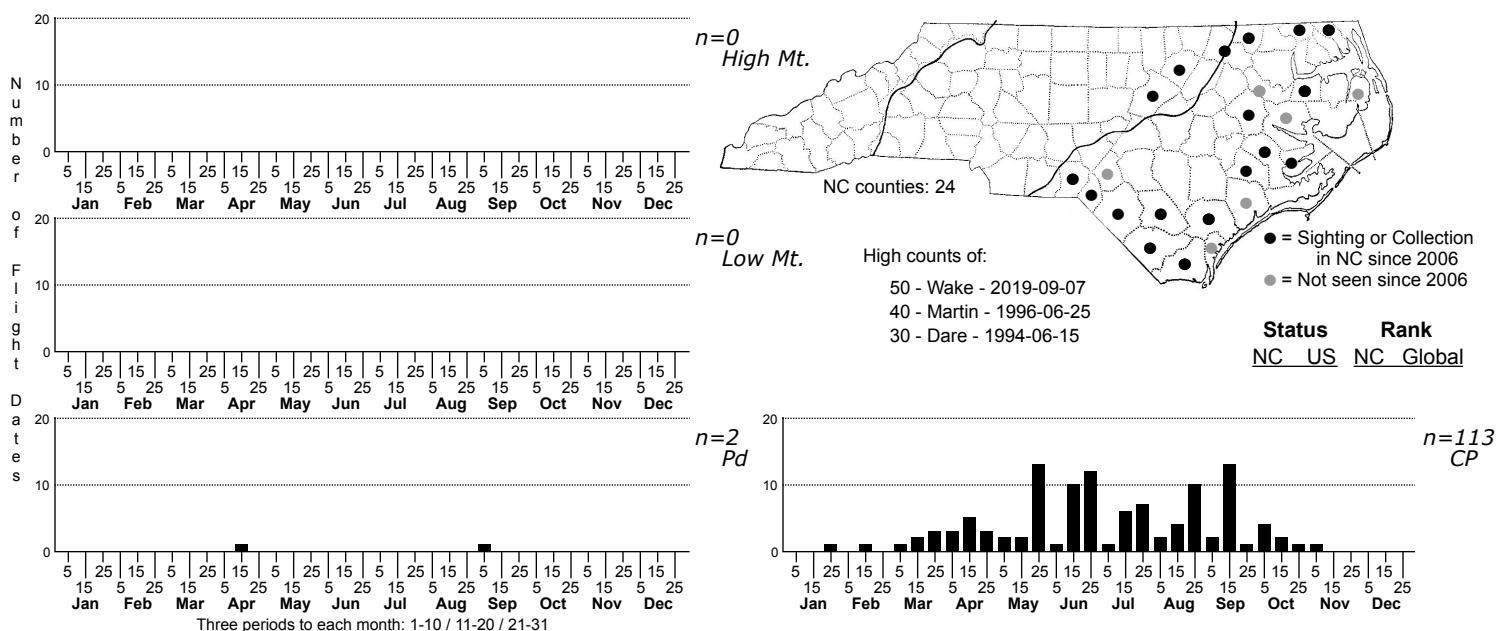


Iridopsis pergracilis Cypress Looper Moth



FAMILY: Geometridae SUBFAMILY: Ennominae TRIBE: Boarmiini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: One of 20 species in this genus that occur in North America north of Mexico, seven of which have been recorded in North Carolina. In Rindge's 1966 revision of this group, 18 were placed in *Anacamptodes*, which he recognized as possibly representing the same genus as *Iridopsis*, and two in *Iridopsis* itself.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Leckie and Beadle (2018)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Rindge (1966)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Wagner et al. (2002)

ID COMMENTS: A medium-sized, dimorphically-colored Gray. The ground color of the wings is pale gray to nearly white. The antemedian and postmedian lines are black and shaded with either reddish-brown or blackish brown. The postmedian is moderately waved, but not deeply biconcave as in some other members of this genus. Forewings have only a weakly developed discal spot and median line, if any, but the discal spot is well-developed on the hindwings (Rindge, 1966). The strongly-contrasting black-and-white form is distinctive but the reddish-brown shaded form is similar to *I. defectaria*; that species is usually larger, has a more deeply undulating -- biconcave -- postmedian, with a prominent bulge at both M₂ and C₂. *Iridopsis humaria* is similar in size but has a darker, more purplish ground color. *Iridopsis ephyraria* is also similar in size but usually has a more distinct median line and discal spot. *Iridopsis cypressaria* is smaller and the ground color of its wings are tan rather than gray or whitish; the postmedian line in that species is also much straighter below the bulge at the cell.

DISTRIBUTION: Found throughout the Coastal Plain, including the Fall-line Sandhills; also occurs in cypress stands in the eastern Piedmont

FLIGHT COMMENT: Adults are present throughout most of the year, from late January to early November. Pupae overwinter (Wagner et al., 2002).

HABITAT: Our records come from both riverine and non-riverine swamp forests, tidal as well as non-tidal forests, and from lakeshores and old millponds. Two records from Hoke County come from streamhead swamp forests, where Pond Cypress is likely to be the species present. None of our records come from cypress savannas, however.

FOOD: Wagner et al. (2002) list Bald Cypress (*< i>Taxodium distichum</i>*) as the host and almost all of our records come from sites where it is the only species of cypress present. The two records from Hoke County, however, are more likely to be associated with Pond Cypress (*< i>T. ascendens</i>*).

OBSERVATION METHODS: Comes well to blacklights.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G4G5 SNR [S3S4]

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

COMMENTS: This species is a strong habitat specialist, but its habitats are still fairly widespread. Currently, it appears to be secure within the state.