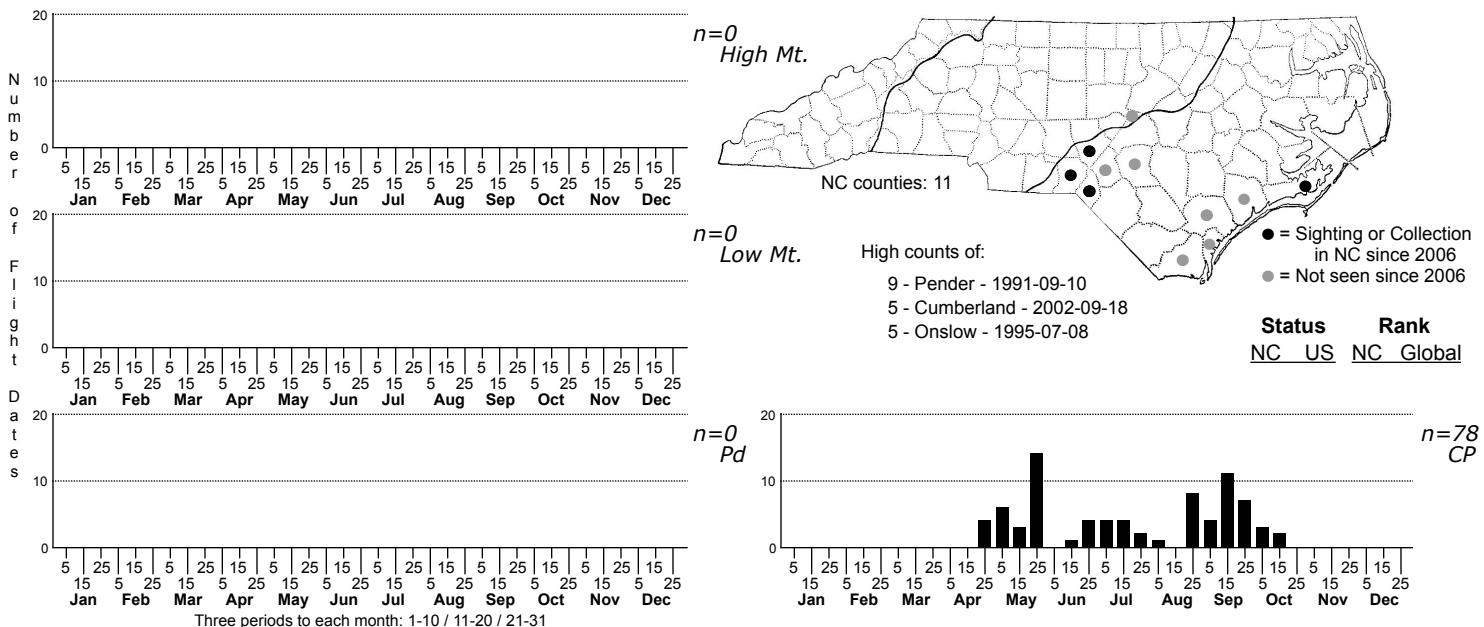


Crambidia pura Pure Lichen Moth



FAMILY: Erebidae 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:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1960)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: Pure white above, including the frons and top of the head, and smaller than the *Crambidia casta*, with a wingspan less than 30 mm. Covell (1984) states that *pura* is also pure white below, unlike *casta*, which has gray on both the undersurface of its wings as well as on its legs and abdomen. However, our Coastal Plain species is both small and grayish beneath (Forbes, 1960, stated that both species were identical in color). Unless information on size is included, it may be difficult to tell *pura* and *casta* apart based on photographs alone. Good photographs should, however, be sufficient to distinguish *pura* from members of the *cephalica* complex, which have yellow shading on their frons and top of their heads. Specimens provide more reliable means of identification and worn or otherwise difficult-to-identify males can be identified by dissection.

DISTRIBUTION: Appears to be restricted to the southern portion of the Coastal Plain, including the Fall-line Sandhills.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Appears to be multivoltine, with three distinct flights.

HABITAT: All of our records come from Longleaf Pine habitats (or adjoining areas in a a very few cases), including Wet Pine Savannas, Coastal Fringe Sandhills, and Pine--Scrub Oak Sandhills.

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

OBSERVATION METHODS: Comes moderately well to blacklights, with up to 9 having been collected in a single trap; none have been recorded at bait.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G4 SNR [S3]

STATE PROTECTION: Has no legal protection, although permits are required to collect it on state parks and other public lands; should be placed on the NHP Watchlist.

COMMENTS: Appears to be a specialist of Longleaf Pine communities, probably associated with lichens or algae growing on Longleaf Pines. As such, they are vulnerable to the effects of habitat loss and fragmentation, with much of their original habitat lost over the past several centuries and more currently being lost due to the continued effects of habitat conversion and due to suppression of naturally occurring fires.