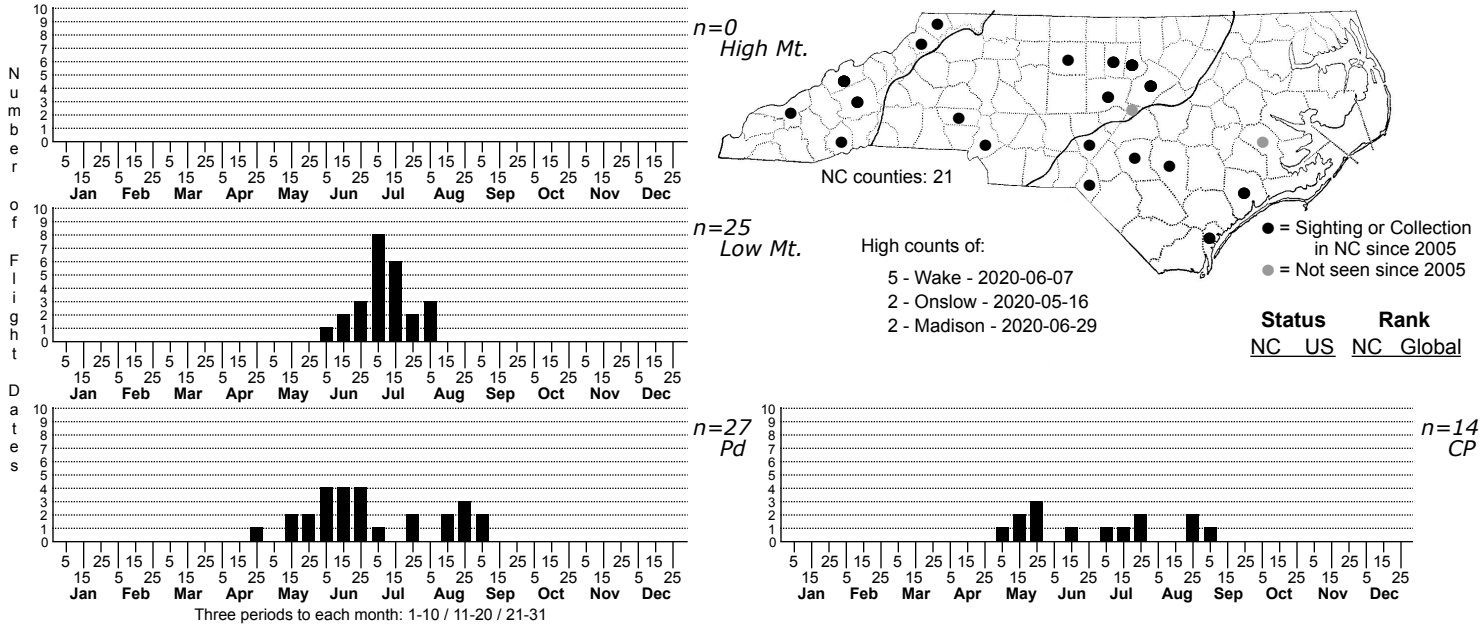
Philonome clemensella Clemens' Philonome



FAMILY: Tineidae SUBFAMILY: TRIBE:
TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS: The New World genus Philonome comprises twelve species, with three described species in North America. This genus was previously associated with Bucculatricidae or Lyonetiidae, but was reassigned to Tineidae by Sohn et al. (2015) based on morphological and molecular evidence.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Beadle and Leckie (2012)
ONLINE PHOTOS:
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Sohn et al. (2015)
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: The following is based in part on the description in Forbes (1923) and Sohn et al. (2015). The palps and face are white, and the eye-caps white with orange on the upper edge. The antenna is reddish orange to reddish brown at the base, and the remainder nearly white. The scales on the vertex are orange and the thorax is white, with a broad pale orange to dark brown area behind. The ground color of the forewing is reddish orange to reddish brown. A broad, white streak that gradually angles away from the costa extends from the wing base to about the mid-length of the wing. A second streak extends along the inner margin from the thorax to where it meets a small tuft of brown scales, then angles obliquely to join the tip of the first streak. At the distal third of the wing there is an oblique and slightly curved costal streak that extends posteriorly. This streak appears as a broad, triangular mark at the costa and narrows posteriorly before terminating at a small patch of dark scales. Two small white spots are also usually evident, one on the inner margin near the base of the dorsal cilia, and the second just below the apex. The apex and cilia are dusted with dark brown scales to varying degrees. There are usually one or two dark lines through the orangish white cilia, one at the base, and a more conspicuous one near the middle of the cilia.

DISTRIBUTION: Philonome clemensella is found in eastern North America in Canada (Ontario; Quebec) and in most of the eastern US. In the US it occurs from Vermont and New Hampshire westward to Wisconsin and Oklahoma, and southward to the Gulf Coast and eastern Texas. We have records from throughout the state, from the lower elevations in the mountains to near the coast.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Local populations appear to be univoltine. Specimens have been found from March through November in different areas of the range, with a peak in June and July. As of 2020, our records extend from May through August, with a peak in June and July.

HABITAT: The habitat is poorly documented, but populations appear to be affiliated with hardwood forests. Most of our records are from semi-wooded residential neighborhoods.

FOOD: The hosts are poorly documented, but Robinson et al. (2012) and Forbes (1923) reported Walnut (Juglans), hickories (Carya) and Basswood (Tilia americana), but these are based on label data in the USNM collection. The collection also includes a specimen whose label data states that it came from oak (Quercus). The labels give no details other than plant common names. Therefore, it is not clear if these records refer to larval host plants or where the adults were collected. In North Carolina, Jim Petranka reared a larva from within a large black knot on a Black Cherry (Prunus serotina) tree. The larva presumably fed on organic material within the knot. At present, it is currently uncertain to what extent this species is restricted to using black knots as habitats and feeding sites.

OBSERVATION_METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights, but are easily overlooked because of their small size.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR [S3S4]

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

COMMENTS: It is uncertain whether this species is strongly attracted to lights, but the available records (N = 19 as of 2020) suggests that the species is not significantly threatened in the state.