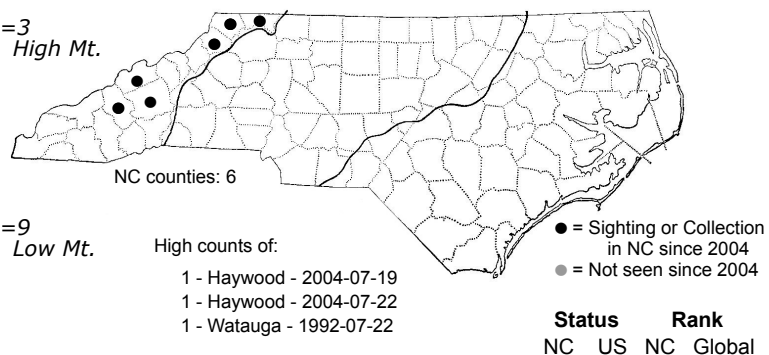
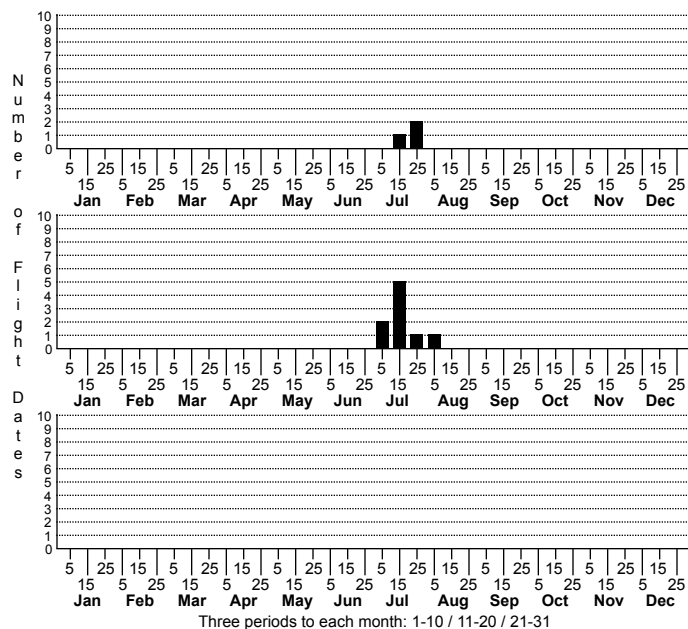


# *Chrysoteuchia topiarius* Topiary Grass-veneer



FAMILY: Crambidae SUBFAMILY: Crambinae TRIBE: Crambini  
 TAXONOMIC\_COMMENTS:

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Beadle and Leckie (2012)  
 ONLINE PHOTOS:  
 TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS:  
 TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: The following is based on descriptions by Fernald (1896) and Forbes (1923). The palps, head and thorax are ashy-gray, and the ground of the forewing varies from ashy-gray to clay-colored or orangish-brown. The ground color becomes a deeper yellowish to yellowish-orange on the apical fourth of the wing. Most specimens have a series of dark fuscous, longitudinal or oblique stripes between the veins. The subterminal line is silvery gray and angled outwardly near the center of the wing. It is margined basally by a narrow, dark-brown line of scales, followed by a wider yellowish to yellowish-orange line of similar width. A brown oblique costal line is present that starts before the middle of the costa, then runs obliquely inward and stops before reaching the subterminal line. A similar but shorter line parallels the first, and there is an oblique leaden streak in the apical portion of the subterminal space, which is otherwise yellowish to yellowish-orange. The terminal line is black and extends from the apex to beyond the middle where it is replaced by three black dots. The fringe is silvery gray, and the hindwing pale gray to dark gray with a whitish fringe, along with a darker terminal line that does not reach the anal angle.

DISTRIBUTION: *Chrysoteuchia topiarius* is widely distributed across much of the central and northern U.S., Alaska, and southern Canada where it occurs from the Northwest Territories and British Columbia eastward to Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. In the conterminous U.S., it has been documented in every state except Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida and South Carolina. As of 2023, all of our records are from the Blue Ridge, where this species appears to reach its southernmost limits in eastern North America.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults fly from April through October in different areas of the range, with June through August the peak months in most areas. As of 2023, our records range from early-July to early-August. This species is univoltine in North Carolina.

HABITAT: Most of our records are from mesic forested habitats, but with early successional or disturbed habitats such as road corridors and meadows nearby.

FOOD: This species appears to be somewhat polyphagous, but feeds primarily on grasses. It can be a significant pest in lawns and commercial grass seed and turf production, as well as in cranberry bogs (Fernald, 1896; Forbes, 1923; Beckwith, 1925; Crawford and Harwood, 1959; Robinson et al., 2010). Grasses that are used include Redtop Bentgrass (*Agrostis gigantea*), Orchard Grass (*Dactylis glomerata*), Tall Fescue (*Festuca arundinacea*), Perennial Ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*), Timothy (*Phleum pratense*), Kentucky Bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*) and Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*), but others are undoubtedly used. Other reported hosts include seedlings of firs (*Abies* sp.) and Douglas Fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) in nursery operations, Sheep Sorrel (*Acetosa acetosella*) and Cranberry (*Vaccinium macrocarpon*), where the larvae can cause significant plant damage in both natural bogs and commercial operations. Scammell (1917) also noted that Olney's Threesquare (*Schoenoplectus americanus*) is readily used when growing in cranberry bogs.

OBSERVATION\_METHODS:

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR [S2-S3]

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

COMMENTS: This species is uncommon in North Carolina where it reaches the southern limit of its range in eastern North America. We need additional information on its host plants and abundance before we can accurately assess its conservation status in North Carolina.