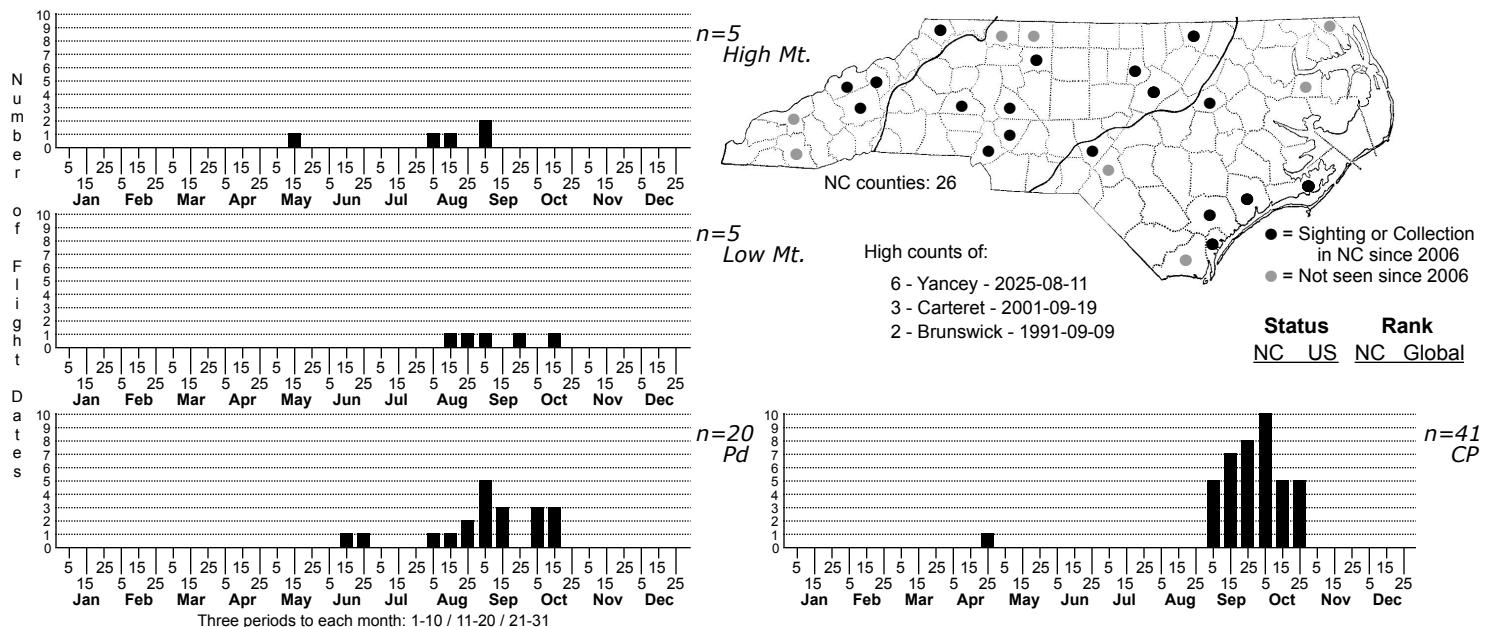


Agrius cingulata Pink-spotted Hawk Moth



FAMILY: Sphingidae SUBFAMILY: Sphinginae TRIBE: Sphingini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: One of five worldwide species, the only one in North America.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984); Beadle and Leckie (2012)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1948); Hedges (1971); Tuttle (2007)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Forbes (1948); Wagner (2005); Tuttle (2007)

ID COMMENTS: Adults are unmistakable as the only sphingid species in our area with pink spots on the abdomen. Sexes similar.

DISTRIBUTION: Essentially a tropical species that migrates to North Carolina every year and probably breeds here and is eliminated most winters.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Adults are taken as early as May but most common late in the season.

HABITAT: Found predominantly in open agricultural areas anywhere in the state.

FOOD: Larvae feed on the underside of *Ipomoea* leaves - often on morning glories but occasionally also a pest on Sweet Potato (*Ipomoea batatas*) (Forbes, 1948; Wagner, 2005). Mejia et al. (2020) also list Jimsonweed (*Datura stramonium*), Common Sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*), potato, tobacco, Common Pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*), Bindweed (*Convolvulus*), and cocklebur (*Xanthium*). There is an iNaturalist record of a larva feeding on Sweet Potato in North Carolina.

OBSERVATION METHODS: Adults readily come to strong lights, such as mercury-vapor lamps, but only in small numbers to 15 watt UV lights. They can also be captured as they nectar on flowers after dusk, but are not attracted to bait. Usually collected as singletons until September and October when adults become quite common, particularly at strong light sources.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G5 [S3S5]

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

COMMENTS: This is probably mainly a migratory species in our area and is found primarily in disturbed areas rather than natural habitats. Consequently, it is not a conservation concern in this state.