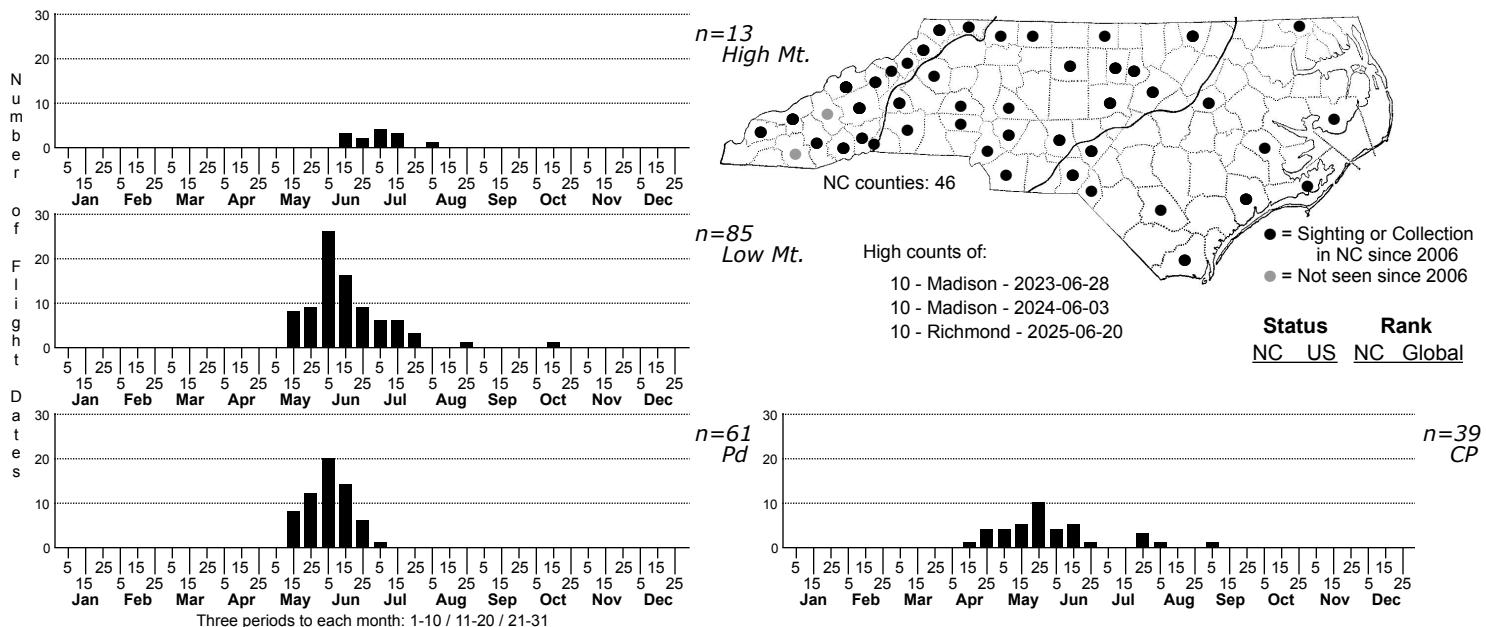


Blepharomastix ranalis Hollow-spotted Blepharomastix



FAMILY: Crambidae SUBFAMILY: Pyraustinae TRIBE: Spilomelini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS:

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

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1923)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: This species has a light clay-colored ground on both the forewing and hindwing that is overlain with darker dull brown markings. The costa is shaded brown except for the apical third or so, and the antemedial line is slightly excurred. The orbicular is a well-marked ring, and the reniform a double bar or horseshoe-shaped mark. The claviform is very reduced and often appears as a dark dash or dot. The postmedial line has a stepped pattern that begins on the subapical region of the costa and runs towards the anal angle. It abruptly turns inward before reaching the anal angle, then angles again to run perpendicular -- and in a more sinuous fashion -- towards the inner margin near the middle of the wing. In males, the middle section is usually missing so that there is simply a subapical and median lateral line, while in females the entire postmedial line is often intact (Forbes, 1923). There is a dashed brown terminal line, and the fringe is a shade lighter than the ground color. The hindwing is generally similar to the forewing, with the marks consisting of a single, stepped postmedial line and a discal spot. A rare melanic form has been found in North Carolina that appears to have identical female genitalia to that of the typical form described above. It resembles the typical form but differs in having dark scaling overlaying portions of the ground color, thicker and darker transverse lines, and orbicular and reniform spots that are encircled with dark scales.

DISTRIBUTION: *Blepharomastix ranalis* is found in Ontario and Quebec, and in a broad swath across the U.S. where the range extends from New Hampshire and Vermont southward to southern Florida, and westward to central Texas, central Oklahoma, eastern Nebraska, Iowa and Wisconsin. Populations in Arizona and vicinity are now thought to comprise a separate species. This species occurs statewide in North Carolina, but is relatively uncommon in the upper Coastal Plain.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults have been observed from March through September in different areas of the range, with a seasonal peak from May through August. As of 2023, our records extend from late-April through early September, with a seasonal peak in May and June. Local populations in North Carolina are univoltine.

HABITAT: Specimens have been observed in a wide range of habitats in North Carolina that range from xeric communities in the Sandhills to a bog and rich hardwood slopes in the Blue Ridge. Many are from semi-wooded residential neighborhoods.

FOOD: The only reported host is an unspecified species of *Chenopodium* (Forbes, 1923).

OBSERVATION METHODS: The adults readily come to lights.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR SNR [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 widespread and common in most areas of the state and appears to be secure.