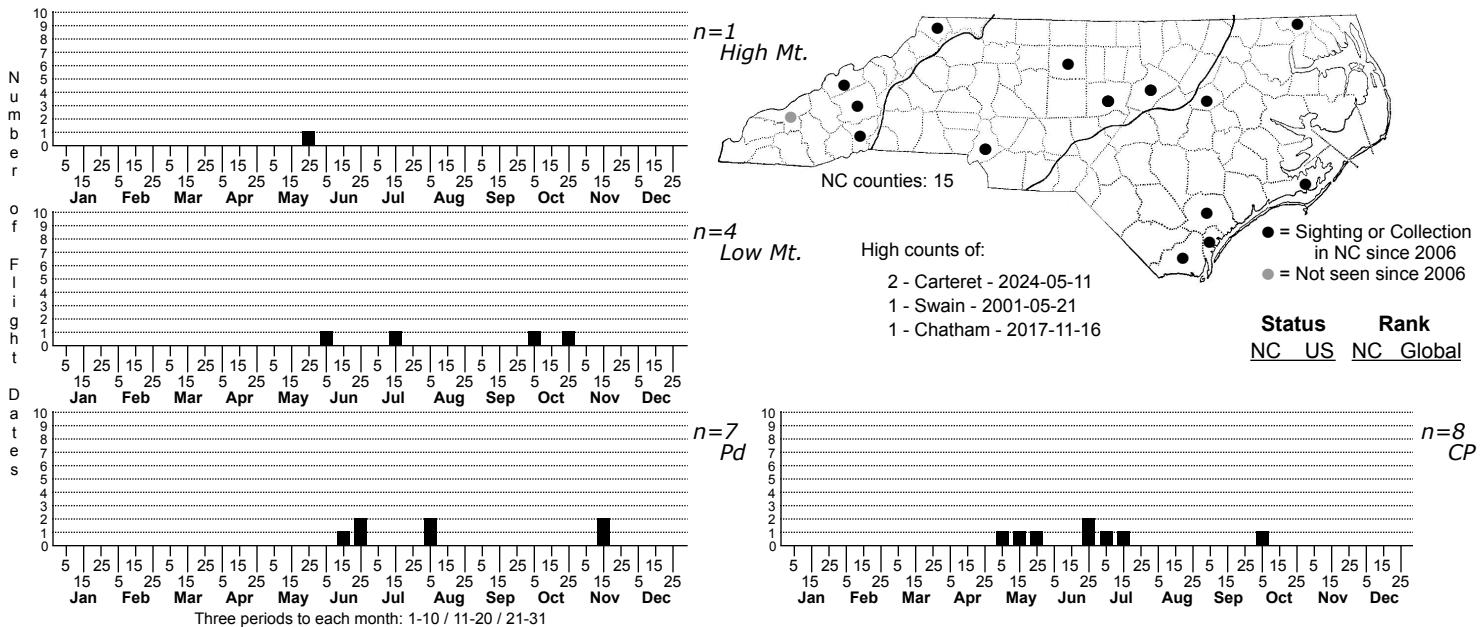


# *Palpita quadristigmalis* Four-spotted Palpita



FAMILY: Crambidae SUBFAMILY: Pyraustinae TRIBE: Spilomelini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS:

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: *Diaphania costata* and *Palpita quadristigmalis* are two very similar species with semitranslucent, satiny white wings that have a brown to brownish-orange costa. The latter is best distinguished by the presence of four black dots on the forewing, including three along the costa before the middle of the wing, and a fourth at the lower, outer corner of the discal cell near the middle of the wing. *Diaphania costata* either lacks all of the dots, or has a single obscure dot on the discal cell. *Palpita quadristigmalis* also has a discal dot on the hindwing that is not present on *D. costata*.

DISTRIBUTION: *Palpita quadristigmalis* is a largely tropical and subtropical species that occurs from Central America and the Caribbean southward to central South America. It occurs throughout much of the eastern and southwestern U.S. from Massachusetts southward to southern Florida, and westward across the Gulf States and Texas to Arizona, Colorado, eastern Nebraska, Indiana and Ohio. As of 2023, we have a single record from the southeastern Coastal Plain, with the remainder from the Piedmont and Blue Ridge.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults fly year-round in Florida, Louisiana, and Texas, and mostly from May through October farther north. As of 2023, we have records from late-May through mid-November, with most from June and July.

HABITAT: Most of our records are from fragmented landscapes and often from residential neighborhoods. A few are from more natural habitats, including hardwood-pine forests.

FOOD: The larvae feed on members of the Oleaceae (Robinson et al., 2010; Villegas-Luján et al., 2019), including Japanese Privet (*Ligustrum japonicum*), California Privet (*L. ovalifolium*), European Privet (*L. vulgare*), and Cultivated Olive (*Olea europaea*). Ken Kneidel reared an adult from a leaf roll that was on Green Ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), which is a new host record for the species.

OBSERVATION METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR[S3-S4]

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

COMMENTS: We need additional information on host use and preferred habitats before we can accurately assess the conservation status of this species.