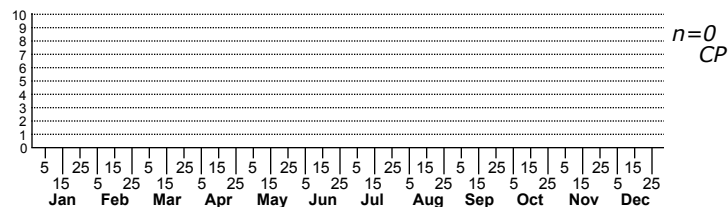
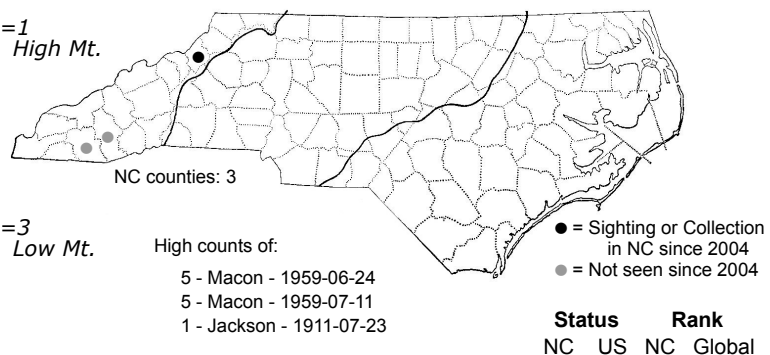
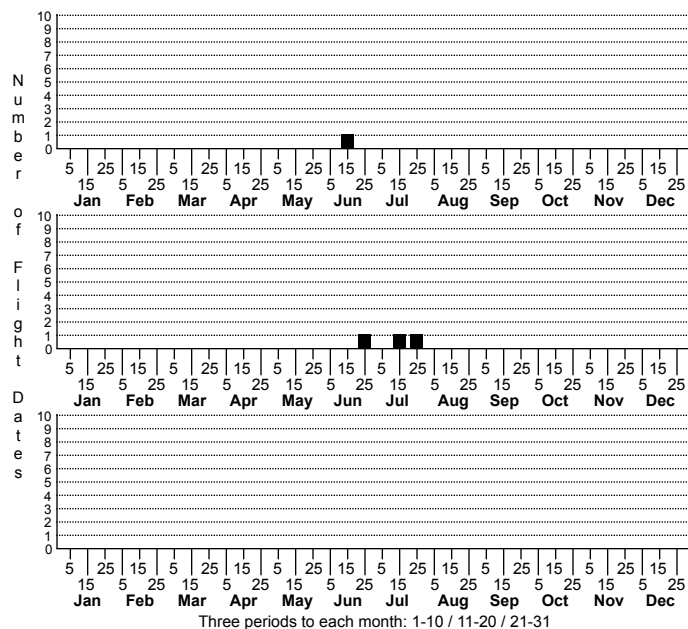


*Bucculatrix cuneigera* No common name



FAMILY: Bucculatricidae SUBFAMILY: TRIBE:

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: *Bucculatrix* is a large genus of small leaf-mining moths, with around 300 species worldwide. A total of 103 Nearctic species have been described, and many others will likely be described in the future. Braun (1963) covered 99 species in her monograph, and four additional Nearctic species have been described since then.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Braun (1963, p. 56)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Braun (1963)

ID COMMENTS: This is a minute black and white moth. The face and thorax are white and the tuft on top of the head is either entirely white or with a variably brown center. The ground color of the forewing is dark blackish-brown to sooty black. Several streaks of white are present, but none form complete bands across the wing. A white, longitudinal, streak extends from the base of the wing close to the costa. It gradually widens, but often forms a sharp point towards the middle of the wing. Two additional streaks extend obliquely down and outward from the costa to the middle of the wing; one at about two-thirds and the second at about four-fifths. The inner margin has a large, posterior oblique streak that begins at about one-fourth and terminates near the mid-wing just before the first costal streak. One or two smaller streaks are present at the base of the dorsal fringe that are sometimes represented as one or two small spots. In addition to the white streaks, a white wedge is present at the apex that is followed on the outside by a black line or dark apical spot. The hindwings are dark gray to brownish gray (Braun, 1963).

DISTRIBUTION: *Bucculatrix cuneigera* is found in eastern North America, with its distribution centered in the northeastern states and adjoining areas of Canada. Braun (1963) examined specimens from Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Maine, Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, and North Carolina. Additional state records include New Hampshire, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island (BugGuide). As of 2021, we have three site records from both lower and higher elevations in the mountains.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Records from outside of North Carolina are from May through July. As of 2021, all of our records are from June and July.

HABITAT: The preferred habitats are poorly defined. This species commonly uses Short's Aster farther north, which is found in mesic to upland forests, rocky open woodlands and slopes, and woodland borders. Habitats were not described at the sites where this species was recorded in North Carolina. We suspect that this species uses upland hardwoods in North Carolina, but this needs to be confirmed.

FOOD: This species specializes on asters (*Symphytotrichum* spp.). Short's Aster (*S. shortii*) was used at Braun's (1963) study sites in Ohio, but other *Symphytotrichum* species are likely used elsewhere given that this is a Midwestern species that is absent from most of the range of *B. cuneigera*.

OBSERVATION\_METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights, and the larval mines are often conspicuous in the autumn.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR [SU]

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

COMMENTS: We currently have very few records for this primarily northern species in North Carolina. More information is needed on its distribution, host plants, and habitat associations here in this state before its conservation status can be assessed.