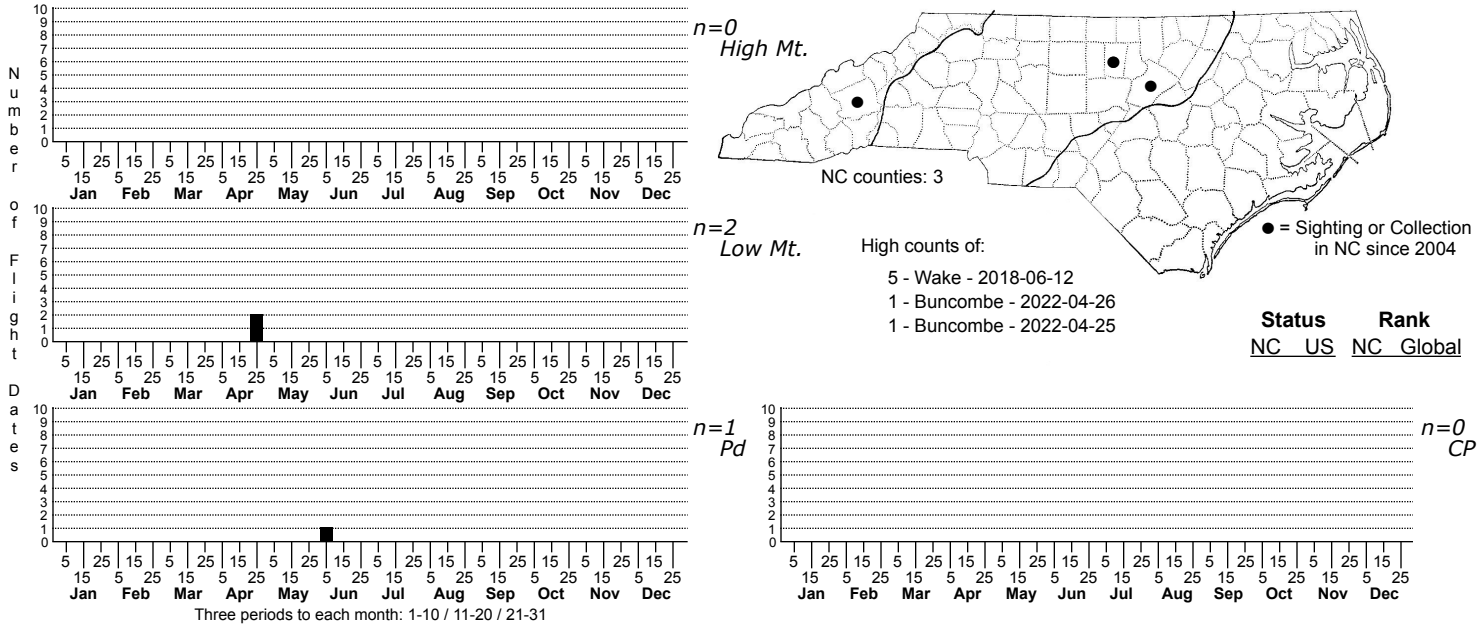
Phyllonorycter obscuricostella No common name



FAMILY: Gracillariidae SUBFAMILY: Lithocolletinae TRIBE:
TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS:

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:
ONLINE PHOTOS: MPG; BogGuide
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Braun, 1908.
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: The following is primarily based on the description in Clemens (1859). The head and frontal tuft are silvery, and the thorax is very pale golden. The ground color of the forewing is pale golden, and frequently lighter colored on the dorso-basal third. The forewing has a silvery median streak that extends from the base to the middle of the wing. The streak has a black margin on the costal edge and terminates between the first pair of costal and dorsal streaks. There are a total of three silvery dorsal streaks and four silvery costal streaks, with a black margin on the basal (anterior) edge. The black margin is often reduced or missing on the last two costal streaks and the last dorsal streak. The first pair of dorsal and costal streaks are near the mid-wing, and are very oblique and long relative to the others. A second pair of streaks that are less oblique occurs at about three-fourths. The remaining streaks (two costal streaks; one dorsal) are greatly reduced in size. The apical spot is black, while the cilia are grayish with a black marginal line. The hindwing and cilia are bluish gray.

DISTRIBUTION: Phyllonorycter obscuricostella is found in the eastern US from Maine, Connecticut, and Massachusetts, west to Illinois and southward to Kentucky and North Carolina. Our records are highly disjunct, with all others from well to the north and west.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Please refer to the flight charts.

HABITAT:

FOOD: Larvae feed on Ostrya virginiana (Robinson et al., 2010)

OBSERVATION_METHODS: The adults appear to rarely visit lights and most records are from reared adults. Searching for mines on the undersides of Ostrya leaves is the easiest way to document local populations. Phyllonorycter ostryaefoliella also mines the undersides of Ostrya leaves, but the mine is larger and more wrinkled than that of P. obscuricostella, and is usually formed near the leaf margin rather than between two veins (Eiseman, 2019).

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: [GNR] S1S3

STATE PROTECTION:

COMMENTS: Our records are currently few in number and appear to be highly disjunct from the majority of the range of this species in the North and Midwest. However, its host plant is widespread and this species may eventually be found over a wider area of the state.