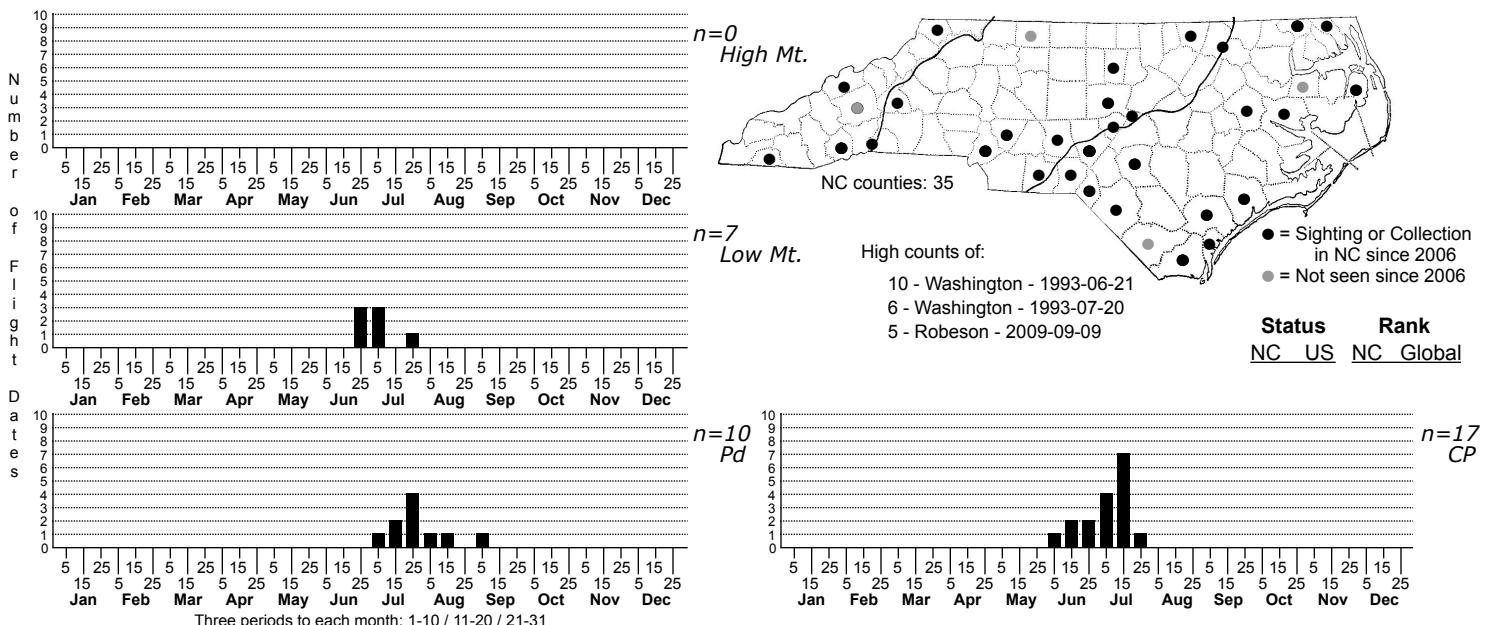


Parasa indetermina Stinging Rose Caterpillar Moth



FAMILY: Limacodidae SUBFAMILY: TRIBE:

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: This is one of two members of this genus that are found in North America, both of which occur in North Carolina.

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

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1923)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Dyar, 1897a; Marquis et al. (2019)

ID COMMENTS: This is a distinctive species that is bicolored and very similar to *Parasa chloris*. The palps, antennae, legs, and ground color of the forewing are warm brown, while the dorsum of the head, the thorax, and portions of the median and basal areas of the forewing form a continuous, broad, bright green band when viewed from the side. The green band on the forewing is edged with a thin dark brown line, and the veins on the apical half are also dark brown. The posterior edge of the green median area typically has a weak concavity just below the inner margin, then continues towards the costa as a broadly rounded mark. The subapical area adjacent to the outer margin has a diffuse dark brown blotch near the middle of the wing. Individuals typically rest in an upright stance on thick, "furry" brown legs, in a slightly "head down" posture.

Parasa chloris is very similar to *P. indetermina* but is smaller and the posterior edge of the green median area is straight or slightly concave. In addition, the subapical area adjacent to the outer margin is evenly brown (except for the darker brown veins). In *Parasa indetermina*, the posterior edge of the green median area is more rounded, and the subapical area adjacent to the outer margin has a diffuse dark brown blotch near the middle of the wing that is diagnostic for this species. Worn specimens may be difficult to distinguish, but can be identified using genitalia.

DISTRIBUTION: *Parasa indetermina* is found in the eastern US from southern Massachusetts southward to central Florida, and westward to eastern Texas, Arkansas, eastern Oklahoma, Missouri and Illinois. This species occurs statewide in North Carolina.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults have been found from February through October in different areas of the range, with the great majority from June through September. Local populations in North Carolina are single-brooded. As of 2023, our records range from early June through early September.

HABITAT: Our records are mostly from sites with deciduous or mixed pine-hardwood forests, and encompass a wide range of moisture conditions from alluvial forests and mesic mountain slopes, to dry or xeric habitats such as Longleaf Pine savannas in the Sandhills. Local populations also commonly occur in semi-wooded residential neighborhoods and along forest edges and wooded fencerows.

FOOD: The larvae are polyphagous and feed mostly on deciduous trees (Dyar, 1897a; Wagner, 2005; Heppner, 2007; Robinson et al., 2010; Marquis et al., 2019). The reported hosts include maples (*Acer*), Common Pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*), hickories (*Carya*), Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*), Eastern Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*), Florida Dogwood (*Cornus florida*) and other dogwoods, domestic apples (*Malus domestica*), Northern Bayberry (*Morella pensylvanica*), American Sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*), poplars (*Populus*), Sweet Cherry (*Prunus avium*), Black Cherry (*P. serotina*), pears (*Pyrus*), White Oak (*Quercus alba*), Black Oak (*Q. velutina*), brambles (*Rubus*), willows (*Salix*), Sourwood (*Oxydendrum arboreum*), blueberries (*Vaccinium*), and viburnums (*Viburnum*). In North Carolina, larvae have been recorded feeding on hawthorn (*Crataegus*), Common Waxmyrtle (*Morella cerifera*), Sourwood, cherry, oak, Black Willow (*Salix nigra*), and Stiff Dogwood (*Swida foemina*).

OBSERVATION METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights and the larvae can be found by searching the undersides of leaves.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G4 S4

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

COMMENTS: This species occurs statewide and uses a wide variety of host species. It appears to be secure within the state.