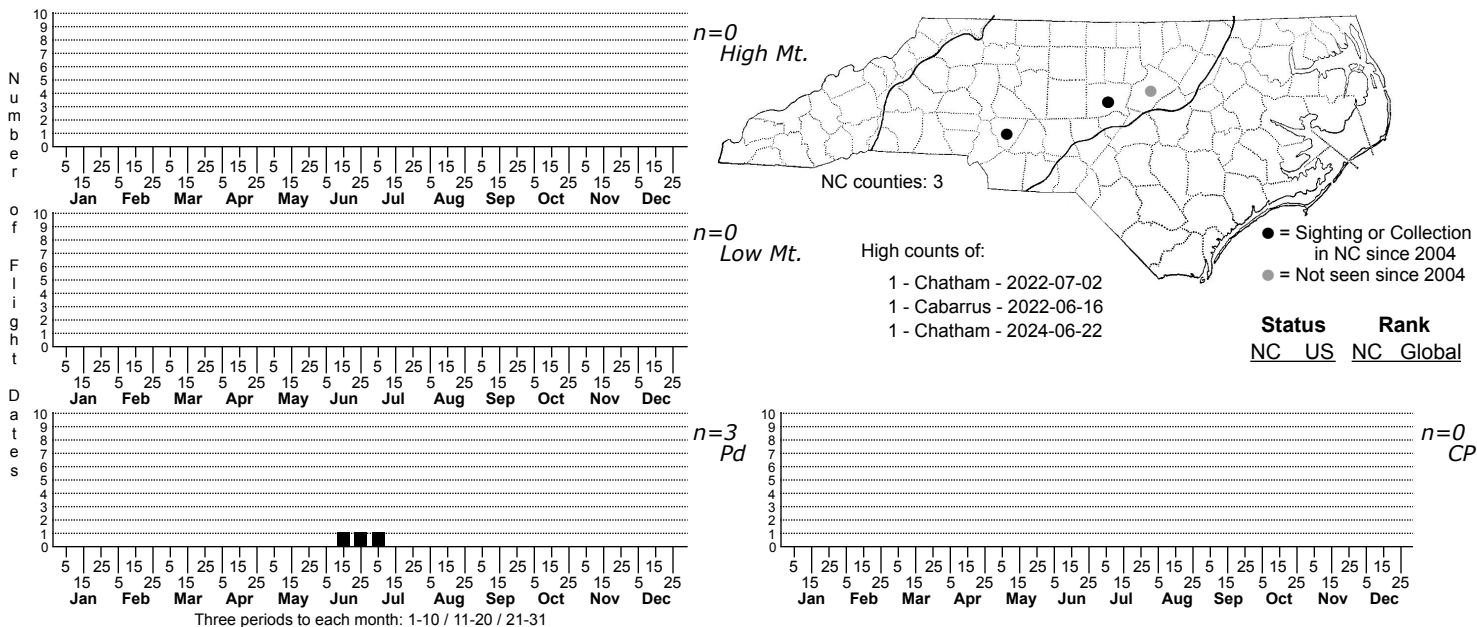


Sericoplaga externalis Falcate Sericoplaga



FAMILY: Crambidae SUBFAMILY: Pyraustinae TRIBE: Pyraustini
 TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS:

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Munroe (1976)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: This is a distinctive species due to its sinuate termen, falcate apex, and whitish fringe. The head, thorax, and ground color of the forewings are concolorous and vary from warm brown to reddish brown. The markings are dark brown and include the antemedial and postmedial lines, along with a slightly curved reniform spot and a small dot-like orbicular spot. The antemedial line is weakly denticulate and projects nearly perpendicular from the inner margin before angling basally to the costa. The costal half of the postmedial line is weakly bowed outward and dentate. The line then project basally near the middle of the wing before angling obliquely to the inner margin. There is a thin, dark terminal line that contrasts with the adjoining whitish fringe. The termen is sinuate and the apex is falcate. The hindwing is similar to the forewing, except that only the postmedial line is present and often rather obscure. The legs are white and mostly unmarked.

DISTRIBUTION: *Sericoplaga externalis* appears to feed only on Osage-orange (*Maclura pomifera*), which is native to a small area of the Red River drainage of Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas, and possibly small portions of Kansas, Louisiana, and Missouri (Ferro, 2014). It was subsequently used as an ornamental and for windbreaks and hedge fences, and was planted throughout the eastern U.S. where it has escaped in many areas. The range of *S. externalis* appears to have expanded dramatically in conjunction with the range expansion of the host plant. The range currently extends from southern Ontario, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland and northern Virginia westward to Iowa, eastern Nebraska and eastern Kansas, and southward to Texas, Mississippi, central Alabama and southern Florida. As of 2023, we have only three records for the state, and all are from the Piedmont.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults appear to fly year-round or nearly so in Florida and from April through September in other states. As of 2023, our two dated records are from mid-June and early July.

HABITAT: In North Carolina, the host plant that supports this monophagous species can be found in a variety of habitats, including stream floodplains, thickets by brackish marshes, disturbed woods, and old homesites.

FOOD: *Sericoplaga externalis* appears to be monophagous on Osage-orange (*Maclura pomifera*).

OBSERVATION_METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS:

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

COMMENTS: