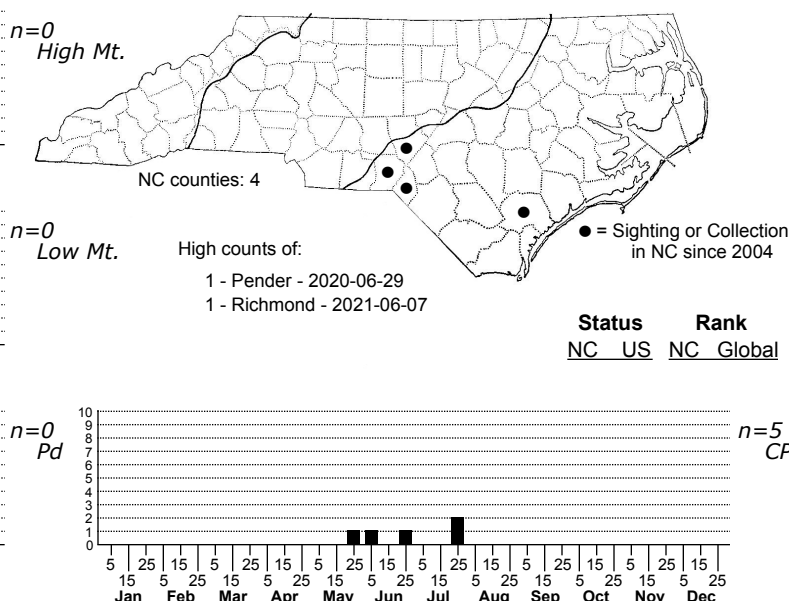


Elophila nebulosalis Nebulous Munroessa Moth



FAMILY: Crambidae SUBFAMILY: Acentropinae TRIBE: Nymphulini

TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS: The genus *Elophila* contains nearly 50 described species that occur on most continents worldwide. Nine species occur in North America -- including seven in North Carolina -- and all have aquatic larvae that feed on floating and submerged plants. The larvae live in cases that are constructed from cut-out portions of leaves or leaf fragments, with pupation occurring within the case. The larvae are gill-less and appear to obtain oxygen by storing air in their cases.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Munroe (1972)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: This species generally resembles *Elophila faulalis*, but is smaller and generally darker in color (Munroe, 1972). The abdomen has white bands that alternate with yellowish to light brown bands. Specimens typically have an orangish-yellow ground color on both the forewing and hindwing that is overlain with whitish, irregular bands and darker dusting. The forewing of most specimens has a whitish basal fascia at around one-fourth, and a broad arch of dark ocherous dusting that sweeps from the middle of the costa posteriorly to the inner margin, then outward to the subapical region of the costa. The dark arch surrounds an orange-yellow, roundish, costal patch that is margined basally and distally by an irregular white stripe. The stripe often continues inward as fragments that extend towards the inner margin and into the dark arch. The subterminal region has an undulating white stripe that adjoins the dark arch and is often faintly margined posteriorly with a darker shade.

The hindwing is generally similar, but has a narrow median white band that is bordered both basally and distally by a black line. The basal black line is straight and oblique, while the distal line is strongly sinuate. A yellowish-orange spot is usually present within the median band in the subcostal region. *Elophila nebulosalis* resembles *E. faulalis* but is smaller (forewing not exceeding 8 mm), lacks the round, white, black-margined spot near the middle of the forewing, and has a narrower, white, median band on the hindwing.

DISTRIBUTION: *Elophila nebulosalis* is restricted to the southeastern US where it occurs in Coastal Plain habitats from southeastern North Carolina southward to southern Florida and westward to southeastern Texas. As of 2023, we have only two records from Pender and Richmond counties.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults fly year-round in Florida and mostly from May through September elsewhere. As of 2023, our two records are both from June.

HABITAT: The adults are generally found in or near wetland habitats, but details concerning their habitat preferences are lacking.

FOOD: The host plants are unknown but presumably are aquatic plants as is the case for other congenics.

OBSERVATION_METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR S2S3

STATE PROTECTION:

COMMENTS: This species appears to be rare in the state and at the northern limit of its geographic range.