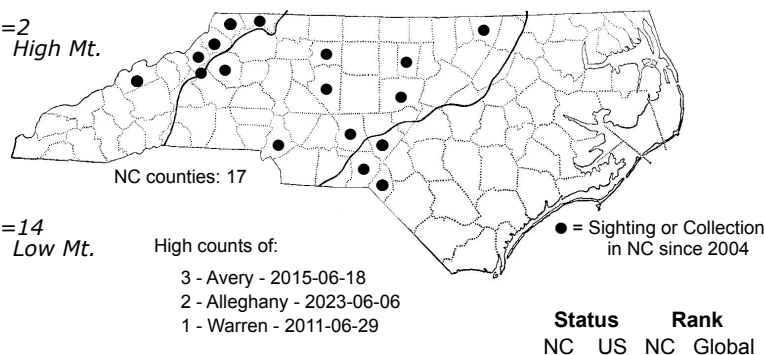
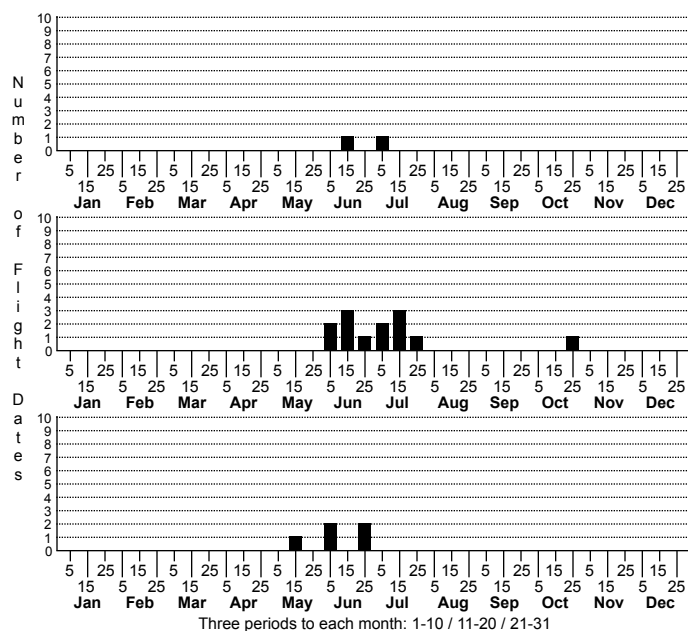


# *Crambus saltuellus* Pasture Grass-veneer Moth



FAMILY: Crambidae SUBFAMILY: Crambinae TRIBE: Crambini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: The genus *Crambus* includes around 155 species that are distributed globally. Some of the species are significant pests that can cause damage to agricultural crops, lawns and rangelands. This is one of 41 species in this genus that occur in North America north of Mexico (Pohl and Nanz, 2023), and one of fifteen species that occur in North Carolina.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Beadle and Leckie (2012)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: The head and thorax of this species are brownish-yellow, and the palps when viewed from the side are mostly light fuscous with white beneath (Fernald, 1896). The legs are light fuscous above, and the ground color of the forewing varies from brownish-yellow or brownish-orange to brown. The most conspicuous mark is a broad, silvery white, longitudinal stripe that gradually widens as it extends from the wing base to near the middle of the wing, then tapers to a sharp point at around two-thirds the wing length. A small tooth often projects from the dorsal edge at the point where the stripe begins to taper, and the margins are lined with yellowish- to brownish-orange scales. The stripe is divided by a relatively well-developed brownish-yellow to brown line that extends from near the distal tip of the stripe before fading out near the wing base. A V-shaped brownish-yellow to brown subterminal line is present at around four-fifths that is double, or nearly so, with the distal line incomplete or broken on the dorsal half. The space between the lines is filled with silvery scales. In between the subterminal line and the end of the silver band there is a separate large white patch. The patch is bordered above and below with two silvery lines with black edges that alternate with light brownish-yellow lines. The subapical area has a small, triangular, brownish-yellow costal patch and a similar white patch that adjoins the black terminal line that covers the apical third of the outer margin. The remainder of the outer margin has a series of four or five black dots or dashes. The fringe is silvery lead gray, while the hindwing is gray to grayish-white with a paler fringe.

*Crambus saltuellus* is very similar to *C. agitatellus*, but has a more prominent brown or brownish-yellow line running through the silver stripe, and has a larger number of dark and silver lines extending out from the upper portion of the silver stripe. In some individuals, dark streaks run close to the inner margin from the base of the wing to the subterminal line (BugGuide, 2018). In addition, the double subterminal line is filled with a line of silvery white scales. In *C. agitatellus* the silvery line tends to be narrower and relatively obscure, and has a mixture of both silvery and blackish scales, particularly on the costal half.

DISTRIBUTION: *Crambus saltuellus* is found in the eastern U.S. and adjoining areas of southern Canada (Manitoba; Ontario; Quebec; New Brunswick; Nova Scotia; Prince Edward Island). In the U.S. the range extends from Maine to South Carolina and northern Alabama, and westward to northern Louisiana, central Oklahoma, eastern Kansas, Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota and northeastern Nebraska. This species is uncommon or absent from most of the southeastern Coastal Plain. As of 2023, we have records from all three physiographic regions, with Coastal Plain records restricted to the Sandhills.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults fly from April through August in different areas of the range, with a seasonal peak typically from May through July in most states. As of 2023, our records range from early-May through late-July, with one late-season record from late October.

HABITAT: Our records include grassy habitats such as pastures and meadows in the mountains, and xeric Long-leaf Pine forests in the Sandhills. We also have records from bogs and bottomland forests.

FOOD: The larvae have been reported to feed on grasses (Beadle and Leckie, 2012), but there is remarkably little hard evidence that this is the case. The adults do prefer pastures, meadows, and other habitats that support grasses, particularly cool-season species. This, and the fact that other members of the genus are known to use grasses, is the presumed basis for assuming that the larvae also feed on grasses.

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: This species appears to be fairly common locally in the appropriate habitats, but more information is needed on its host plants, habitat requirements, and distribution and abundance before we can fully assess its conservation status within North Carolina.