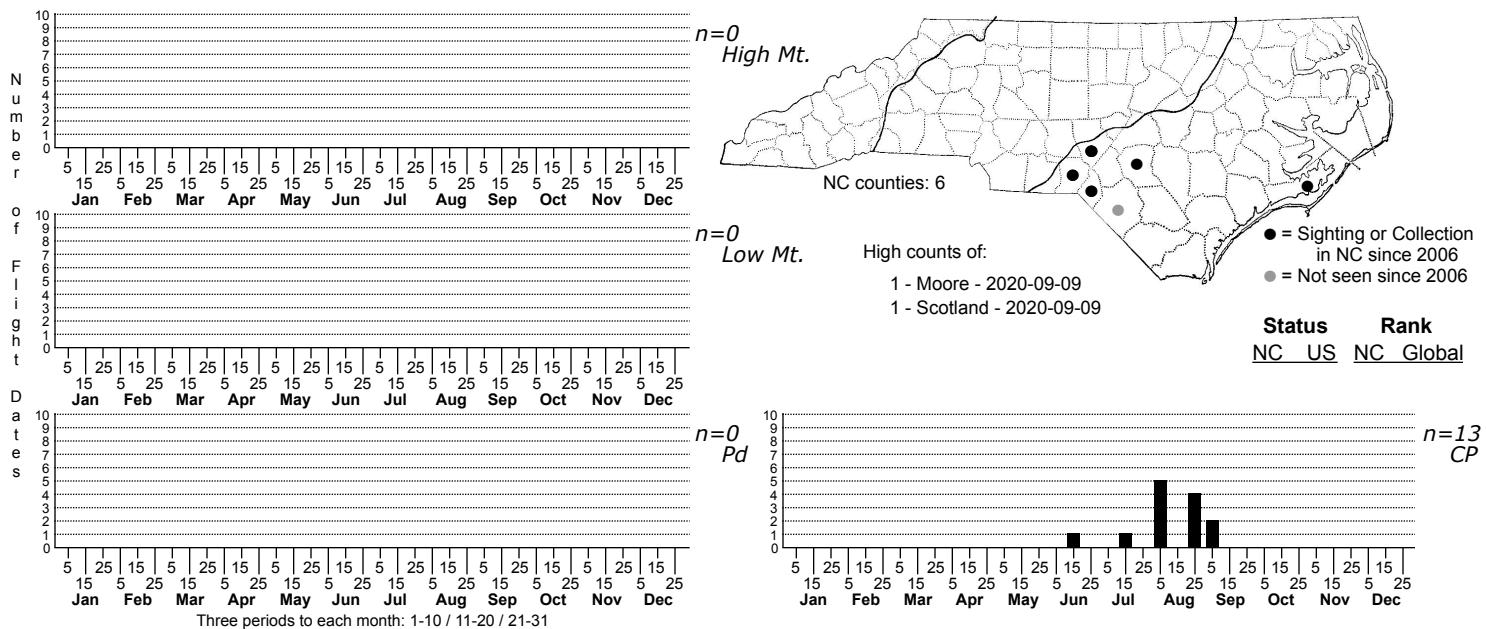


# *Acrolophus forbesi* Forbes' Grass Tubeworm Moth



FAMILY: Tineidae SUBFAMILY: [Acrolophinae] TRIBE: [Acrolophini]

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: The genus *Acrolophus* is a mostly neotropical taxon with over 250 described species, including 54 that are currently recognized in North America. The labial palps on the males of many species are very elongated and densely hairy. The larvae of some species live in silk-lined burrows in the ground and feed on the roots and young shoots of grasses and herbs. However, the life histories of most species remain undocumented and in need of study. Members of this genus were previously placed in their own family (Acrolophidae), but they are now treated as a subgroup within the Tineidae based on molecular phylogenetic studies.

## FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

### ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Hasbrouck (1964)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: The following is based on the description by Hasbrouck (1964). In the male, the head, labial palp, and thorax are grayish white and tinged with fuscous. The labial palp is intermediate in length and recurved back over the head to the anterior margin of the thorax. The palps are closely appressed to the head and to each other, with the segmentation obscured by a rather dense covering of coarse scales. The eyes are large and protruding, and rather sparsely furnished with very short setae that are moderately lashed. The antennae is simple, ocherous, and covered dorsad with scales. It is densely clothed lateroventrad with minute setae, and the segmental processes are robust and set closely together throughout the antenna. The forewing is grayish brown and intricately sprinkled with fuscous, ocherous, and pale red. It often has four or five large, grayish white patches, but the pattern is variable and commonly obscure or reduced. The hindwing and fringes are dark brown, and the abdomen brown, with rather coarse scales. The females are similar in coloration to the males, but the labial palps are slightly shorter than those of the males. They are directed downward and slightly forward, are rather narrowly separated from each other, and are clothed with elongate, slender scales. The eyes are similar to those of males, but are somewhat smaller. *Acrolophus piger* is externally similar but is distantly related and can be easily separated using the genitalia. In addition, the structure of the antennae and eyes can be used to separate the two. In *A. piger* the eyes are rather densely clothed with erect setae, and each antennal segment is completely encircled by at least one ring of scales. In *A. forbesi*, the eyes have relatively few very short setae, and each antennal segment is clothed only dorsad or dorsolaterad with scales.

DISTRIBUTION: Hasbrouck (1964) list the distribution as Florida, Georgia and North Carolina. As of 2020, we have only a single historical record from Robeson County.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults fly in June and July (Hasbrouck, 1964).

HABITAT: The habitats are undocumented.

FOOD: The hosts are poorly documented. Heppner (2007) reports grasses, but it is unclear if this is based on actual observation or just inferred based on the hosts of other *Acrolophus* species.

## OBSERVATION METHODS:

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: