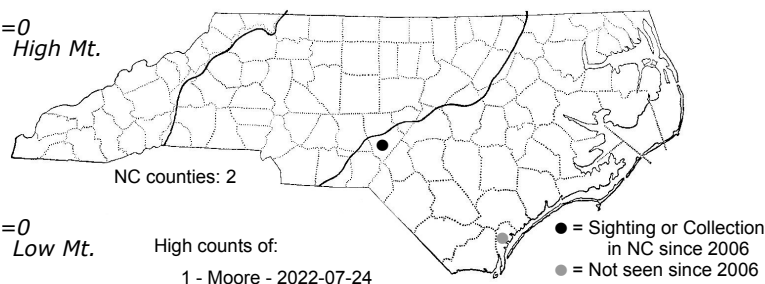
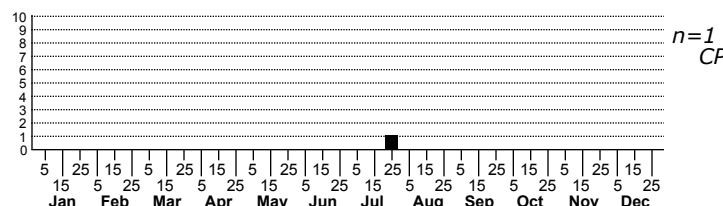


# *Prochalia pygmaea* None



Status Rank  
NC US NC Global



FAMILY: Psychidae SUBFAMILY: Psychinae TRIBE: [Psychini]

TAXONOMIC\_COMMENTS: The family Psychidae contains as many as 1,350 species that are found worldwide. The females of many species are flightless, and the larvae of all species live in constructed cases or bags, hence the name bagworms. *Prochalia* is a monotypic genus that is restricted to the southeastern US.

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FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Davis (1964)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Barnes and McDunnough (1913)

ID COMMENTS: The male of this species has distinctive broad, rounded wings and broadly bipectinate antennae that have 18-19 segments. The head, thorax, abdomen and wings are all uniform brownish fuscous (Barnes and McDunnough, 1913; Davis, 1964). The fore tibia has a long spine (epiphysis), and the middle tibia a single apical spur. The posterior tibia is unarmed. The wingless females live in smooth, granulate silk cases that are covered with tiny fragments of sand and debris and are 13-16 mm in length (Davis, 1964). The females are vermiform with the legs and all other external appendages vestigial. The head and dorsal area of the thorax are slightly sclerotized. The males of this species closely resembles those of *Zamopsycha commentella*, which has 11 veins in the forewing versus 12 in *Prochalia pygmaea*. Davis (1964) noted that the wings of the males are broader and usually shorter than those of *Z. commentella*, while the discal scales of the forewing are relatively broad and oblongate with acute apices.

DISTRIBUTION: *Prochalia pygmaea* is found throughout Florida, then northward along the coast to southeastern North Carolina. It extends westward along the Gulf Coast to Alabama and Mississippi, with one northern record from northern Mississippi. As of 2020, we have a single historical record from New Hanover Co.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The flight season is poorly documented because almost all records are for either larvae or flightless females.

HABITAT: The habitat requirements are poorly documented. The larvae appear to rely heavily on lichens on oaks and other hardwoods, and likely need humid microenvironments.

FOOD: Barnes and McDunnough (1913) reported that the larvae feed on lichens, including those that grow on the bark of oaks and commercial oranges (*Citrus sinensis*).

OBSERVATION\_METHODS: The males appear to rarely visit lights and almost all records are based on finding the larvae or adult females in their cases.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR SH

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

COMMENTS: We have only a single historical record for this largely subtropical species from before 1938.