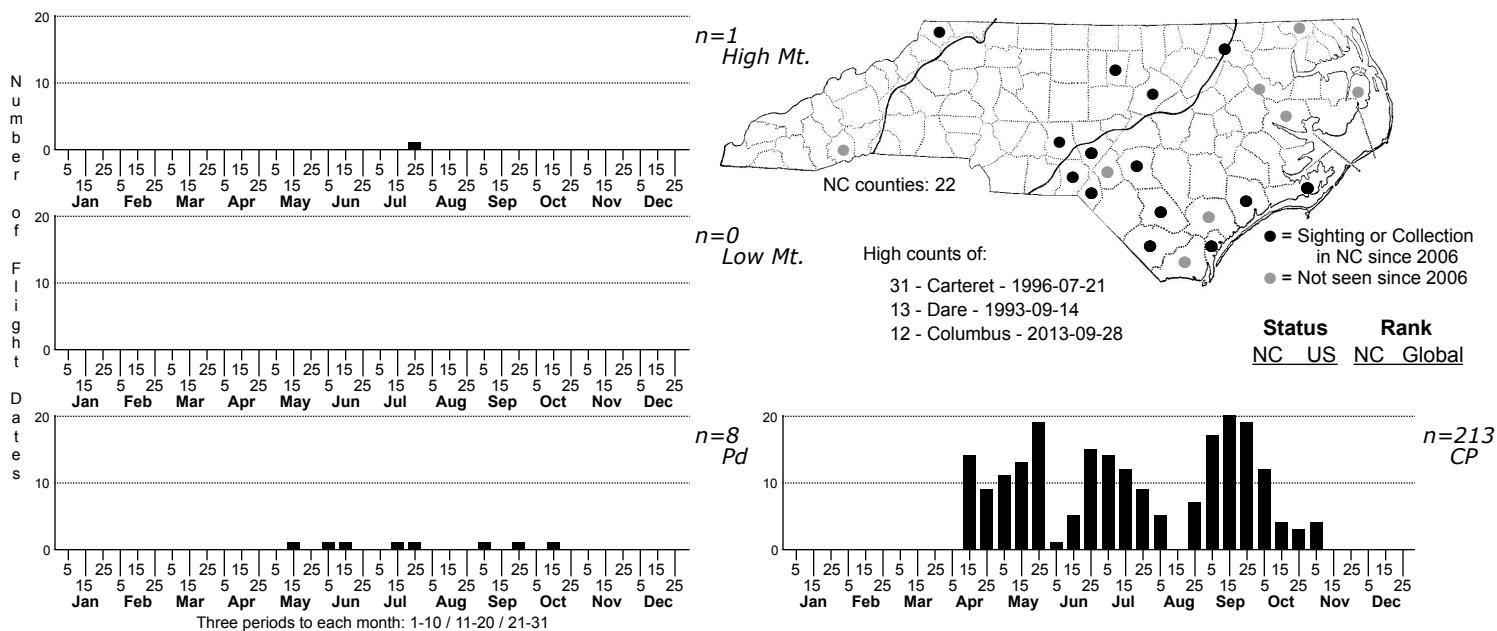


Cisthene subjecta Subject Lichen Moth



FAMILY: Erebidae SUBFAMILY: Arctiinae TRIBE: Lithosiini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: One of twenty species in this genus that occur in North America, five of which have been recorded in North Carolina

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Mentioned by Forbes (1960) but not described in detail

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: (None)

ID COMMENTS: Dark gray with a thin yellow line along the costa and another located above the inner margin; two pink to cherry red spots project downward from both of these lines in the postmedian area; unlike the similar but slightly larger *Cisthene packardii*, there is no patch of yellow located on the upper side of the line above the inner margin.

DISTRIBUTION: Almost all of our records come from the Coastal Plain and eastern Piedmont; an old record from Wray (1967) comes from Brevard in the southern Mountains

FLIGHT COMMENT: Has three distinct flights: spring, summer, and fall

HABITAT: Strongly associated with dry-to-xeric Coastal Plain habitats, particularly maritime forests and scrub and Coastal Fringe Sandhills; occurs farther inland also in association with sandridges in the Coastal Plain and dry upland habitats in the eastern Piedmont. Although there are a very few records from floodplain habitats, these were obtained from dry floodplain ridges or from portions of the floodplains that adjoin sandy uplands.

FOOD: Like most Lithosiines, probably feeds on lichens, bark algae, and cyanobacteria (Covell, 1984; Wagner, 2005). Based on its xeric habitat associations, the main hosts are likely to be tree lichens associated with xerophytic hardwoods.

OBSERVATION METHODS: Comes well but usually in small numbers to blacklights; none of our records come from bait

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G5 SNR [S3S4]

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

COMMENTS: A relatively uncommon species and associated with a fairly narrowly distributed habitat. It is, however, widely-enough distributed that it is reasonably secure in the state. However, some of its favored habitats along the barrier islands and coastal fringe sandhills are likely to be lost due to sea level rise.