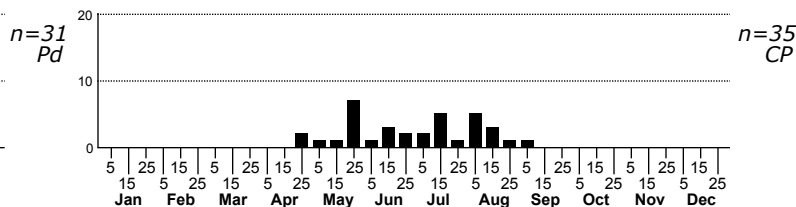
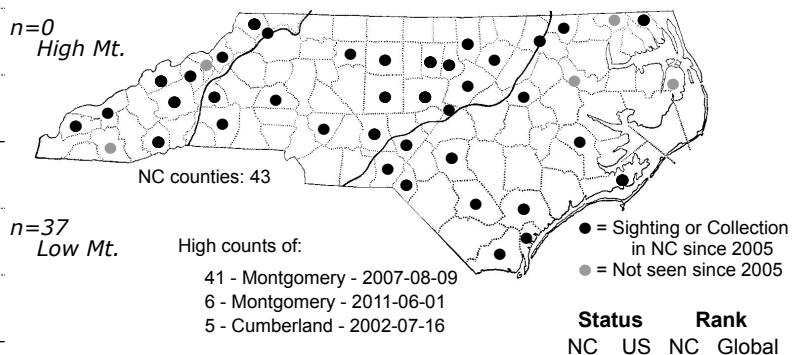
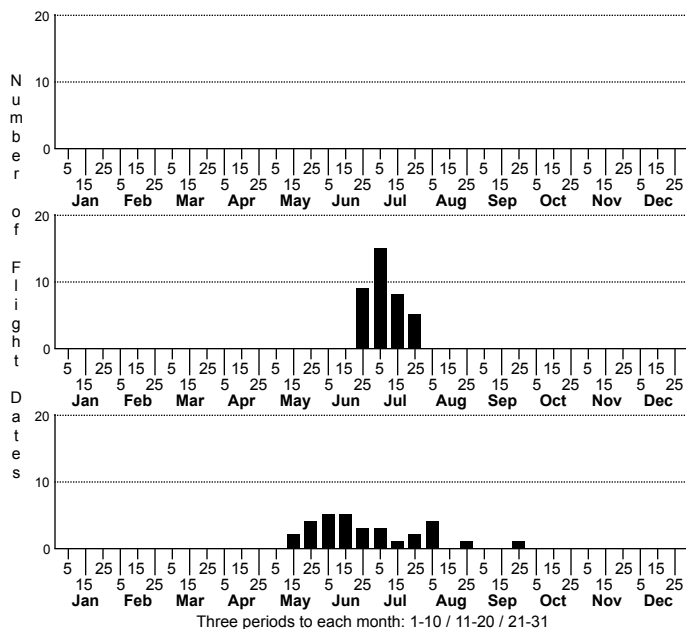


# *Adoneta spinuloides* Purple-crested Slug Moth



FAMILY: Limacodidae SUBFAMILY: TRIBE:

TAXONOMIC\_COMMENTS: The genus *Adoneta* contains four recognized species in North America, with all but one occurring in North Carolina.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (2005); Beadle and Leckie (2012)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1923)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Dyar (1897a); Wagner (2005)

ID COMMENTS: In this species the head and thorax are reddish brown with whitish scales infused along the posterior margin of the thorax and often along the margins of the vertex. The thorax is covered with long hairs, and the legs tend to be a darker than the overall body color, with substantial areas of blackish or dark reddish-brown scales. The forewing has a rusty reddish-brown ground color and is marked with two whitish lines. The first is a curving or sinuous line that projects from the inner margin at about one-third and terminates near the middle of the wing. The second extends from the costa at about four-fifths and roughly parallels the termen before ending near the middle of the wing. The proximal margins of both lines usually abut large, diffuse patches of buffy or cream-white scales. Other marks on the forewing include a diffuse patch of blackish scales in the discal area between the two white lines, a triangular patch of dark reddish-brown scales along the basal fifth of the inner margin that is bisected by a whitish streak, a similar large region of diffuse, dark reddish-brown scales below the inner margin on the apical half, and three diffuse blackish dots on the apical third that parallel the outer margin near the middle of the wing. The fringe is blackish with a central white line, while the hindwing is pale grayish brown. The length from the tip of the head to the apex of the forewing at rest averages 10 mm (n = 4) for North Carolina specimens.

DISTRIBUTION: *Adoneta spinuloides* is broadly distributed across the eastern US and in adjoining areas of southern Ontario and Quebec. In the US the range extends from Maine southward to southern Florida, and westward to central Texas, central Oklahoma, eastern Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, Wisconsin and eastern Minnesota. This species occurs statewide in North Carolina.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults have been found from January through November, with a strong seasonal peak in June through August in most areas of the range. As of 2023, our records are from late-April through late-September.

HABITAT: Local populations are typically found where deciduous hardwood or mixed pine-hardwood forests are present. Populations are also commonly found in other habitats that support deciduous hardwoods such as fencerows, field edges, and semi-wooded residential neighborhoods.

FOOD: Larvae feed on a variety of trees and to a lesser extent shrubs (Dyar, 1897a; Wagner, 2005; Heppner, 2007; Robinson et al., 2010; Marquis et al., 2019). The reported host include serviceberries (*Amelanchier*), Common Pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*), birches (*Betula*), American Hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*), chestnuts (*Castanea*), American Persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*), American Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), American Witch-hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*), apples (*Malus*), bayberries (*Myrica*), Black Tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*), Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*), White Oak (*Quercus alba*), Chestnut Oak (*Q. montana*), Northern Red Oak (*Q. rubra*), Black Oak (*Q. velutina*), locusts (*Robinia*), roses (*Rosa*), willows (*Salix*), and American Basswood (*Tilia americana*), and elms (*Ulmus*).

In North Carolina, we have recorded the species feeding on Boxelder (*Acer negundo*), hickory (*Carya*), Sparkleberry (*Vaccinium arboreum*), and Winged Elm (*Ulmus alata*), but it presumably uses a range of other hosts as well.

OBSERVATION\_METHODS: The adults are readily attracted to lights and the larvae can be found on the leaves of deciduous trees and shrubs.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: [G4G5] S4S5

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

COMMENTS: *Adoneta spinuloides* occurs throughout the state and feeds on a wide variety of hardwood trees. It appears to be secure.  
March 2025 The Moths of North Carolina - Early Draft