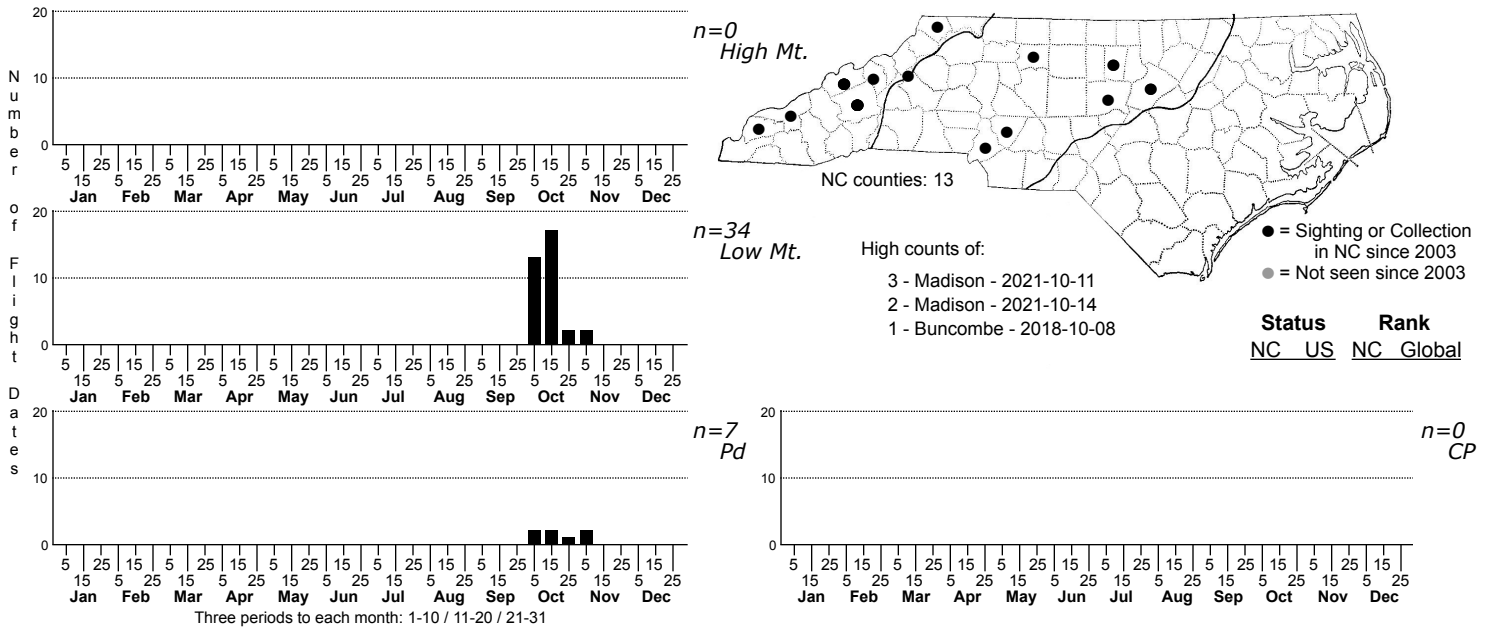


Acrolophus morus No common name



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: Covell (1984); Beadle and Leckie (2012)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Hasbrouck (1964)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: This species is unusual in exhibiting sexual dimorphism in coloration. The males are dark gray to blackish and the females a dull ochreous yellow to light or medium brown. The labial palp is intermediate in length and recurved back over the head, but extends only slightly onto the anterior margin of the thorax. The eyes are naked and lack prominent tufts of lashes. The antenna is simple, laminate, with the segments laterally flattened. In females, the hair-like scales that cover the thorax and head are dark reddish brown with pale to whitish tips (often uniformly blackish in males). The ground color of the forewing of females is ochreous yellow to medium brown. A pale ochreous band that is lighter than the ground extends along the internal margin from the base and terminates at or shortly before the anal angle. The band constricts near the mid-wing due to a wedge-shaped blackish mark that extends nearly to the inner margin. A small black spot is often evident within the pale band between the dark wedge and the extreme wing base. The costa has a series of dark spots that extend along most of the length and become larger before the apex. A small, dark, curved discal streak is usually present at about two-thirds the wing length. The hindwing is brownish fuscous, with the fringe slightly darker than the ground. The males have similar patterning, but are darker with an overall grayish brown or blackish tone. This is the only species in North Carolina with a flight period in October; all others fly during the spring and summer.

DISTRIBUTION: *Acrolophus morus* is found in eastern North America. The range extends from the New England states and adjoining areas of extreme southern Canada (Ontario; Quebec) southward to North Carolina, eastern Tennessee and vicinity. It extends westward to Kentucky, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. MPG has the range extending as far south as northern Florida and Mississippi. This is inconsistent with both iNaturalist records and the range that was reported by Hasbrouck (1964). As of 2022, our records are all from the Piedmont and lower mountains.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Records for adults are from June through November in areas outside of North Carolina, with a strong seasonal peak in October. As of 2022, all of our records are from October through early November.

HABITAT: The habitat requirements are poorly resolved. A single record of this species feeding on birch leaves implies that forested habitats are required.

FOOD: There is one record of an adult being reared from a caterpillar that was feeding on birch leaves (Hasbrouck, 1964). This is atypical for a genus that has many species that feed on plant roots, and needs to be verified through additional observations.

OBSERVATION_METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights during their brief flight period in October and early November.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR S3-S4

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

COMMENTS: