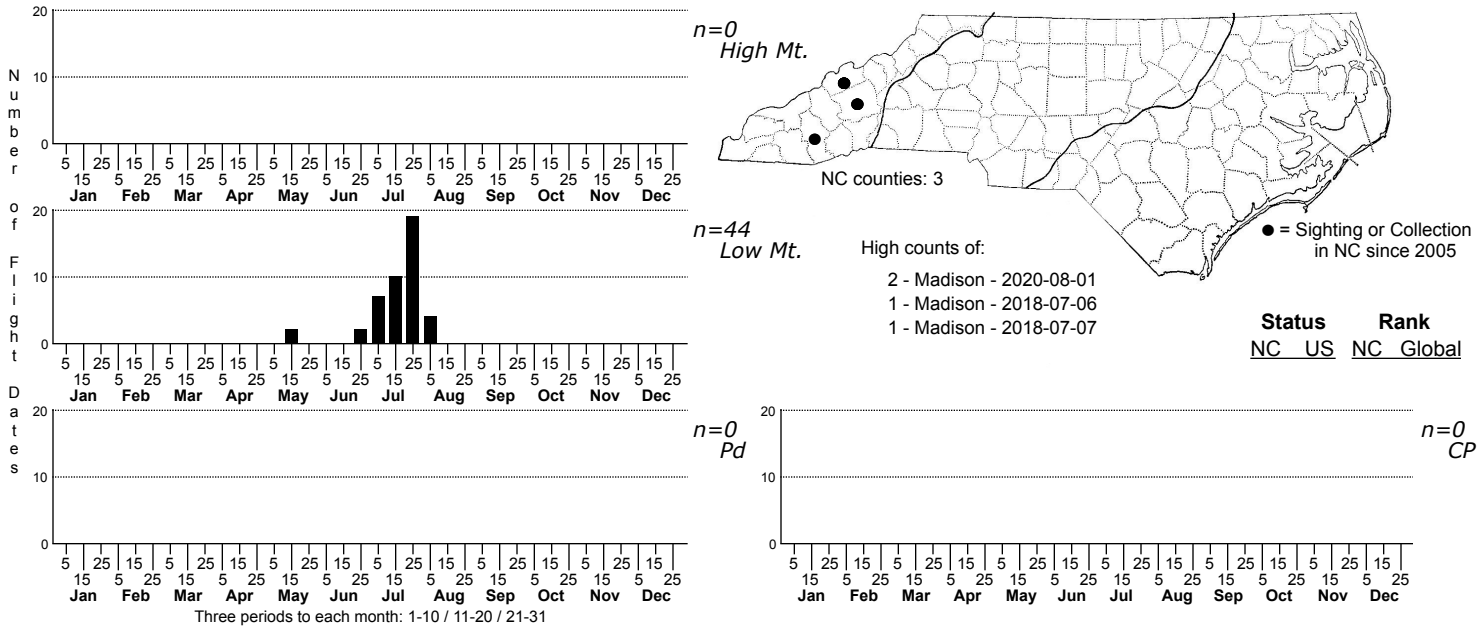
Epiblema glenni Glenn's Epiblema



FAMILY: Tortricidae SUBFAMILY: Olethreutinae TRIBE: Eucosmini
TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS:

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:
ONLINE PHOTOS:
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Wright (2002).
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: This species is predominantly brown with a salmon-colored median band that often has two or three dots of dark scales along the inner margin. The palps, head, thorax and antennae are all dark brown and concolorous with a prominent basal patch on the forewing. The dark brown basal patch contrast sharply with the lighter median band, which extends from the inner margin towards the costa, and abruptly narrows near the center of the wing. The distal edge of the band is more or less concave on the costal half of the wing. In females the band continues forward to the costa as a narrower band, while in males it is separated from the costal fold by a narrow strip of dark scales (Wright, 2002; Wright and Gilligan, 2023). The median fascia that follows the median band is brownish to grayish and sometimes paler than the basal patch. It has a prominent black spot just behind the median band at the point where it narrows abruptly. The costal stigulae beyond the median band are white and well defined. The ocellus is often obscure, but when evident the central field varies from brown to whitish tan and is crossed longitudinally by four black dashes. It is capped at its apical corner with a black spot of variable expression, and strongly bordered with gray along the basal and tornal margins. The gray border is overlaid to varying degrees with light-brown to pale-salmon scales.

E. tripartitana is very similar to E. glenni and is best distinguished by the color and shape of the median band. In E. tripartitana the band appears white to the naked eye, but a pale salmon tint usually is detectable under magnification (Wright, 2002). In females the band merges with the costal stigulae, forming a continuous band from the inner margin to the costa. In males the band is intercepted by the costal fold, but the light-gray to gray costal strigulae on the adjacent portion of the fold often create the impression of it continuing to the costal margin. The convex curvature of the band's distal margin varies from circular, to that of a line bent just above the fold. In E. glenni the median band is distinctly salmon colored, and often has a thin white margin where it adjoins the brown basal patch. Its width narrows markedly above the fold, where the distal edge angles abruptly inward. In females it continues forward to the costa as a narrower band, while in males it is separated from the costal fold by a narrow strip of dark scales (Wright, 2002). Wright (2002) was unable to find any diagnostic differences between the two species based on the male and female genitalia. These species appear to be geographically isolated in North Carolina, with E. glenni restricted to the Blue Ridge and E. tripartitana to the Coastal Plain.

DISTRIBUTION: Epiblema glenni is found in eastern North America from Maine southwestward through the Appalachian region to central and southern Alabama, and westward to western Tennessee, Missouri, eastern Iowa, Wisconsin and southeastern Minnesota. Populations also occur in southern Ontario. As of 2024, all of our records are from the lower valleys in the Blue Ridge.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults primarily fly from June through September in different areas of the range, with records as early as March in Alabama. As of 2024, our records range from late-June through early-August, with a seasonal peak in July.

HABITAT: Our records are mostly from fragmented landscapes with a mixture of forests, fields and residential neighborhoods.

FOOD: The hosts plants are undocumented, but are presumed to be members of the Asteraceae as is the case with other Epiblema species.

OBSERVATION_METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights.

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 appears to be uncommon in North Carolina, with all of our records restricted to lower-elevation valleys in the Blue Ridge. More information is needed on its host species and ecological requirements before we can fully assess its conservation status.