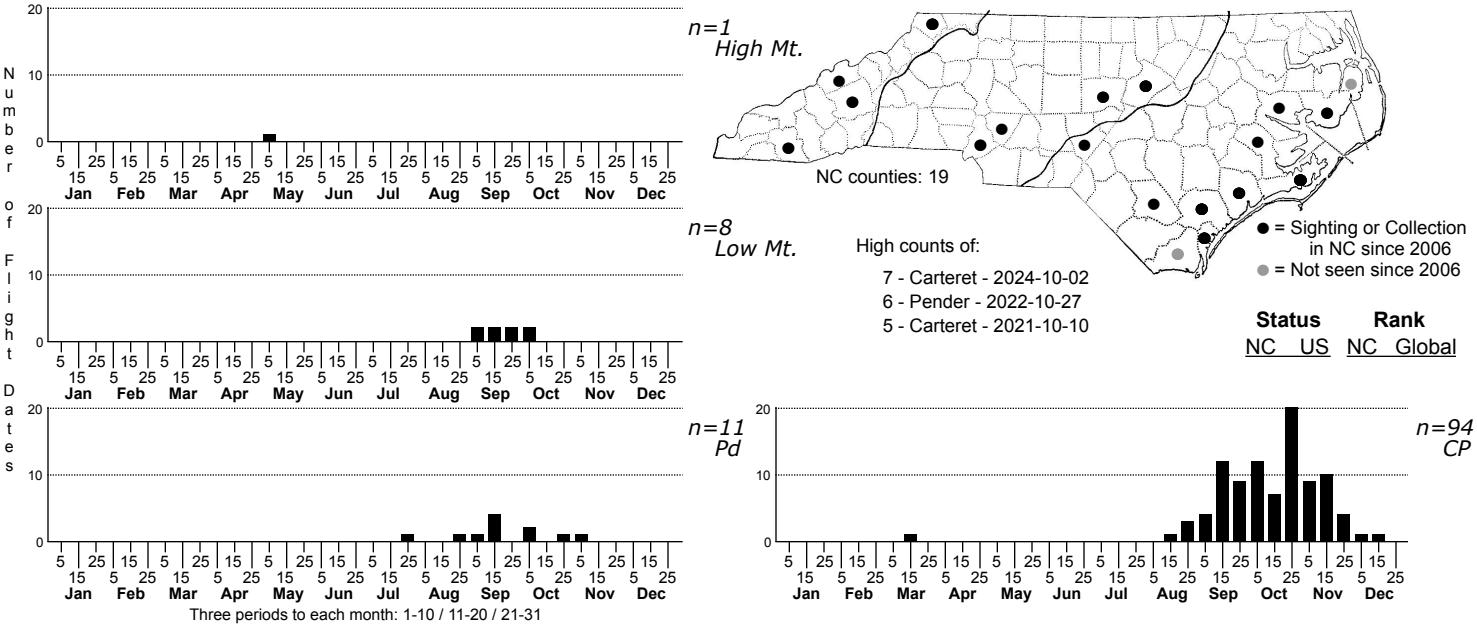
Enyo lugubris Mournful Sphinx



FAMILY: Sphingidae SUBFAMILY: Macroglossinae TRIBE: Dilophonotini
TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS: A genus of 8 species, perhaps associated incorrectly, but two species occur in the United States and only one in North Carolina.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984)
ONLINE PHOTOS:
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Hodges (1971); Tuttle (2007)
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Tuttle (2007). Not described by Forbes (1948) or Wagner (2005).

ID COMMENTS: This small, heavy-bodied sphinx is smoky brown -- darker beyond the straight postmedian line -- and possess a white discal spot. Unlikely to be confused with any other species. Sexes are similar.

DISTRIBUTION: A migratory species that has been recorded primarily along the coast, especially the southern portion near the mouth of the Cape Fear River. The record from the northern Mountains, however, indicates that it could show up anywhere in the state.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Like most migrants it begins to show up in early summer and by fall is here in large numbers.

HABITAT: The majority of our records come from open habitats on barrier islands and sand ridges located in the tidewater area. The few records we have from other areas -- all from the northern Mountains -- probably represent migratory strays.

FOOD: Larvae feed on the Vitaceae, particularly grapes and Virginia Creeper (Parthenocissus quinquefolia). Reported hosts include Ampelopsis, Peppervine (Nekemias arborea), and Possum Grape (Vitis baileyana) (Beadle & Leckie, 2018; Mejia et al., 2020; BugGuide). In North Carolina, larvae have been recorded on grape.

OBSERVATION_METHODS: Comes to lights and nectars at flowers; a large sassanqua shrub is likely to have a dozen or more moths flying around its blossoms like a flock of hummingbirds. particularly noticeable late in the growing season. Not found at baits.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G5 SNR [S3S4]

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

COMMENTS: The species breeds in North Carolina but rarely overwinters. Distribution of breeding populations needs to be documented but are probably are not of conservation concern, given that the species does not appear to be a permanent resident.