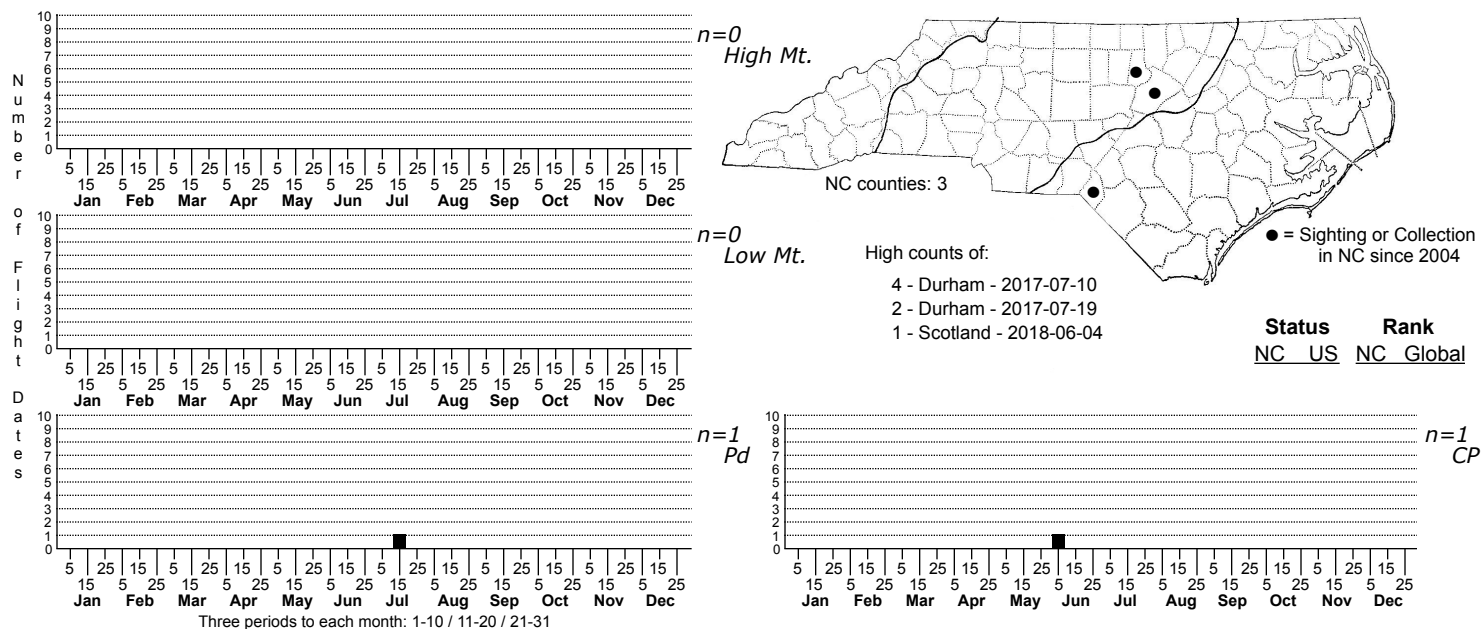


Phyllonorycter occitanica No common name



FAMILY: Gracillariidae SUBFAMILY: Lithocolletinae TRIBE:

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: *Phyllonorycter* is a genus of small and often colorful moths, with 79 described species in North America. The larvae of most form underside tentiform mines on woody plants and pupate within the mines.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Braun, 1908

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: The following description is based primarily on Braun (1908). The face and palpi are white, and the tuft is white with a few brownish scales. The antenna is whitish and annulated with yellowish or yellowish brown. The ground color of the thorax and forewing is deep saffron. A white transverse band extends from the anterior margin of the thorax through the patagia, and then becomes continuous with the basal streak on the forewing. A second dorsal streak occurs at the basal fifth of the wing that is oblique and weakly curved posteriorly. These first two basal streaks are pointed at the apex, lack a dark margin, and terminate well before reaching the costa. At the middle of the wing there is a narrow fascia with a dark margin on the anterior (basal) side. The middle fascia is almost always complete, but on some individuals may be interrupted by a very short gap between a dorsal and costal streak. Beyond this, a pair of dorsal and costal white streaks with dark anterior margins occurs at three-quarters of the wing length. These are sometimes connected to form a fascia. In the apical region of the wing there are scattered dark scales that are sometimes organized into a more well-defined patch. Faint whitish spots are sometimes evident in this region. The apical cilia are saffron gray, and the hindwings and cilia are whitish. The legs are whitish with brown spots.

DISTRIBUTION: *Phyllonorycter occitanica* was originally described from Texas, and was recently found in North Carolina and Tennessee. As of 2020, our records are all from the east-central part of the state and reflect work by Tracy Feldman on leafminers in this region.

FLIGHT COMMENT: This species is probably bivoltine, with adults active from May through late summer.

HABITAT: *Phyllonorycter occitanica* is found in forests or forest edges where elms grow. Habitats can range from bottomland forests and moist slopes, to drier ridges and open woods. In addition to using forested sites, elms sometimes grow in disturbed habitats such as abandoned fields and roadways. Most species prefer sites with rich, circumneutral soils.

FOOD: The only documented hosts are Winged Elm (*Ulmus alata*) and Slippery Elm (*U. rubra*).

OBSERVATION_METHODS: The adults appear to rarely visit lights. They are perhaps best obtained by rearing adults from active mines that are present on elms following the spring leaf-out.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR S3S5

STATE PROTECTION:

COMMENTS: