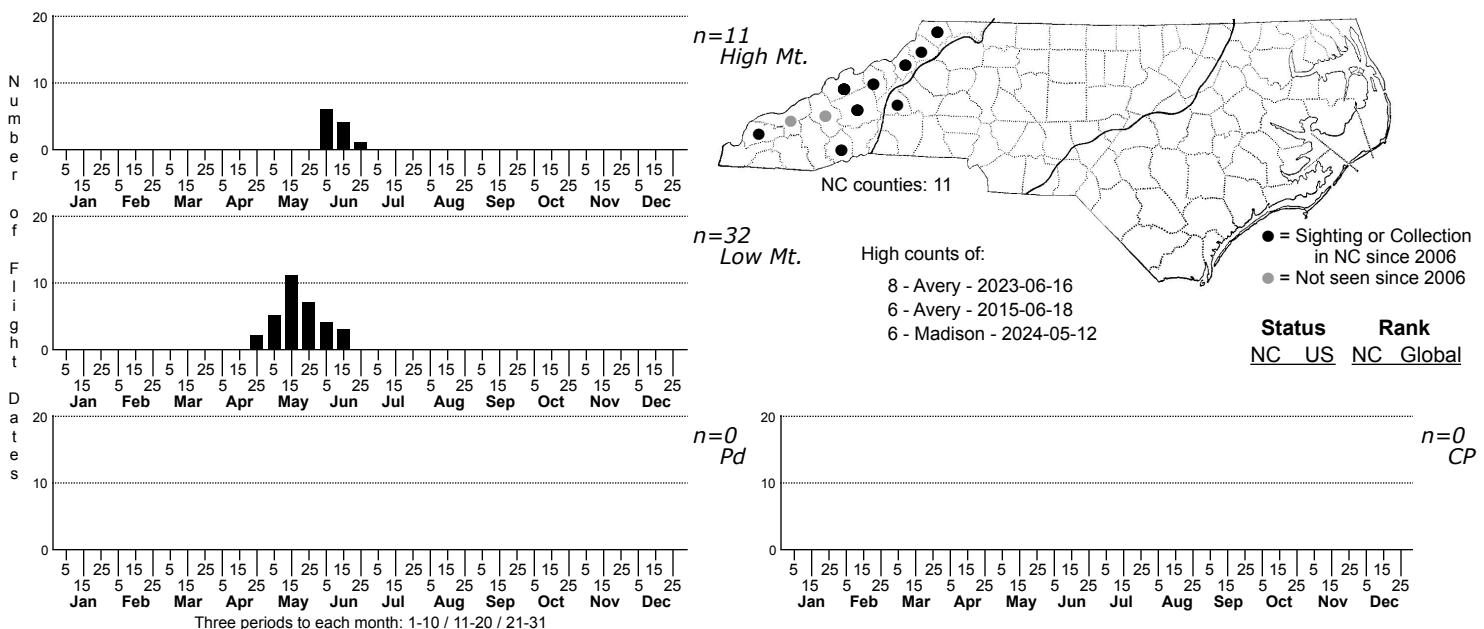


Clepsis melaleucanus Black-patched Clepsis



FAMILY: Tortricidae SUBFAMILY: Tortricinae TRIBE: Archipini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS:

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984); Beadle and Leckie (2012)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Freeman (1958)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: MacKay (1962)

ID COMMENTS: The following description is based primarily on that of Freeman (1958). The head, palps, and thorax are light brown to brownish-orange. The forewing ground is creamy-white and is overlain by several darker patches. The patches typically have a light fawn margin and a darker orangish-brown center with small metallic bluish to pearly gray streaks within. The patches include a basal one that covers the first one-third of the wing, a large, oblong or rounded patch on the inner margin near the tornus that extends inward past the middle of the wing, and a subapical costal patch at about four-fifths. All three patches are usually separated from adjoining patches by a gap with whitish to whitish-brown scales. The apical portion of wing and the fringe are whitish or slightly ochreous. The hindwing is fuscous with white along the costa, and the fringe is whitish with a dark basal line. The basal third of the costa is orangish-brown in males and creamy-white in females. Males also have an extremely long costal fold that gradually tapers to a point slightly beyond the center of the costa.

DISTRIBUTION: <i>Clepsis melaleucanus</i> is found in southern Canada from Alberta eastward to Nova Scotia, and in the eastern US from the New England states westward through the Great Lakes region to Minnesota and eastern North Dakota, and southward to Indiana, Kentucky, eastern Tennessee, western North Carolina, northern Georgia, western Virginia and Maryland. As of 2023, all of our records are from the Blue Ridge Mountains.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults have been observed from April through August in different areas of the range, with a seasonal peak in most areas in May and June. As of 2023, our records extend from late April through mid-June.

HABITAT: Local populations are commonly found in mesic hardwood forests or forest edges.

FOOD: The larvae are polyphagous and use both hardwoods and herbaceous plants (Freeman, 1958; Chapman and Lienk, 1971; Gilligan and Epstein, 2014; TortID). The reported hosts include cohosh (<i>Caulophyllum</i>), Green Alder (<i>Alnus crispa</i>), birch (<i>Betula</i>), commercial apples (<i>Malus domestica</i>), wintergreen (<i>Pyrola</i>), witch-hazel (<i>Hamamelis</i>), Mayapple (<i>Podophyllum peltatum</i>), Solomon's seal (<i>Polygonatum</i>), trilliums (<i>Trillium</i>), and meadowsweet (<i>Spiraea</i>).

OBSERVATION METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights and can often be seen perched on low-lying vegetation in mesic forests.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR S4S5

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

COMMENTS: This species is common in the Blue Ridge and shows no evidence of precipitous population declines.