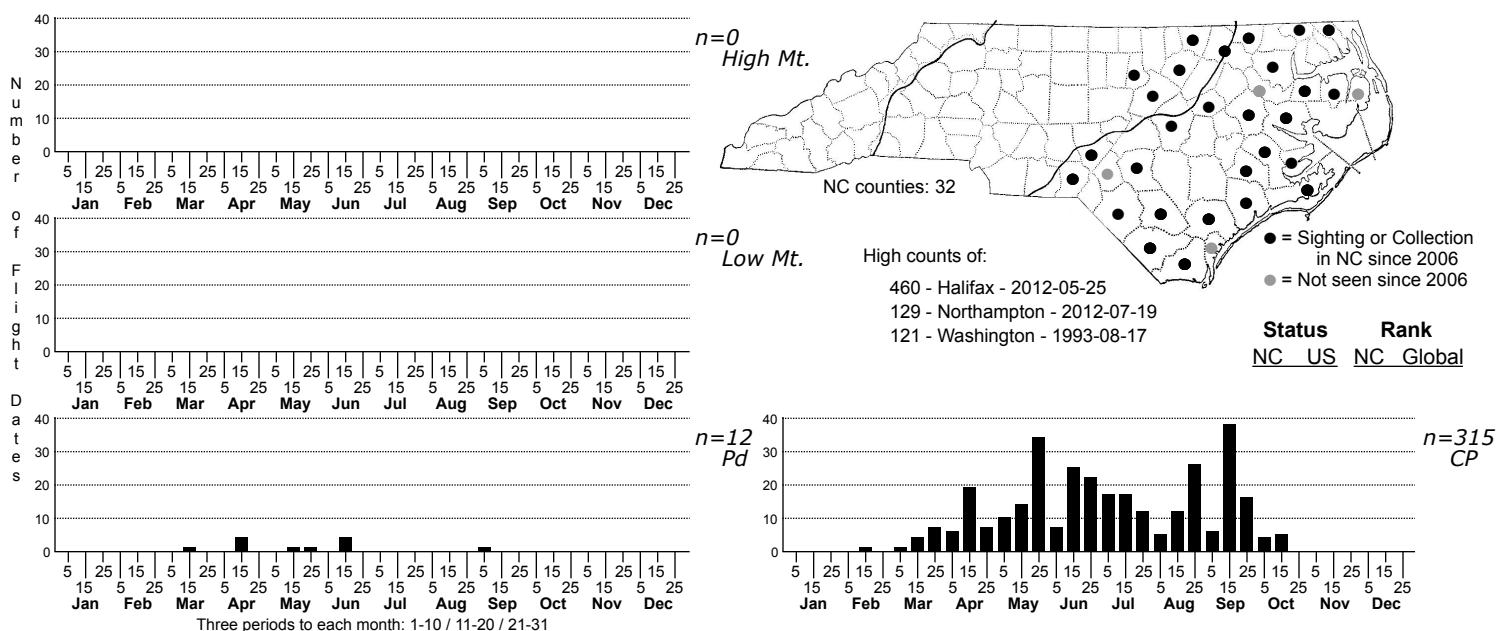


## Macaria aequiferaria Woody Angle



FAMILY: Geometridae SUBFAMILY: Ennominae TRIBE: Macariini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: This is one of 73 species in this genus that occur in North America, with 17 species occurring in North Carolina. In the latest checklist of North American Lepidoptera (Pohl and Nanz, 2023), North American members of the genus *Speranza* and *Epelis* were treated as junior synonyms of *Macaria*.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984; as *Semiothisa aequiferaria*); Leckie and Beadle (2018)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Ferguson (2008)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Ferguson (2008)

ID COMMENTS: A moderately small, dark gray to yellowish tan Geometrid. Pattern and coloration are similar to *Macaria aemulataria*, with which it occurs in swamps containing a mixture of Bald Cypress and Red Maple. In addition to the structural features of the males, the spring form of *aequiferaria* is much darker gray than *aemulataria* and the paler summer form is usually more yellowish, often with the subterminal area darker than the basal area. Females of the summer form, however, may be very similar to those of *aemulataria* but usually have a shallower and less conspicuously darkened subapical notch on the outer margin; the spot patch on the subterminal line is also usually not as divided by the yellow vein lines (Ferguson, 2008). As in other members of this species group, the head is red or ocher, contrasting with the gray or brown thorax and abdomen.

DISTRIBUTION: The majority of our records come from cypress-containing habitats in the Coastal Plain. However, it is also found in the eastern portion of the Piedmont in areas where cypress occurs naturally (e.g., along the Tar River near Louisburg) or from the edges of large reservoirs (e.g., Lake Gaston and Kerr Lake) where cypress may have been introduced.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Appears to be present throughout the growing season, from late winter to fall.

HABITAT: We have records from both riverine and non-riverine swamp forests dominated by Bald Cypress, as well as from Carolina Bays and Cypress Savannas dominated by Pond Cypress.

FOOD: Larvae are stenophagous, feeding on cypress (Ferguson, 2008). From our records, it appears to feed on both Bald Cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) and Pond Cypress (*T. ascendens*).

OBSERVATION METHODS: Comes well to 15 watt blacklights but we do not have any records from either bait or flowers.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G5 SNR [S4S5]

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

COMMENTS: Although this species feeds solely on cypress and occurs in only a narrow range of habitat types, cypress swamps and savannas are still plentiful in the Coastal Plain and portions of the adjoining Piedmont. It is threatened, however, by habitat loss due to the creation of impoundments, conversion of Carolina Bays to agriculture and silviculture, and to the effects of sea level rise and salt water intrusion in tidewater areas. Nonetheless, as long as cypresses themselves remain a common species, *Macaria aequiferaria* is also likely to persist.