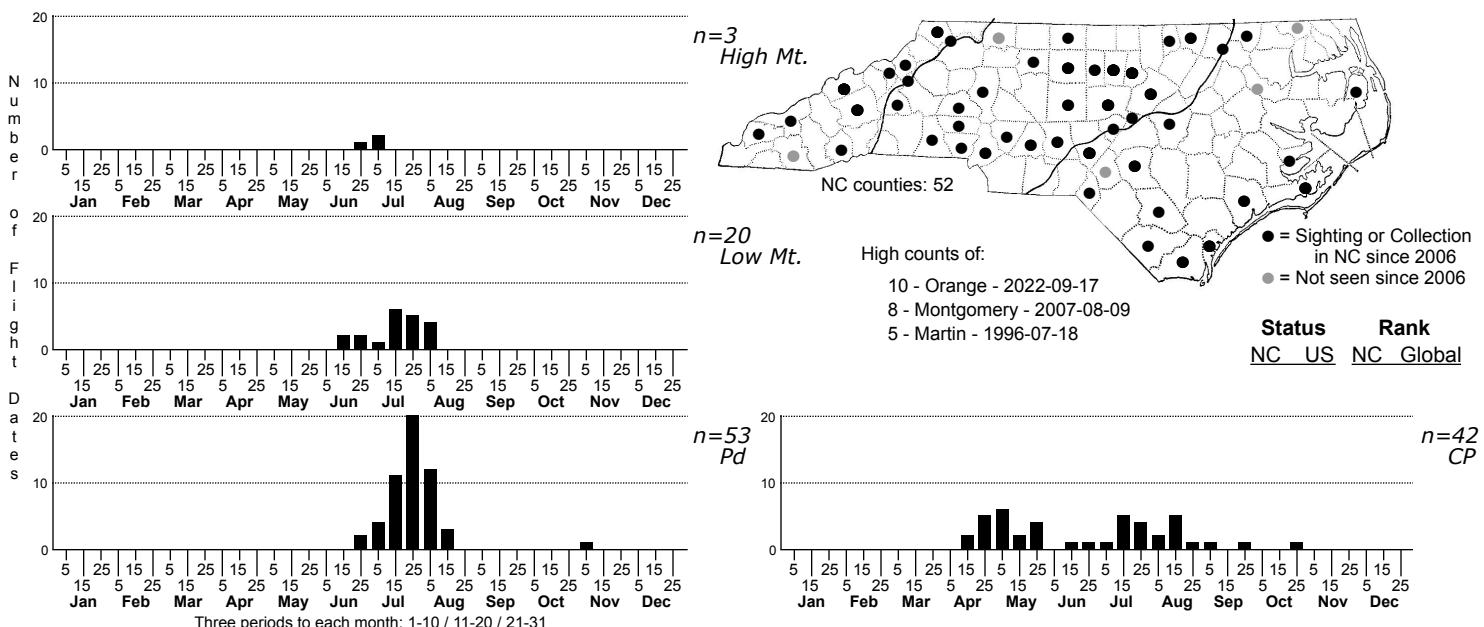


Isa textula Crowned Slug Moth



FAMILY: Limacodidae SUBFAMILY: TRIBE:

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: This is one of only two representatives of this genus in North America and the only one to occur in the East.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984); Beadle and Leckie (2012)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1923)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Wagner (2005)

ID COMMENTS: *Isa textula* lacks any conspicuous markings on the body or wings. The head, thorax, and abdomen vary from light reddish-tan or reddish-orange to reddish-brown and tend to be lighter colored than the forewings. The forewing varies from pale orange to dark reddish-brown and has subtle, textured bands of silvery gray scaling that gives it a unique, velvety appearance. The hindwing is concolorous with the forewing. The length from the tip of the head to the apex of the forewing at rest averages 10.5 mm (n = 8). This species has a conspicuous hump-backed shape when resting, with the head projecting downward towards the substrate.

DISTRIBUTION: *Isa textula* occurs throughout most of the eastern US and in adjoining areas of Ontario and Quebec. In the US the range extends from Maine southward to southern Florida, and westward to central Texas, southeastern Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, eastern Kansas, Illinois and Wisconsin. This species occurs statewide in North Carolina, from the barrier islands to the higher elevations in the Blue Ridge.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults fly year-round in Florida, and mostly from March through November in other southern populations. Farther north, the flight season is largely restricted to May through October. As of 2023, our records extend from late-April through mid-August, with two late-season records from late-October and early November. Most populations in North Carolina appear to be univoltine.

HABITAT: Our records all come from stands of hardwood or mixed pine-hardwood forests, as well as wooded residential neighborhoods. Local populations can be found in habitats that encompass a wide range of moisture regimes and soil pH. Examples of the diverse habitats that are used by this species include maritime forests, sandhill communities, brown-water river bottomlands, lakeshores, mesic to drier Piedmont forests, and rich mesic slopes in the Blue Ridge that support northern hardwoods.

FOOD: The larvae are polyphagous and feed on a variety of deciduous trees (Wagner, 2005; Heppner, 2007; Lill, 2008, Robinson et al., 2010; Murphy et al., 2011; Beadle and Leckie, 2012; Marquis et al., 2019). They appear to only rarely use shrubs. The reported hosts include Norway Maple (*Acer platanoides*), Horse-chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), Pignut hickory (*Carya glabra*), Sweet chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) and other chestnuts, American Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), Common Waxmyrtle (*Morella cerifera*), Black Gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*), American Hop-hornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*), Sweet Cherry (*Prunus avium*), Black Cherry (*P. serotina*), White Oak (*Quercus alba*), Black Oak (*Q. velutina*), Chestnut Oak (*Q. montana*), Willow Oak (*Q. phellos*), Northern Red Oak (*Q. rubra*), American Basswood (*Tilia americana*), and elms (*Ulmus*).

In North Carolina, larvae have been recorded on Black Cherry, White Oak, Willow Oak (*Quercus phellos*), Winged Elm (*Ulmus alata*), ash (*Fraxinus*), American Hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*), Eastern Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*), American Hop-hornbeam, Florida Maple (*Acer floridanum*), and American Beech.

OBSERVATION METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights, but do not come to bait or visit flowers.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G5 [S5]

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

COMMENTS: This species is common statewide and occupies a wide range of habitat types. It uses numerous host plants that are common, and appears to be secure within the state.