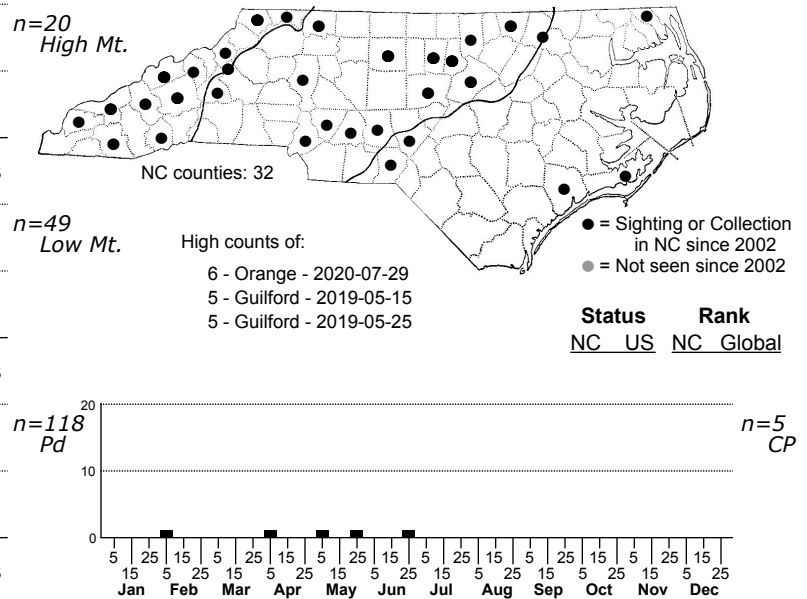
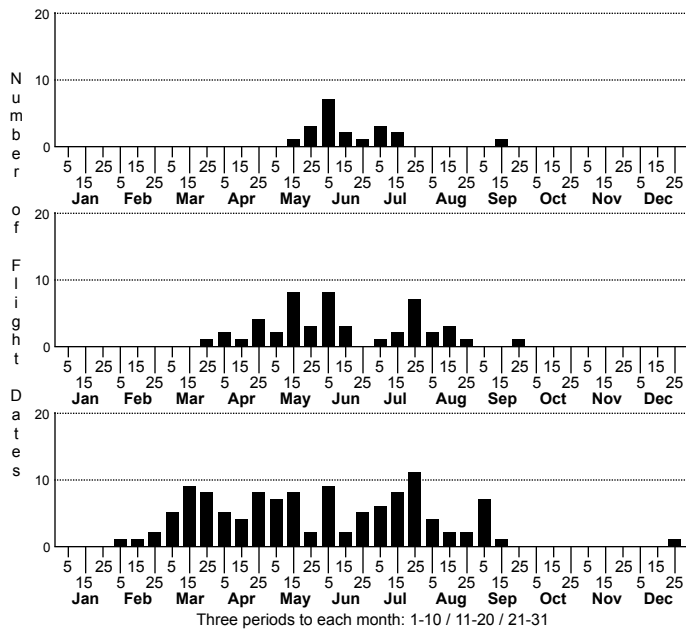


# *Palpita magniferalis* Splendid Palpita Moth



FAMILY: Crambidae SUBFAMILY: Pyraustinae TRIBE: Spilomelini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: One of twelve species in this genus recorded in North America north of Mexico (Scholtens and Solis, 2015). Munroe (1952) placed *magniferalis* in his *Illibalalis* Species Group, which in North Carolina also includes *arsaltealis*, *illibalalis*, *freemanalis*, and *aenescentalis*.

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

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Munroe (1952)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: A small, gray and brown blotched Pyraustine. The forewings are marked with extensive areas of pale gray; the abdomen is also pale gray and irregularly marked with fuscous. The orbicular and reniform are contrastingly black, and large fuscous patch is often present beyond the reniform and a brown postmedian patch may also be present (Munroe, 1952). Most of the forewing is marked with fuscous speckling. Hind wings are translucent pale gray with light fuscous speckling. The winter form of *freemanalis* is very similar but smaller.

DISTRIBUTION: Please refer to the dot map.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Please refer to the flight charts.

HABITAT: Our records come from both upland and bottomland habitats, corresponding to its association with both White and Green Ash. Both natural stands are used as wooded residential neighborhoods.

FOOD: Larvae feed on Ash species (Robinson et al., 2010) Munroe (1952) specifically lists *Fraxinus americanus*, *nigra*, and *pennsylvanica*. A NC record from Dismal Swamp State Park (NRID, accessed 2022-08-07) indicates it probably uses Carolina Ash, since that is the only species of *Fraxinus* recorded at that site. Additionally, a larva has been photographed on Swamp Privet, *Forestiera acuminata*, in Texas (George Smiley, BugGuide, accessed 2022-08-7). That species only reaches as far north as South Carolina. The possibility that *magniferalis* can feed on introduced species of *Ligustrum* is currently not known.

OBSERVATION\_METHODS: Adults come well to blacklights

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR S2S3

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

COMMENTS: Wagner and Todd (2016) list this species as having a High Endangerment Risk due to the impacts of the Emerald Ash Borer. Recent (2022) records from a bottomland that has been hard-hit by the Emerald Ash Borer indicate that *magniferalis* may be able to use Ash saplings, which are still common; Chinese privet, however, is also present and its use as larval foodplant needs to be determined.