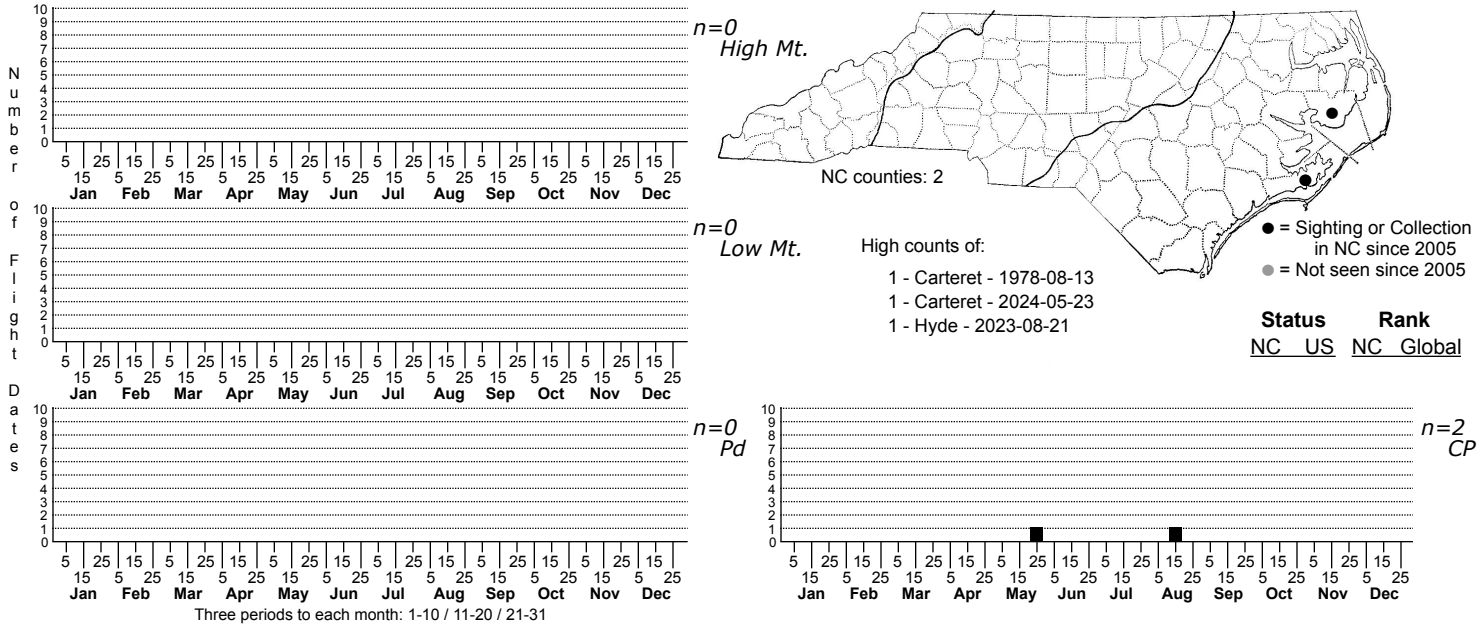
Eumorpha intermedia Intermediate Sphinx



FAMILY: Sphingidae SUBFAMILY: Macroglossinae TRIBE: Macroglossini
TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS: This is largely a Neotropical genus but 12 species are recorded from the U.S. and 5 from North Carolina.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984)
ONLINE PHOTOS:
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Hodges (1971); Tuttle (2007)
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Tuttle (2007)

ID COMMENTS: Similar but slightly smaller than Eumorpha pandorus; browner and the underside is rusty red instead of gray green (see Brou, 2011, for illustrations). Sexes are similar.

DISTRIBUTION: Apparently quite rare in North Carolina, as of 2024 we only have two records from the Coastal Plain.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Unclear in North Carolina.

HABITAT:

FOOD: Larvae are stenophagous, feeding on the Vitaceae, including wild grapes (Vitis) and Virginia Creeper (Parthenocissus quinquefolia) (Heppner, 2007). Our only larval record (iNaturalist, Heather Perusini) in North Carolina is for a caterpillar apparently feeding on Peppervine (Nekemias arborea).

OBSERVATION_METHODS: Adults, like other members of this genus, probably visit flowers but do not come to bait. The scarcity of records both in North Carolina and elsewhere may be due to their lack of attraction to low intensity UV and other lights; more records might be obtained from use of mercury-vapor. Larval surveys of grape and Peppervine may be productive as they are for E. pandorus.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G3G4 SNR [SU]

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

COMMENTS: Most likely, this species is a migrant to our area from its core range along the Gulf Coast. However, records are scarce even within the heart of its range and it is at least possible that it could establish temporary colonies in our area. According to Bo Sullivan: "Other than the single record I took, I have not knowingly seen it since. However, the species is obviously not often seen or not often recognized. You need the underside in order to determine the species which eliminates most photographs. No doubt many are identified as E. pandorus. There is no reason it is not regularly seen in the Coastal Plain since the foodplant (Nekemias arborea) is very common. Sphingids respond to strong UV light sources (mercury vapor, sun lamps, etc.) but many species rarely come to 15 watt UV bulbs. I suspect it is mostly overlooked because it is difficult to catch and to identify."