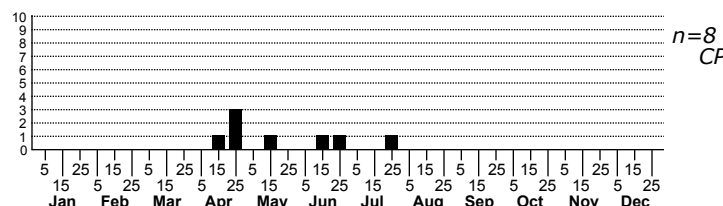
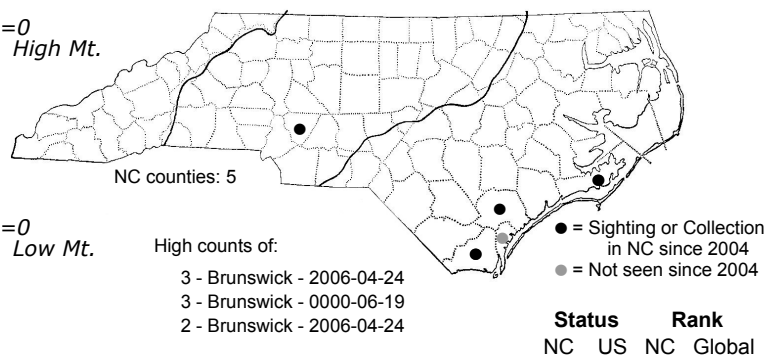
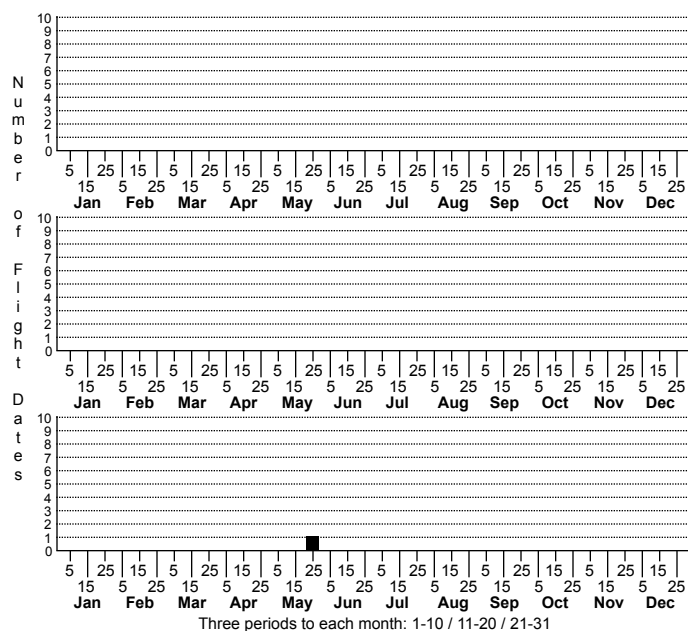


# *Basiacladus tracyi* No common name



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. *Basiacladus* is a small genus with only two recognized species.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Davis (1964)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Jones (1921)

ID COMMENTS: The males of this species are light brown throughout with strongly rounded wing tips. The antenna has 28-34 segments, is broadly bipectinate, and gradually decreases in width to the apex. The pectinations arise basally from each segment, and the sensory hairs are erect, very slender, and approximately 4x the diameter of the pectination in length (Davis, 1964). The legs are unarmed and the forelegs are the longest. The wings are evenly scaled and fuscous, and the apical angle and outer margin of both wings are strongly rounded. The scales of the discal cell on the forewing are very slender and hairlike, and have acute tips. The body is robust and densely hairy. The vestiture consists mostly of light brown hairs with a slight admixture of grayish white. The abdomen has the caudal segments somewhat widely tufted laterally. The adult females are wingless with a grub-like form and about 11 mm long (Jones, 1921). The chitinized dorsal portions of the thoracic segments are pale straw-yellow, and the abdominal band of downy hair is very pale, dull fawn color. The females live in cases that are 25-30 mm long. They are composed of silk and have sections of grass or sedge blades applied longitudinally in overlapping fashion (Davis, 1964). The width of the case is variable depending on material that is used, but most are 6-8 mm wide. Male *B. celibatus* are very similar, but smaller with no overlap in size (wing expanse only 10-12.5 mm for *B. celibatus* versus 16-19 mm *B. tracyi*).

DISTRIBUTION: The range extends from Coastal Plain habitats in North Carolina to Florida, then westward to Mississippi and eastern Louisiana (Davis, 1964). Isolated records for eastern Tennessee and West Virginia are questionable. As of 2020, all of our records are from extreme southeastern North Carolina.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Davis (1964) characterized this as an essentially spring-emerging species, and Brou (2009) found that a population in Louisiana was single-brooded with most in flight from late-May through late-June (N = 71 males). MPG shows records from April through June, then again in September through October, which suggest the possibility of double brooding in at least some southern populations. However, the source and status (females/ larvae?) of the late-season records are unknown. As of 2020, all of our records are from April through late-July.

HABITAT: Jones (1911, 1922) noted that the larvae are typically found in wet, sunny places on sedges, grasses, and rushes, and occasionally on low growing herbaceous plants and shrubs. Our records are from pine savannas and flatwoods in the Coastal Plain.

FOOD: The known hosts include the flower petals of Pale Pitcherplant (*Sarracenia alata*), along with unspecified grasses, sedges, and rushes. Jones (1911) noted that grasses seem to be the preferred food at a Mississippi site, but several larvae were seen devouring the tender, young petals of *Sarracenia*. At other sites in the Southeast the larvae fed on sedges, grasses, and rushes, and occasionally on low growing herbaceous plants and shrubs (Jones, 1922).

OBSERVATION\_METHODS: The males are attracted to lights, and the cases with larvae can be found on appropriate host plants.

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: This species is seemingly uncommon to rare in much of its range.