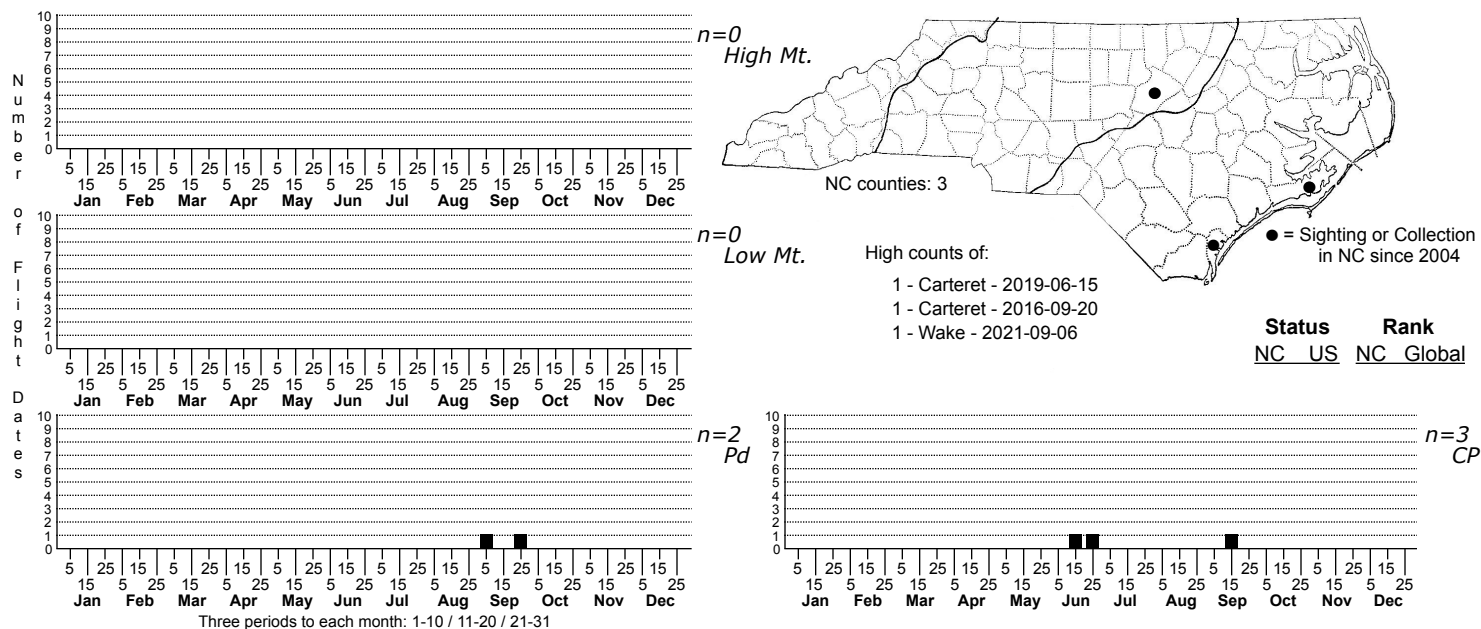


Duponchelia fovealis European Pepper Moth



FAMILY: Crambidae SUBFAMILY: Spilomelinae TRIBE:
 TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS:

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: In this species the forewing ground color varies from grayish-brown to brown, while the antemedial and postmedial lines range from dull white to yellowish-white. The antemedial is relatively straight, while the postmedial has a conspicuous outward loop or “finger” about one-third in from the inner margin (Stocks and Hodges, 2011; Hayden et al., 2013). The area beyond the postmedial line is a shade darker than the overall ground color, and the termen has a line of dark dots along its margin. The abdomen of the male is noticeably elongated, and is ringed with alternating brown with dull whitish bands. The males typically rest with the abdomen strongly curled upwards.

DISTRIBUTION: *Duponchelia fovealis* is an invasive species that is native to areas around the Mediterranean Sea. It is a pest in greenhouse operations and croplands, and has expanded its range via introductions to other parts of Africa, Europe, the Middle East and North America. It was first discovered in the U.S. around 2005 and is now widespread in California, the Pacific Northwest and throughout most of the eastern U.S. from the New England states to Florida, and westward to central Texas, eastern Kansas and Minnesota. The current range also includes portions of southern Canada (British Columbia; Ontario), Mexico, and the West Indies. This species does not tolerate freezing winter temperatures and is mostly restricted to greenhouses at northern latitudes. As of 2023, all of our records are from the Coastal Plain and eastern Piedmont.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults can be present year-round in greenhouse operations and are most common in late summer and early autumn in croplands and fallow fields. As of 2023, our few scattered records are from June and September.

HABITAT: The European Pepper Moth is a native to freshwater and saltwater marshlands of southern Europe, but is commonly found in greenhouse operations (Stocks and Hodges, 2011). It also occurs in croplands, residential neighborhoods, and other disturbed habitats where it often uses non-aquatic species as hosts. As of 2023, all of our records are from residential neighborhoods.

FOOD: This species is highly polyphagous (Stocks and Hodges, 2011), but also feeds on detritus such as moist rotting leaves (Hayden et al., 2013). The larvae commonly attack a variety of cut flowers, ornamentals, vegetables and aquatic plants that are grown commercially in fields or greenhouses. Examples include corn, beets, peppers, tomatoes, cucumbers, basil, squash, strawberries, lettuce, begonias, poinsettias, chrysanthemums, cyclamens, pitcher plants and many others. The authors listed 35 other genera that are exploited by the larvae.

OBSERVATION_METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights and the larvae are common pests in greenhouse operations.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS:

STATE PROTECTION:

COMMENTS: This is an introduced species that does not merit protection.