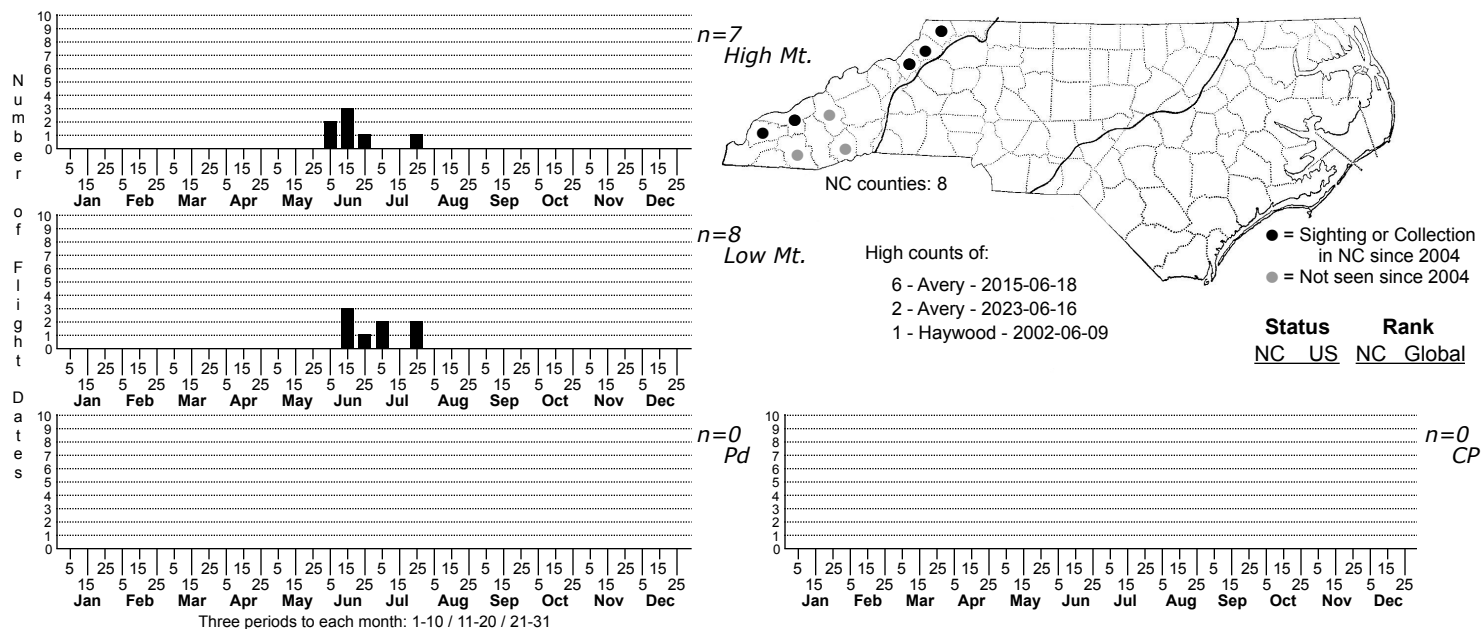


Packardia elegans Elegant Tailed Slug Moth



FAMILY: Limacodidae SUBFAMILY: TRIBE:

TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS: One of four currently recognized members of the genus in North America, three of which occur in North Carolina.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Beadle and Leckie (2012)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1923)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Dyars (1898b); Wagner (2005)

ID COMMENTS: The head, palps, antennae, thorax and ground color of the forewing vary from light to dark brown or grayish-brown, except for a small whitish patch of scales that is often present near the posterior margin of the thorax. A white, posteriorly oblique AM line that is diffusely edged with black on the distal margin runs from the inner margin of the forewing at about one-fourth to the midpoint of the costa. A short, white PM line is also present that runs from the inner margin in the subternal region parallel to the AM line. It often terminates near the middle of the wing, but may extend further where it intersects a curved white line that runs at an oblique angle from just beyond the midpoint of the costa toward the tornus. At that point it meets two or three round black or dark brown spots. The forewing pattern is reminiscent of that of *Packardia geminata*, but on that species the AM and PM lines are dark and the spots near the tornus are white. It is also similar to *P. ceanothi*, which has a bright brownish ochreous ground color and is only known from a single site near Tryon, North Carolina.

DISTRIBUTION: *Packardia elegans* is found in eastern North America in southern Canada (Ontario eastward to Nova Scotia) and northern and mountainous regions of the US. The range in the US extends from Maine westward through the Great Lakes region to Minnesota, and southward through the Appalachian Mountains to eastern Tennessee, western North Carolina and northern Georgia. As of 2023, all of our records are from mid- to higher elevations in the Blue Ridge.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults have been observed from June through October in different areas of the range. Local populations appear to be univoltine, with a seasonal peak typically in June and July. North Carolina populations also appear to be univoltine, with the adults flying from early June through late July.

HABITAT: Dyars (1898b) noted that the larvae are typically found in heavily shaded, forested sites. Our records come from mesic montane forests, including cove forests and northern hardwoods.

FOOD: The larvae feed on deciduous hardwoods (Dyars, 1898b; Wagner, 2005; Robinson et al., 2010). The reported hosts include birches (*Betula*), hickories (*Carya*), American Chestnut (*Castanea dentata*), Mountain Sweet-pepperbush (*Clethra acuminata*), American Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), bayberries (*Myrica*/*Morella*); Blackgum (*Nyssa sylvatica*), cherries (*Prunus*) and oaks (*Quercus*).

OBSERVATION_METHODS: Like other limicodids, the adults are attracted to lights.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR [SU]

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

COMMENTS: We only have a few records for this species. Although it is reported to feed on a fairly wide range of species, the preferred host plants used in North Carolina and other aspects of its habitat associations still need to be determined before its conservation status can be accurately assessed.