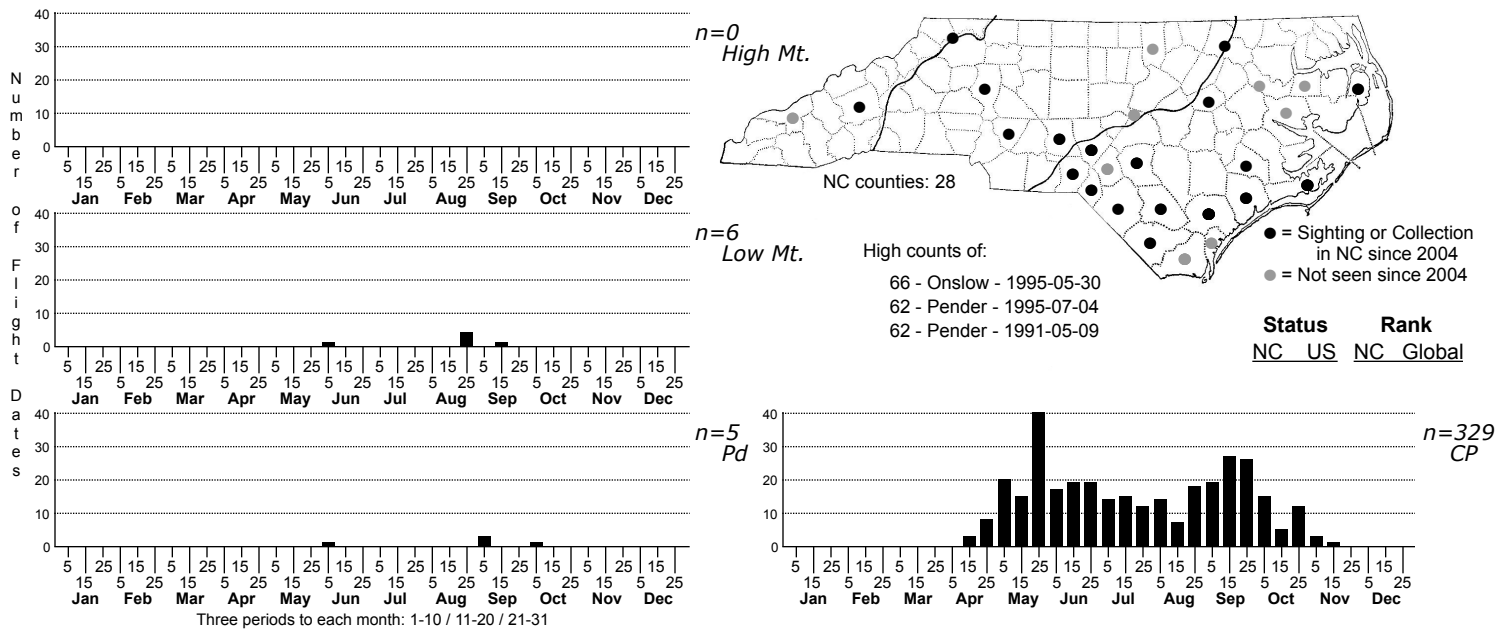


Crambidia lithosioides Dark Gray Lichen Moth



FAMILY: Erebiidae SUBFAMILY: Arctiinae TRIBE: Lithosiini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: One of eleven named species in this genus that occur in North America north of Mexico (Lafontaine and Schmidt, 2010, 2015), of which six been recorded in North Carolina (several others are still undescribed)

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984)

ONLINE PHOTOS: MPG, Bugguide

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1960)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: Strongly sexually dimorphic. Males are small, pale grayish-brown moths that closely resemble the pale members of the *Crambidia pallida* complex; they are easily distinguished, however, by their pectinate antennae. Females have dark gray wings, bordered by yellow along the costal margin and with varying amounts on their thorax. They resemble *Eilema bicolor* in terms of coloration but are smaller and have very distinctive antennae (see below).

DISTRIBUTION: Most of our records come from the Coastal Plain and its occurrence in the Piedmont and Mountains needs to be better understood.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Appears to be continuously present from spring to fall but with two peaks in abundance

HABITAT: The vast majority of our many records for this species come from Longleaf Pine habitats, including savannas, flatwoods, and sandhills -- if this species feeds on tree lichens, then those growing on Longleaf Pine are likely suspects. *Lithosiodes* has also been recorded at a few non-Longleaf habitats, including sites in Pond Pine Woodlands, floodplain ridges in the lower Roanoke River floodplain, and at a few sites in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Pines would still be the common denominators, but would include Pond Pine and Loblolly in addition to Longleaf.

FOOD: Like most Lithosiines, probably feeds on lichens, bark algae, and Cyanobacteria (Covell, 1984; Wagner, 2005).

OBSERVATION_METHODS: Comes regularly and occasionally abundantly to blacklights but has rarely been recorded at bait

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: Although possibly a specialist on Longleaf Pine habitats, it also occurs to some extent in other habitat types and generally appears to be both widespread and secure in North Carolina