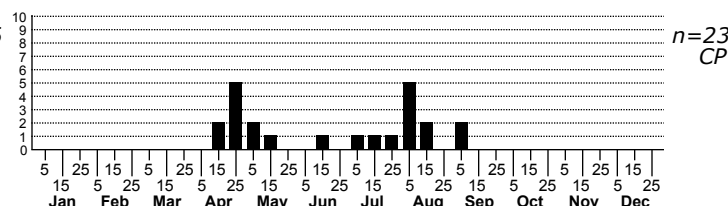
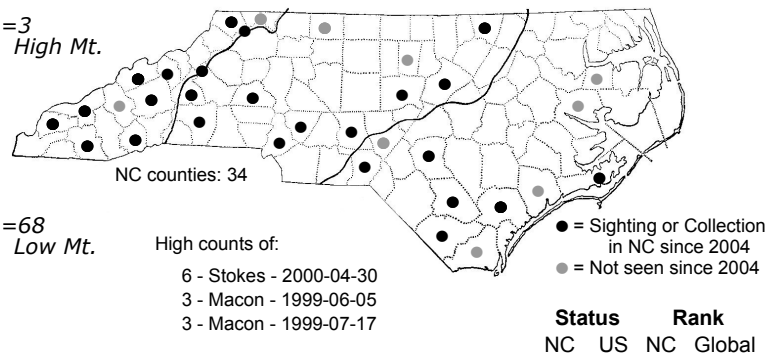
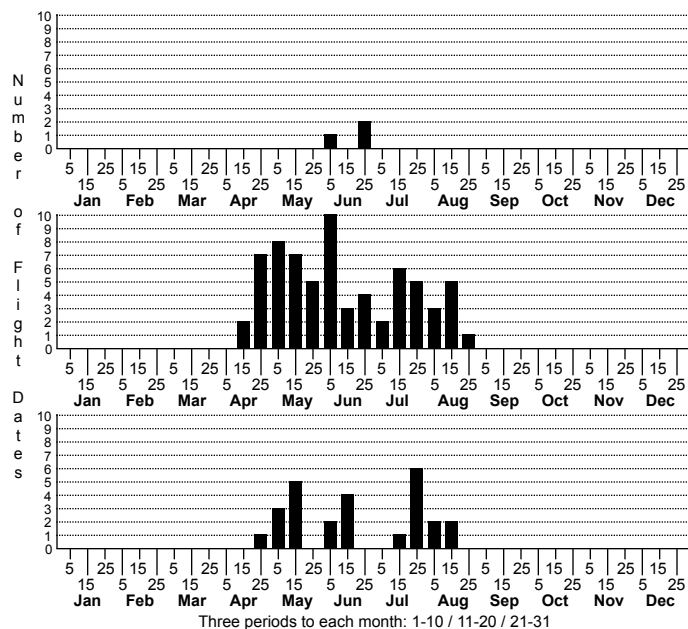


## *Darapsa choerilus* Azalea Sphinx



FAMILY: SpHINGIDAE SUBFAMILY: Macroglossinae TRIBE: Macroglossini

TAXONOMIC\_COMMENTS: This genus of medium sized moths contains three species, all found in North Carolina. Long known as *D. pholus*, the correct name for this species is *choerilus*. Tuttle (2007) gives a history of these names.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984; as *Darapsa pholus*); Beadle and Leckie (2012)

ONLINE PHOTOS: MPG, Bugguide

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

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

ID COMMENTS: Intermediate in size between the larger *Darapsa versicolor* and the smaller *D. myron*, *D. choerilus* is a redder color than those species and is distinguished by its straight postmedian line (curved in the other two). Sexes are similar.

DISTRIBUTION: Widely distributed in the state except possibly the Barrier Islands.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Probably single brooded in the Mountains and double brooded in the Piedmont and Coastal Plain.

HABITAT: Occurs more frequently in peatland and Longleaf Pine communities than the other two members of this genus, probably in associations with Azaleas and/or *Viburnum nudum*, an acidophilic species of *Viburnum*. Conversely, it does not appear to be present on the Barrier Islands where neither Azaleas nor *Viburnums* occur. Over most of the state, it also occurs in bottomlands, mesic slopes, and basic forests where *Viburnums* are common members of the shrub layer. In the Mountains, it occurs in cove forests, high elevation hardwoods, and possibly heath balds, all of which support a diversity of Azaleas.

FOOD: Abbot illustrated adults and the entire life cycle from caterpillars found on Azalea. However, it may more frequently feed on *Viburnums*.

OBSERVATION\_METHODS: Adults frequent flowers and come to bait. Comes regularly to 15 watt UV lights and is also seen around outdoor lights on buildings.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G5 [S5]

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

COMMENTS: Given its wide distribution across the state, broad range of habitats and use of common host plants, this species appears to be secure.