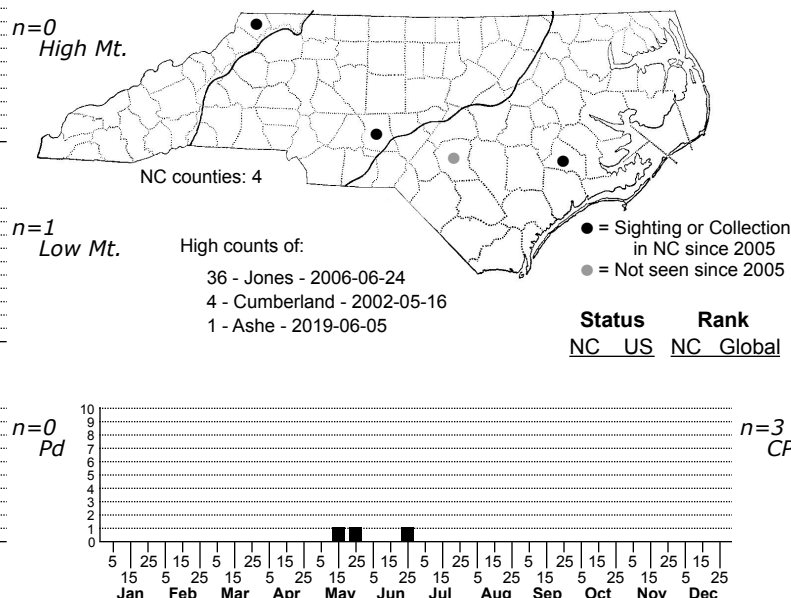
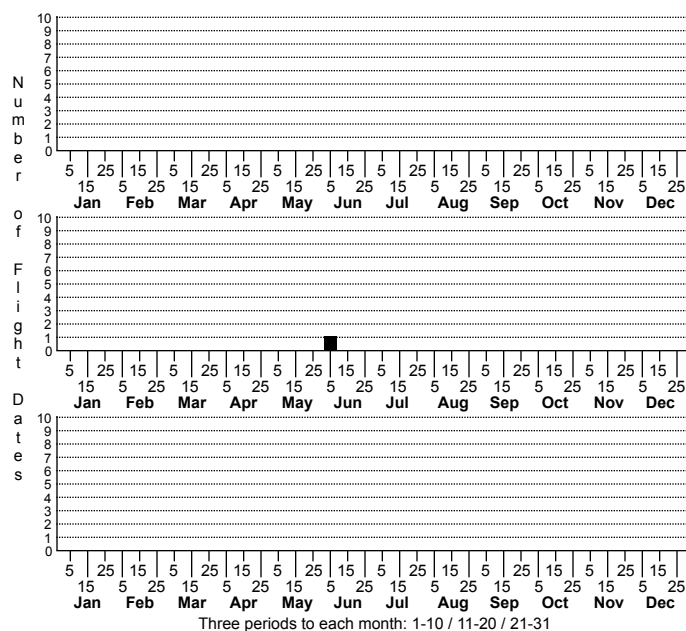


## *Crambus braunellus* Braun's Grass-veneer



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:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Klots (1940)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: The following description is based mostly on the original description by Klots (1940). The head and palps are very pale brown, while the thorax is slightly darker and more lustrous. The ground color of the forewing is light brownish-yellow, and darker between the silvery-white longitudinal stripe and the costa. The silvery-white stripe is narrow, with at most only a bare indication of a dorsal tooth, and tapers gradually to a very sharp point well before the submarginal line. The margins of the stripe if often lined with darker scales than the general ground color. A distinctive feature of this species is a set of seven slender lines of semi-metallic leaden scales that are margined with darker brown scales, and that run from the stripe to the submarginal line.

The area just dorsal to and between the tip of the silvery-white stripe and the submarginal line is whitish, but does not form a clearly marked white patch as seen in some species. The submarginal line leaves the costa at an acute angle, then bends opposite the end of the stripe and runs to the inner margin very close to the outer margin. The line is composed of semi-metallic, leaden scales that are margined basally with brown, with the basal margin becoming very dark towards the costa. Just basal to and adjoining the submarginal line is a white stripe which runs basally and narrows along the costa to about one-half the wing length before tapering off. The subapical area is white, with a triangular, fuscous mark with a white center. The area below the apical area and between the submarginal line and outer margin is whitish and heavily speckled with dark scales on the dorsal two-thirds. A thin, dark-brown, marginal line is present that is best developed on the costal third and that adjoins and often fuses with a series of rounded dots on the dorsal half of the wing. The fringe is whitish basally and darker terminally. The hindwing is a pale brownish-white, and slightly darker apically and terminally, with a nearly whitish fringe.

This species is best distinguished from our other silver-striped species by the absence of a tooth on the silvery stripe, the seven dark lines that run from the stripe to the submarginal line, and the submarginal line that runs very close to the outer margin.

DISTRIBUTION: *Crambus braunellus* is a rarely encounter species that has been observed at several sites that are scattered across the U.S., including in California, New Jersey, Maryland, North Carolina and the Florida Panhandle. As of 2023, we have only four site records, including one from the northern mountains and three from the Coastal Plain.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The flight season is poorly documented, but includes records from April in California and from May and June in the eastern U.S. As of 2023, our records extend from mid-May through late-June.

HABITAT: This species is strongly affiliated with bogs and other wetlands. Our very limited records are from a mountain bog, a coastal wetland site, and a ridge adjoining a bottomland floodplain.

FOOD: The host plants are undocumented, but are likely grasses or sedges based on the known host plants of other *Crambus* species.

OBSERVATION\_METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR [S1-S3]

STATE PROTECTION:

COMMENTS: *Crambus braunellus* is a seemingly rare species with only a few known collection sites in the U.S. This species appears to favor bogs and other small wetlands and has a relatively short flight period -- both of which may contribute to it being undercollected. When at the right place at the right time, it can be locally abundant. Bo Sullivan, for example, collected over 35 specimens during a single trap night at a site in Jones County. We need additional information on its distribution, abundance, preferred habitats and larval life history before we can accurately assess its conservation status in North Carolina.