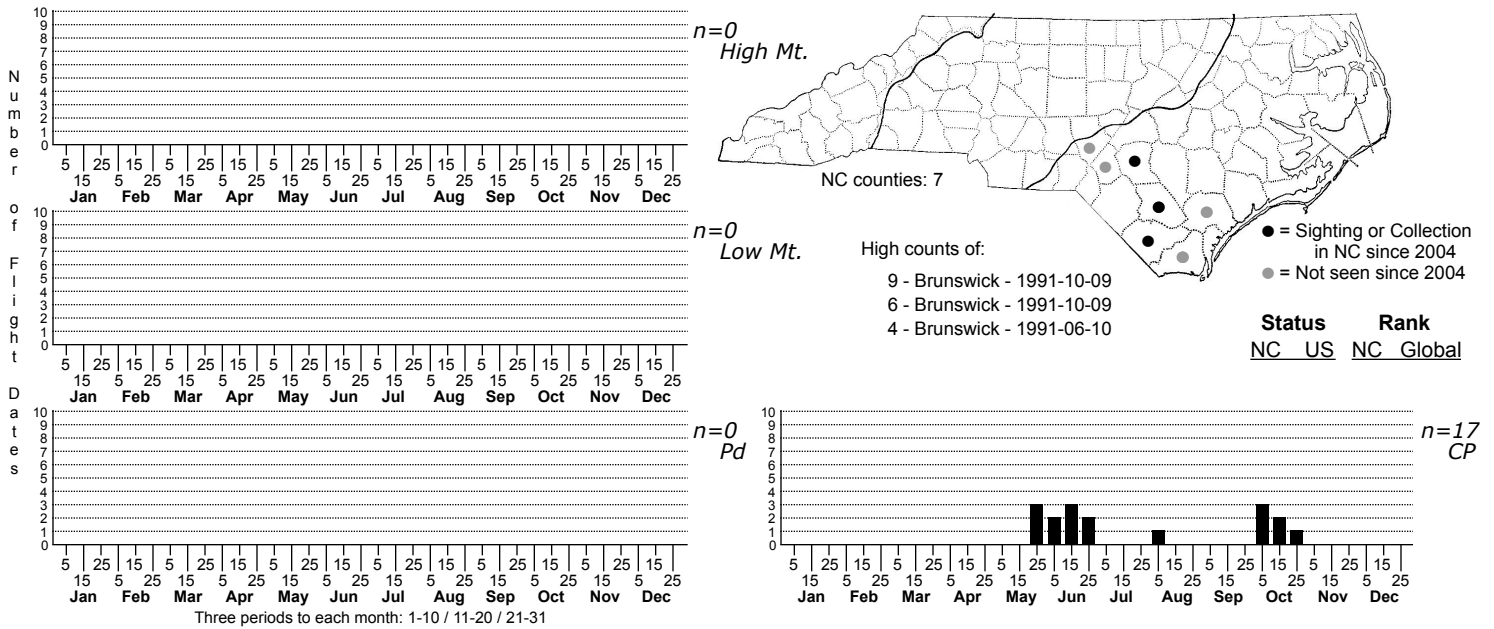


Tolyte minta Southern Tolyte Moth



FAMILY: Lasiocampidae SUBFAMILY: Macromphaliinae TRIBE:

TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS: One of eleven species in this genus that occur in North America (Franclemont, 1973), four of which have been recorded in North Carolina.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Franclemont (1973)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: *Tolyte minta* is a moderately small, predominantly white Lasiocampid. The head, sides of the thorax, and the abdomen are usually all white, with a dark patch of metallic scales in the dorsal area of the thorax and with gray shading at the tip of the abdomen in some individuals. The ground color of the wings is also white, with a contrasting band of gray in the subterminal area; the antemedian and postmedian lines are also light gray with a white filling (Franclemont, 1973). The hindwings are a pure white with a suffusion of gray near the inner margin. *Tolyte notialis* is similar in size and pattern and has a white head and sides of the thorax but is otherwise a darker gray in all of the areas where *minta* is white. Another similar Lasiocampid is *Artace cribraria*, which is usually whiter than *T. minta*, lacks the gray band in the subterminal area, and possesses dotted lines rather than the more continuous gray lines found in *minta*.

DISTRIBUTION: Appears to be restricted to the southern half of the Coastal Plain, including the Fall-line Sandhills.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Probably bivoltine, flying in May and June and later in October

HABITAT: All but one of our records come from shallow depressional wetlands containing populations of Pond Cypress (*Taxodium ascendens*). These habitats include Cypress Savannas, Carolina Bays, and Non-riverine Swamp Forests. None of our records come from deep riverine swamps where Bald Cypress (*T. distichum*) is dominant, although we have one record from Lake Waccamaw State Park, where Bald Cypress occurs.

FOOD: Larvae have apparently not been recorded in the wild, but the association with Pond Cypress appears to be fairly strong. Other members of this genus, including *T. notialis* and *T. laricis*, feed primarily on conifers.

OBSERVATION_METHODS: Comes well to blacklights. Adults do not feed, so do not come to bait or visit flowers.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G4 S2S3

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

COMMENTS: This species appears to be a narrow habitat specialist and has a restricted distribution in North Carolina. The distribution of Carolina bays and other shallow depressional wetlands has been greatly reduced due to conversion to agriculture and silviculture, with the few remaining good examples now found mainly on public lands that are managed as natural areas. Cypress Savannas, in particular, need to be maintained by frequent burning. Although the impacts of burning to *Tolyte minta*, if it is, in fact, feeding on Pond Cypress, are unknown, we recommend that the usual prescriptions be followed for the protection of insect populations: don't burn all of a habitat type in any one burn and allow enough time between burns to permit recolonization of recently burned areas to occur.