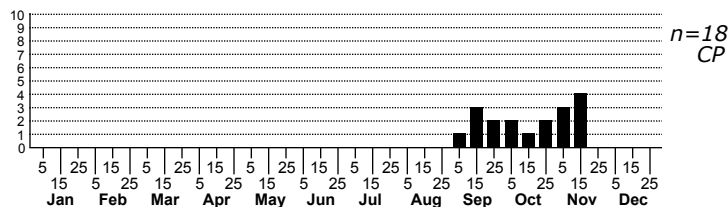
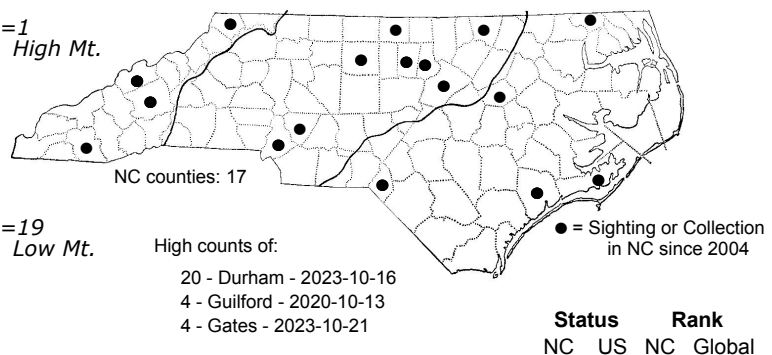
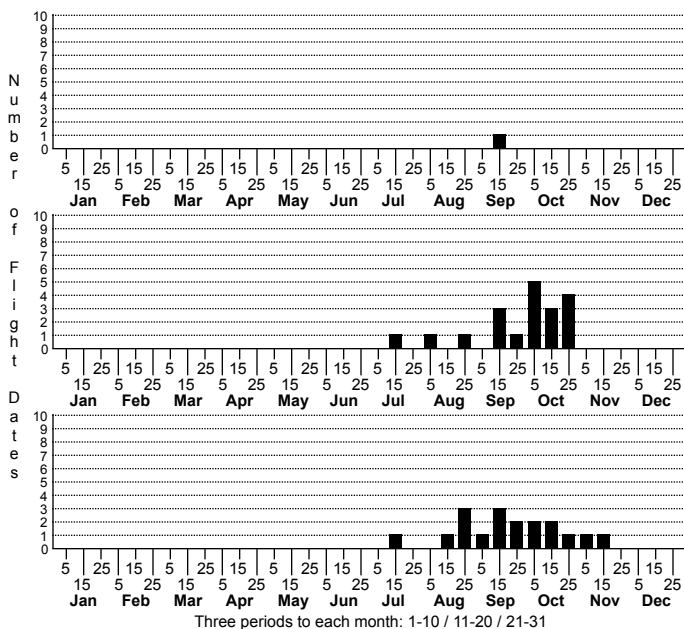


Patania silicalis Herbivorous Patania Moth



FAMILY: Crambidae SUBFAMILY: Pyraustinae TRIBE: Spilomelini
 TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS:

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: In this species the head, thorax, abdomen and ground color of the wings are all concolorous and vary from brown to brownish-yellow. The markings on the forewing are dark brown and somewhat diffuse, and include a slightly irregular antemedial line and a crescent-shaped or curved reniform. The postmedial has a curved portion that projects from the costa and meets the remainder of the line that has a stepped pattern, with a toothed portion that runs parallel to the termen, a connecting line that runs parallel to the inner margin, and a final portion that runs parallel to the termen to the inner margin near the middle of the wing. The hindwing is similar, but lacks the antemedial line and reniform spot. The fringe on both wings is concolorous with the adjoining ground on the wings and abuts a very narrow dark marginal line.

<i>Patania silicalis</i> shares many similarities with <i>Herpetogramma theseusalis</i> and <i>H. centrotrigalis</i>, but the latter two species have a dark orbicular spot just posterior to the antemedial line (often faded on worn specimens) that is missing on <i>P. silicalis</i>. The postmedial line between the costa and the stepped portion of the line that begins at M2 is curved inward in <i>P. silicalis</i> versus more or less straight in <i>H. theseusalis</i>. The dark shading along the lines, particularly in the median area, also may help to distinguish <i>P. silicalis</i>. Finally, the reniform tends to be crescent-shaped in <i>P. silicalis</i> versus more oblong in certain <i>Herpetogramma</i> species.

DISTRIBUTION: <i>Patania silicalis</i> is found from Brazil northward through Central America and the West Indies to eastern North America. In eastern North America, it has been observed from Maine westward through Ontario, Quebec and the Great Lakes region, to Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois and Missouri. The range extends as far south as south-central Texas, the Gulf Coast states, southern Florida and Georgia. This species occurs statewide in North Carolina.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults fly from April through December in Florida and mostly from June through November farther north. As of 2023, our records range from mid-July through mid-November. Populations in North Carolina appear to be univoltine.

HABITAT: Local populations are often found in wet to mesic habitats such as bottomland forests, swamplands, and wet thickets. The adults are good dispersers and often appear at lights in residential neighborhoods.

FOOD: The larvae are polyphagous, with the primary hosts appearing to be members on the Convolvulaceae and Urticaceae. The former are often used in subtropical and tropical regions of the range. Bendicho-Lopez (1998) collected and reared adults in Cuba on Sweet Potato (<i>Ipomoea batatas</i>), <i>I. setifera</i>, Hogvine (<i>Camonea umbellata</i>) and Pigeonberry (<i>Rivinia humilis</i>; Phytolacaceae), and noted that it has been found by others on Great Bougainvillea (<i>Bougainvillea spectabilis</i>; Nyctaginaceae) and Ramie (<i>Boehmeria nicea</i>; Urticaceae). Dutra et al. (2006) found larvae feeding on a tropical shrub in Brazil (<i>Urera baccifera</i>; Urticaceae) after ants that defended the plant were removed.

As of 2023, we have rearing records for North Carolina for False Nettle (<i>Boehmeria cylindrica</i>; Urticaceae), Swamp Fetterbush (<i>Eubotrys racemosus</i>; Ericaceae) and Lizard's Tail (<i>Saururus cernuus</i>; Saururaceae), with False Nettle appearing to be the most commonly used host.

OBSERVATION_METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights and the larvae can be found in rolled leaves of False Nettle and other hosts.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR [S3S4]

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

COMMENTS: Populations in North Carolina appear to be relatively secure, although the historical loss of wetlands in North Carolina has undoubtedly adversely affected this species.