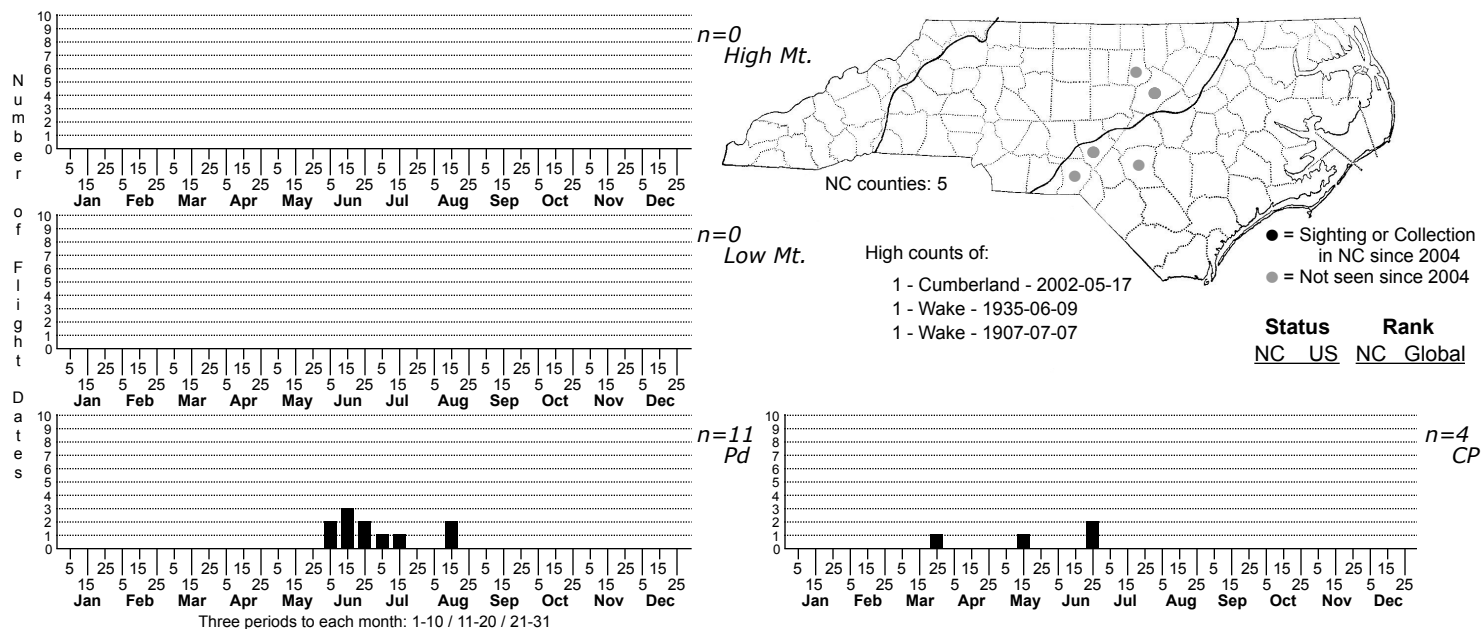


## *Erastria coloraria* Broad-lined Erastria Moth



FAMILY: Geometridae SUBFAMILY: Ennominae TRIBE: Caberini

TAXONOMIC\_COMMENTS: One of four species in this genus that occur in North America, of which two are found in North Carolina

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1948, as *Catopyrrha coloraria*); Schweitzer et al. (2011)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Forbes (1948); Wagner et al. (2001); Schweitzer et al. (2011)

ID COMMENTS: A medium-sized, broad-winged Geometrid, with two seasonal forms: a grayish brown spring form and a yellowish to olivaceous summer form (*dissimularia*). The diffuse, reddish-brown postmedian line is the most conspicuous marking, but an excurved antemedian and a fairly straight median line may be evident, although often obscure (Forbes, 1948). The undersides of the wings -- which are often displayed when the wings are held upright -- are a much brighter yellow and pink. *Erastria cruentaria* is similar but has a more sharply defined postmedian line that is located further out towards the outer margin; contrasting dark spots may also be present just beyond the postmedian in *cruentaria* but are not present in *coloraria*, or representing just a widening of the postmedian (Forbes, 1948).

DISTRIBUTION: Despite the statewide distribution of its host plant, our records for *coloraria* come from just the eastern Piedmont and Fall-line Sandhills.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Bivoltine, with corresponding seasonal forms

HABITAT: Recent records come from Longleaf Pine sandhills habitat; the habitats where historic records come from the Piedmont were not recorded but are likely to be the dry, open woodlands, edges, or glades preferred by its host plants (see Weakley, 2016). These are similar to the habitats used elsewhere within its range (Schweitzer et al., 2011).

FOOD: Monophagous, feeding solely on New Jersey Tea (*Ceanothus americanus*). Populations in the Sandhills probably use *C. americanus* var. *intermedius*, which is associated with sandy soils.

OBSERVATION\_METHODS: Adults fly during the day, but also come to lights to some extent. Schweitzer et al. (2011) also mention that they come to bait and visit flowers.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G3G4 SH

STATE PROTECTION: Listed as Significantly Rare by the Natural Heritage Program. That designation does not confer any legal protection, however, although permits are required to collect it on state parks and other public lands.

COMMENTS: This species has declined across much of its range, apparently correlated with declines in its host plant populations due to fire suppression and over-browsing by White-tailed Deer (Schweitzer et al., 2011). This species appears to have been frequently collected in the first half of the Twentieth Century, particularly in the eastern Piedmont. However, we have very few recent records, all from Fort Liberty, where prescribed burning and deer-hunting are both practiced extensively. The status of *coloraria* elsewhere in the state needs much more documentation, with searches conducted in the same habitats where Mottled Duskywing skippers -- another declining *Ceanothus*-feeder -- have been documented.