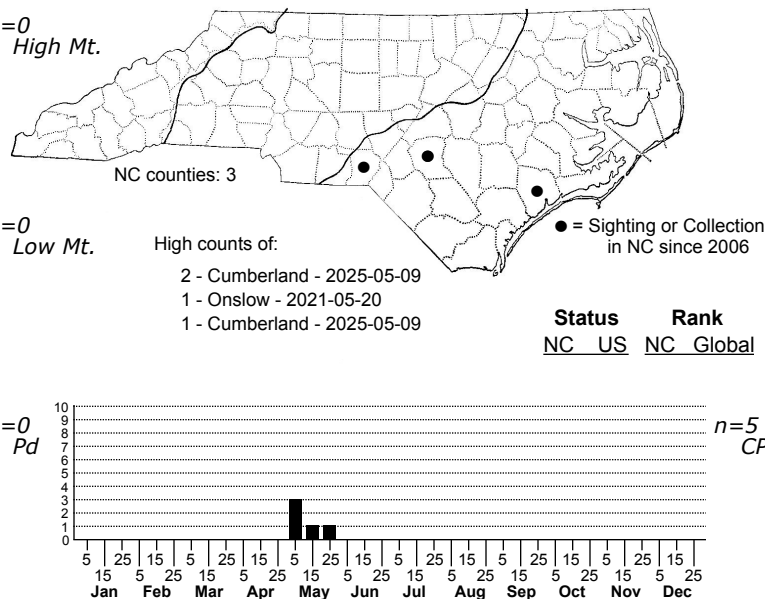


Epiblema desertana None



FAMILY: Tortricidae SUBFAMILY: Olethreutinae TRIBE: Eucosmini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: In their work on the *Epiblema* of North America, Wright and Gilligan (2023) recognized this species as being a member of the '*desertana*' group that has four species, including *E. desertana*, *E. discretivana*, and *E. obfuscana* that occur in the eastern U.S.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Wright and Gilligan (2023)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: The following description is mostly based on that of Wright and Gilligan (2023). The palps, head, thorax and antennae vary from dark brown to blackish brown. The forewing has a prominent basal patch with transverse blackish reticulations that covers the basal third of the wing. The remainder of the wing is mostly light-colored, with the interfascial region that follows the basal patch often having an extensive pink suffusion. A gray patch with black speckling is present in the pretornal area at around two-thirds the wing length, and a short, blackish bar is often evident near the middle of the costa. The ocellus has a narrow white central field that is flanked laterally by pink transverse bands. The whitish to grayish costal stigulae are inconspicuous, and the termen has a prominent black band that extends from the termen to the apex. *Epiblema desertana* is similar to *E. obfuscana*, but the latter lacks the pinkish wash on the forewing that is seen in *E. desertana* and the black band along the termen terminates well before reaching the tornus.

DISTRIBUTION: *Epiblema desertana* is found throughout much of the eastern U.S. and in adjoining areas of southern Canada (Ontario; Quebec). In the U.S. the range extends from southern Maine and other New England states southward to southern Florida, and westward mostly along the Gulf Coast to eastern Texas and central Oklahoma. Farther north the range extends westward to northern Kentucky, Indiana and Illinois. As of 2023, we have a single record from Onslow County near the coast.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults have been observed from February through September in different areas of the range, with the southernmost populations first flying from February through April. Northern populations are univoltine and have a more restricted flight season that peaks in May and June. As of 2023, our one record is from late-May.

HABITAT: Local populations are found in open habitats such as fields, prairies, open woods and roadways that support early-successional composites.

FOOD: Miller (1976) conducted extensive searches of goldenrods (*Solidago* spp.) but only found *E. desertana* galls on Grass-leaved Flat-top Goldenrod (*Euthamia graminifolia*).

OBSERVATION_METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights and can be found in galls on *Euthamia*.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR[S1S2]

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

COMMENTS: This species is rare within the state with only a single confirmed record as of 2023.