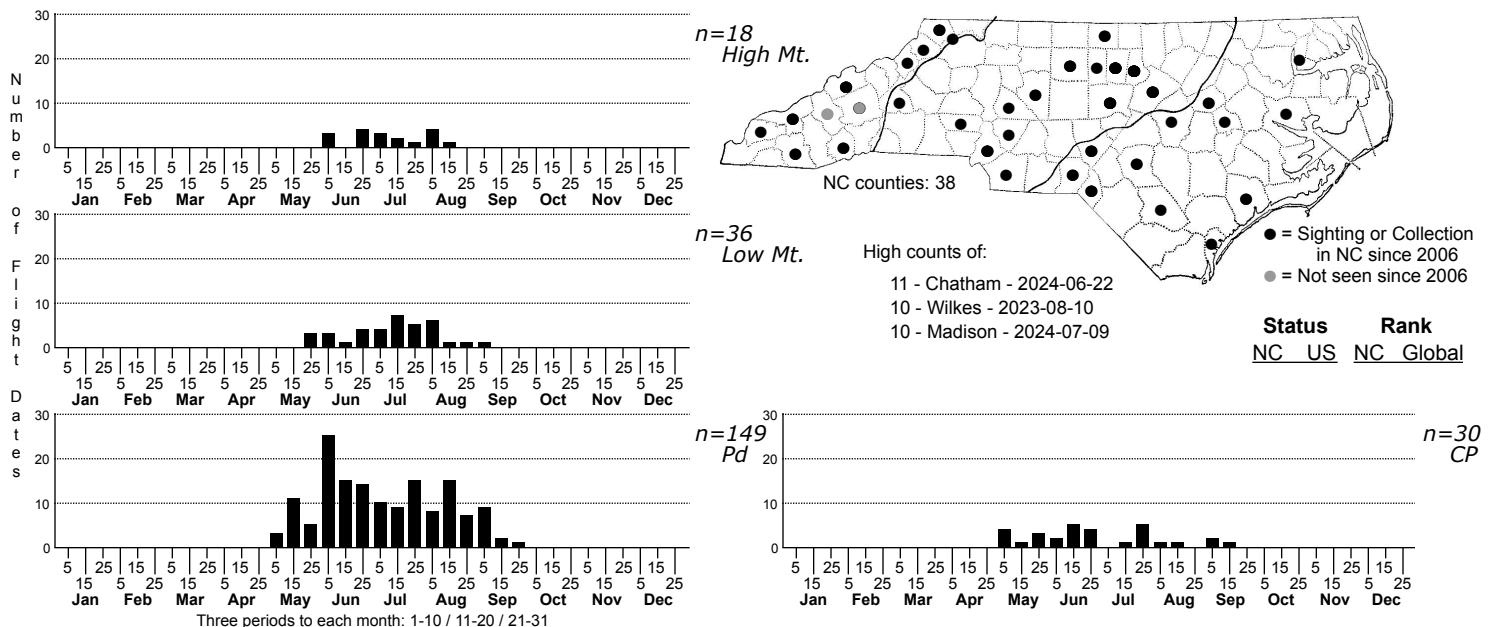


Pococera asperatella Maple Webworm Moth



FAMILY: Pyralidae SUBFAMILY: Epipaschiinae TRIBE: [Epipaschiini]

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: The genus *Pococera* contains a taxonomically challenging group of species with many forms that are difficult to distinguish based on external morphology, coloration, and patterning. Rearing and knowledge of the host species can be helpful in a few instances, and some species can be identified based on external characteristics. However, we find many specimens from North Carolina that are challenging to assign to species with high confidence.

The genitalia of species that have been examined from North Carolina are virtually identical and offer little help in sorting out species. DNA barcoding also offers little help since many of the established names show up in multiple BINs that likely reflect large numbers of misidentified specimens. Unfortunately, no one has any idea which of these specimens are accurately identified. A comprehensive study of North American members of the genus is clearly needed that will hopefully better delineate species boundaries and resolve some of the problems that hamper the accurate identification of specimens from within the state and elsewhere. At present, our assignment of specimens to certain species is best treated as provisional.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984; as *Tetralopha asperatella*); Beadle and Leckie (2012)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS:

DISTRIBUTION: Please refer to the dot map.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Please refer to the flight charts.

HABITAT: Our records come mainly from mesic hardwood forests, including cove forests and northern hardwoods in the Blue Ridge, mesic slopes and residential areas in the Piedmont, and shoreline areas in the Coastal Plain.

FOOD: The larvae are polyphagous, feeding on hardwood trees in a number of different families, but particularly maples (Schaffner, 1959; Giese et al., 1964; Prentice, 1966; Allyson, 1977; Covell, 1984; Heppner, 2007; Robinson et al., 2010; Marquis et al., 2019). The reported hosts include Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*), Sugar Maple (*A. saccharum*), Silver Maple (*A. saccharinum*), Mountain Maple (*A. spicatum*), American Hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*), American Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), Honey Locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*), hickories (*Carya* spp.), Common Waxmyrtle (*Morella cerifera*), American Hop-hornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*), Quaking Aspen (*Populus tremuloides*), White Oak (*Quercus alba*), Post Oak (*Q. stellata*), Black Oak (*Q. velutina*), Live Oak (*Q. virginiana*), Staghorn Sumac (*Rhus typhina*), and American Elm (*Ulmus americana*). Marquis et al. (2019) noted that *Pococera expandens* was at one time considered to be a synonym of *P. asperatella*, so that some of the earlier records for oaks should be interpreted cautiously. In North Carolina, larvae have been recorded feeding on Pignut Hickory (*C. glabra*), Sugar Maple, and Blackgum (*Nyssa sylvatica*).

OBSERVATION METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights. More information is needed on host use in North Carolina.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR S4

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

COMMENTS: