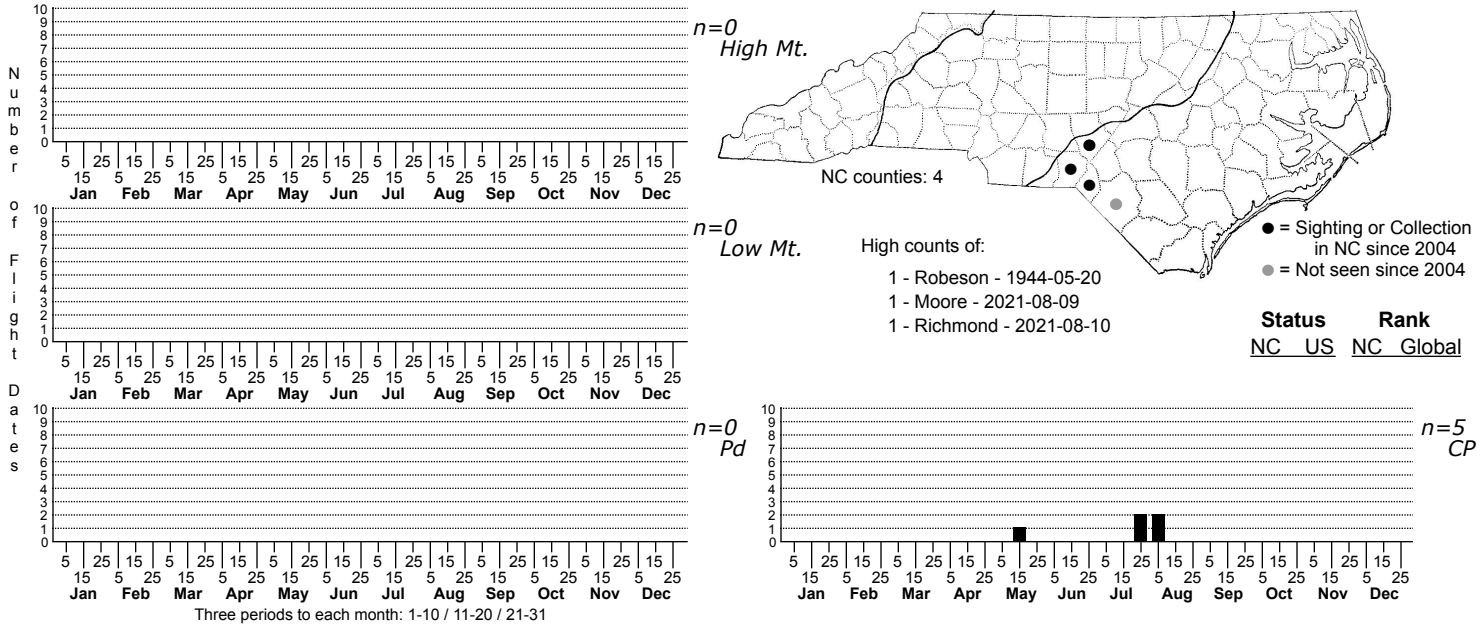
Acrolophus simulatus No common name



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:
ONLINE PHOTOS:
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Hasbrouck (1964)
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: This is a relatively small species of Acrolophus. The head is rough with brownish scales and the labial palp of the male is recurved over the head. It extends onto the thorax, but terminates before reaching the posterior edge. The second joint is very long and roughly clothed with projecting scales beneath. The third joint is about half as long as the second, brushlike, and with very long diverging scales. The antenna is slightly pubescent and simple, but may appear to be somewhat serrated on both sides. The forewing has alternating brown and whitish ocherous patches, with the brown patches taking the form of two angulated bands. Raised bluish-fuscous scales are scattered throughout, but especially in the darker patches (Hasbrouck, 1964). The hindwing and cilia are dull brown. This species is similar to Acrolophus cressoni, but the labial palps extend onto the thorax.

DISTRIBUTION: Acrolophus simulatus ranges from south-central Texas eastward along the Gulf Coast to Florida and northward to North Carolina. There are only a few scattered records for this species outside of Florida, including two in North Carolina from Robeson County.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Adults records for areas outside of North Carolina extend from June through October. Our one dated record is from 20 May.

HABITAT: Recent records in North Carolina come from sand ridge habitats, including one site that is dry to xeric and one that includes a White Cedar stand located adjacent to dry slopes.

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

OBSERVATION_METHODS: The few records that exist are from captures at lights.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR S1S3

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 rare in North Carolina and throughout much of its range.