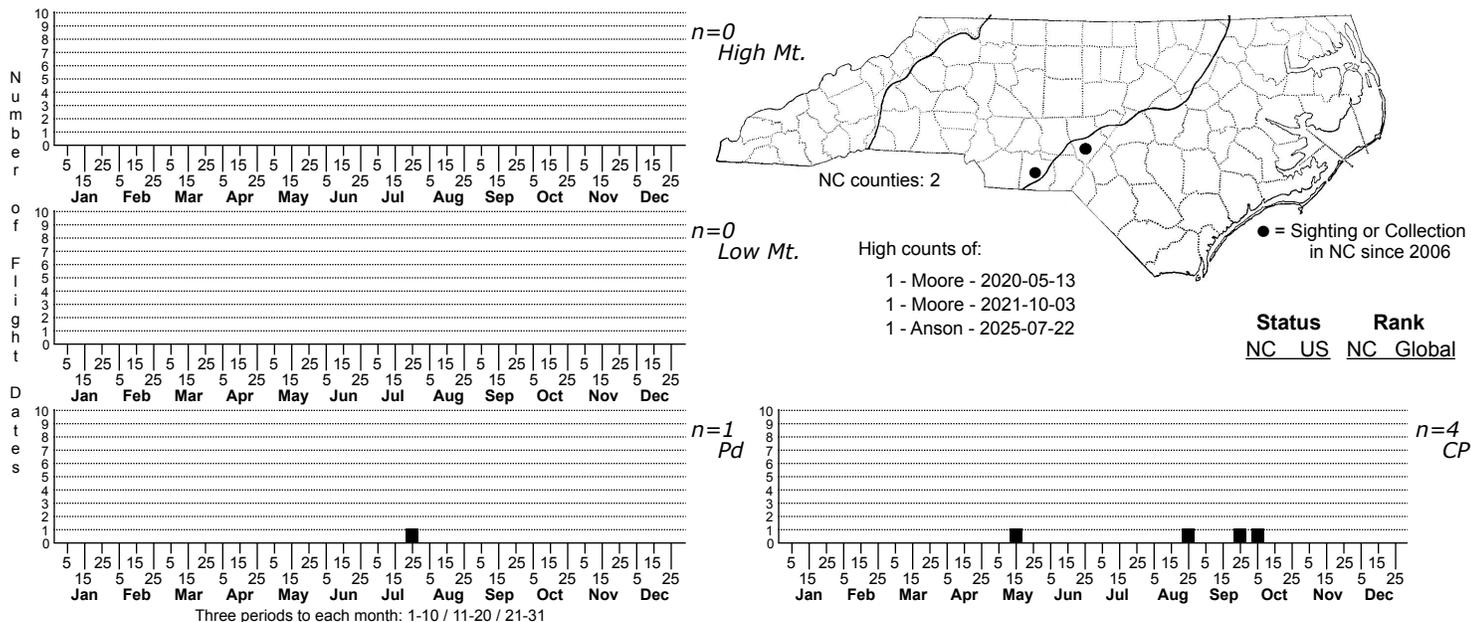


## *Loxostege cereralis* Alfalfa Webworm Moth



FAMILY: Crambidae SUBFAMILY: Pyraustinae TRIBE:  
 TAXONOMIC\_COMMENTS:

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Munroe (1976)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Allyson (1981)

ID COMMENTS: In this species the forewing ground is medium brown with a series of darker brown and tan streaks and marks. There is a long black basal dash near the middle of the wing, with a pale shade above it. The orbicular is followed by a pale patch that is sometimes divided by a black dash that connects the orbicular and reniform spots. The middle portion of the postmedial line is expanded into basally directed wedges. The subterminal band is yellowish buff, sharply defined, and evenly tapered anteriorly and posteriorly. It is followed by a double terminal line. The hindwing tends to be uniformly brown with a whitish fringe, but sometimes has a faint, buff-colored, partial subterminal band.

Munroe (1976) noted that this species is often confused with *L. commixtalis*, but the former is a relatively large, night-flying species that is common in croplands, while *L. commixtalis* is a day-flying species that rarely strays far from its bog habitat. Size is helpful in sorting these out (forewing length = 10-12 mm for *L. commixtalis* and 13-16 mm for *L. cereralis*; Munroe, 1976).

DISTRIBUTION: *Loxostege cereralis* is a very wide-ranging species that is found in almost every state in the conterminous U.S. It also occurs throughout most of southern Canada from British Columbia eastward to Newfoundland. As of 2023, we have only two records from the Sandhills.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults have been observed from February through November in different areas of the range, with May through September being the most active months. As of 2023, our two records are from May and October.

HABITAT: This species is commonly found in agricultural fields and weedy habitats.

FOOD: Munroe (1976) noted that *Loxostege cereralis* has often been confused with *L. munroalis* (= *L. sticticalis*) by economic entomologists. It also has been referred to as *L. commixtalis* in older literature, which adds additional confusion to the host plant information. According to Munroe (1976) this species is polyphagous. The larvae feed on a wide variety of plants, including many forage and truck crops, as well as agricultural weeds. They prefer broadleaf species such as alfalfa.

OBSERVATION\_METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights and the larvae and webs are often conspicuous on cultivated crops.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR S2S4

STATE PROTECTION:

COMMENTS: