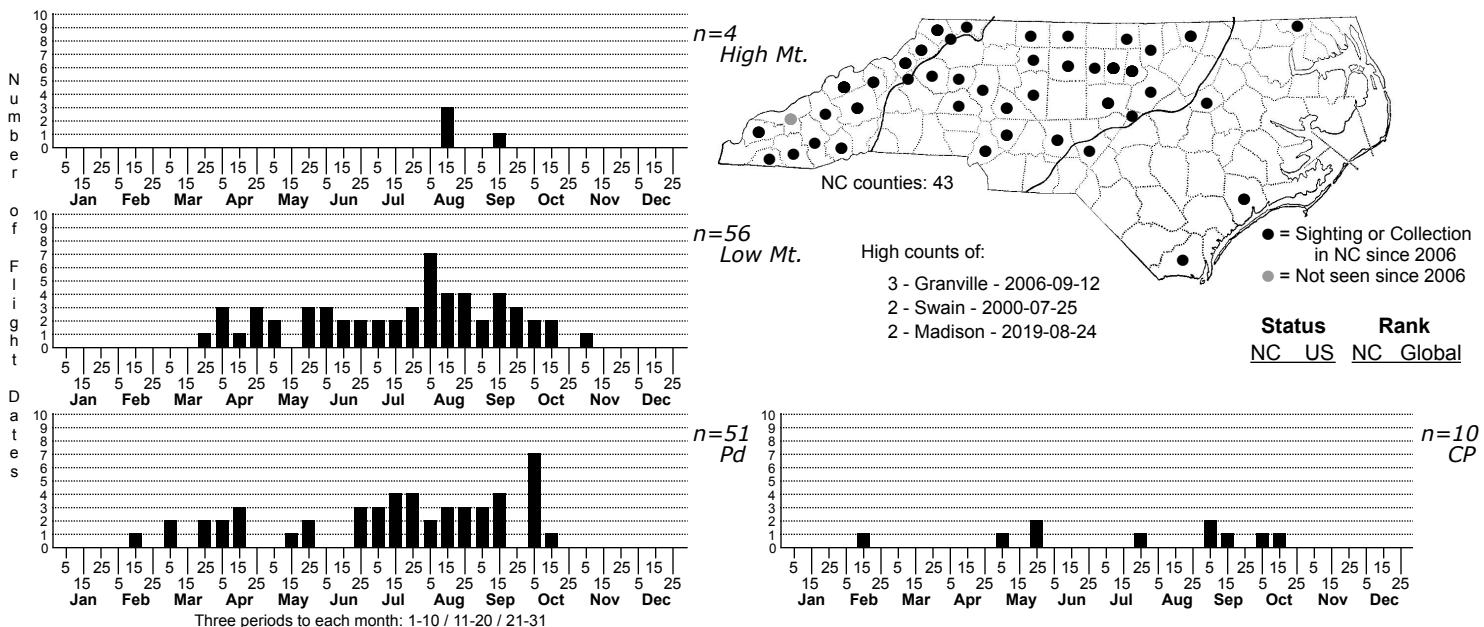


Pyrausta acrionalis Mint-loving Pyrausta



FAMILY: Crambidae SUBFAMILY: Pyraustinae TRIBE: Pyraustini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS:

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

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Munroe (1976)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: The following description is based in part on those of Forbes (1923) and Munroe (1976). The forewing ground color varies from rose to reddish brown or dark brown. The ground is overlain with yellowish patches and spots that are concentrated in the middle third of the wing. The orbicular and reniform spots are a shade darker than the ground, and the antemedial and postmedial lines are the same color as the ground. The antemedial is often partially obliterated by the rose or brown shading. The postmedial line dissects a large yellow patch along the inner margin at around two-thirds the wing length, and is excurred on the costal half. The terminal fifth of the wing beyond the postmedial line lacks any yellow marks except for a narrow yellow terminal line and a conspicuous yellow fringe. The costa is uniformly colored like the ground except for the subapical area where it often phases into yellow. The hindwing is grayish fuscous and often lighter near the base, with a short, straight, narrow, yellowish-buff postmedial line and a buff fringe.

DISTRIBUTION: *Pyrausta acrionalis* is a common species that occurs across most of the eastern U.S. and portions of southeastern Canada from Ontario eastward to Nova Scotia. In the U.S. the range extends from Maine to southern Florida, and westward to central Texas, central Oklahoma, Missouri, Illinois, Wisconsin and eastern Minnesota. It is generally uncommon along the Atlantic Coastal Plain from Virginia to Georgia. In North Carolina this species is common in the Piedmont and lower elevations in the Blue Ridge, and uncommon in the Coastal Plain.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults are active year-round in southern states such as Florida, Louisiana, and Texas, and mostly from April through October farther north. As of 2023, our records range from mid-February to early November, with local populations appearing to produce two or more overlapping generations each year.

HABITAT:

FOOD: The hosts are poorly documented. Covell (1984) listed a mint (*Mentha* sp.) that was presumably based on a museum specimen, but we are unaware of any verification of this.

OBSERVATION METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights and are occasionally seen nectaring on wildflowers.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR [S4S5]

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

COMMENTS: This species is common in the Blue Ridge and Piedmont and appears to be secure within the state.