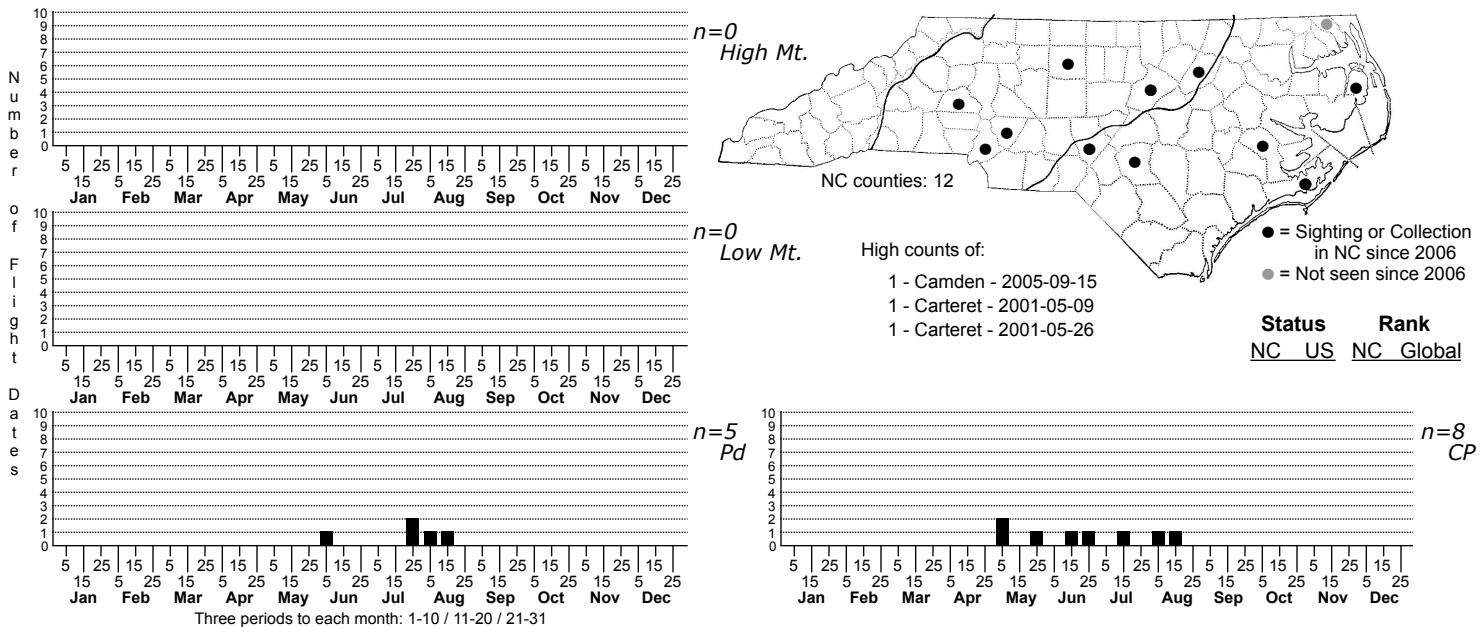


## *Eumorpha achemon* Achemon Sphinx



**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); Beadle and Leckie (2012)

**ONLINE PHOTOS:**

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

**TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:** Forbes (1948); Wagner (2005; described but not illustrated); Tuttle (2007)

**ID COMMENTS:** A moderately large sphinx moth strongly marked with light and dark brown patches on its forewings and body. The pinkish hindwings with a squarish black blotch medially on the forewing anal edge are characteristic. Sexes are similar.

**DISTRIBUTION:** The species is known from two counties in the middle of the state but we have seen no specimens or photographs; sight records for both larvae and adults exist for several sites along the coast. Its primary range is north of us and the species is regarded as uncommon to rare this far south.

**FLIGHT COMMENT:** Sight records for adults come from Fort Macon State Park on two dates in May, 2001.

**HABITAT:** Host plants used by this species are widespread in a variety of open and forested habitats. However, apart from the two historic records from the Piedmont, all of our records come from the Outer Coastal Plain, primarily from Barrier Islands where grape tangles occur in both maritime forests and in open dunes. Another larval record comes from Great Dismal Swamp, probably from non-riverine swamp forest habitat.

**FOOD:** Larvae are stenophagous, feeding on Vitaceae, mainly wild grape (*Vitis*) and Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*). In North Carolina, our only feeding record as of 2024 is on Summer Grape (*Vitis aestivalis*).

**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. Given the existence of several larval records in our area, surveys of grape tangles are likely to be productive.

**NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS:** G4G5 SNR [S3S4]

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

**COMMENTS:** Larval records indicate that this species is resident in the state, at least along the coast. The scarcity of records suggest, however, that it is rare here, although neither habitat nor host plants appear to be limiting factors. More surveys making use of mercury-vapor or other high intensity UV lights may be necessary to determine its conservation status in North Carolina.