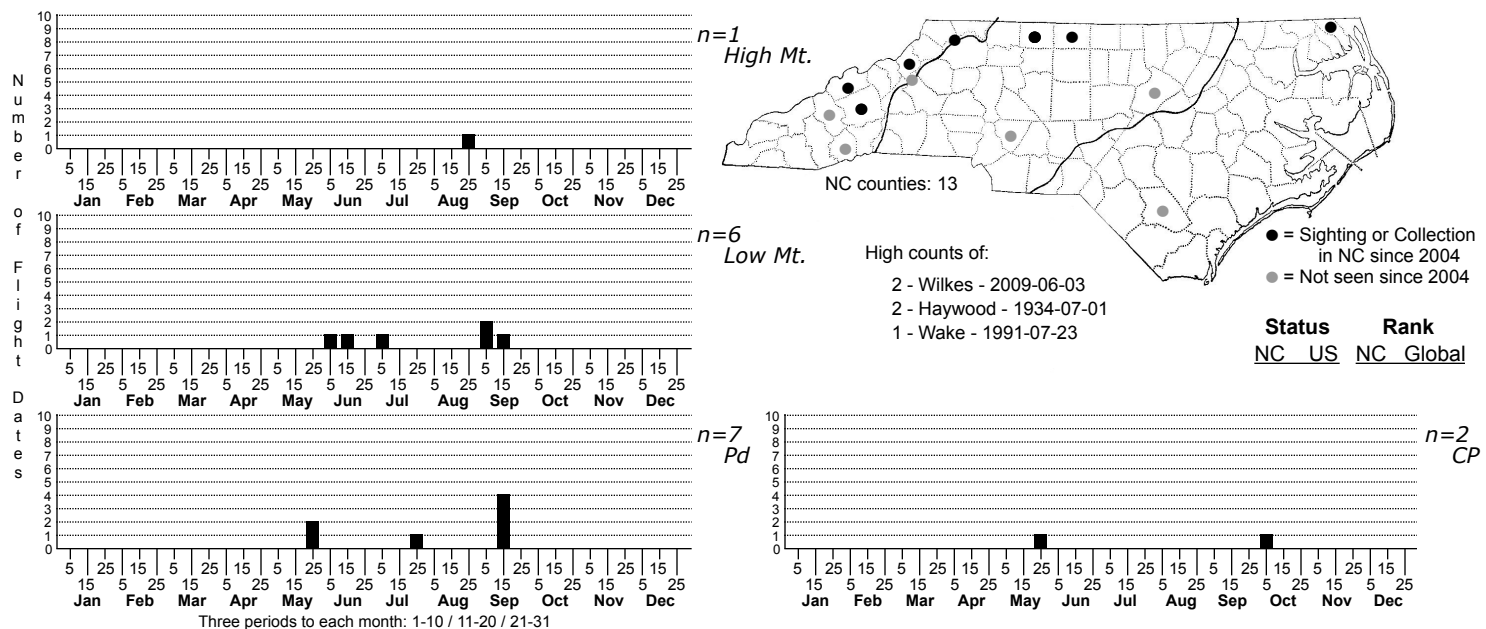


## *Lycomorpha pholus* Black-and-yellow Lichen Moth



FAMILY: Erebiidae SUBFAMILY: Arctiinae TRIBE: Lithosiini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: One of six members of this genus that occur in North American and the only one that has been recorded in North Carolina.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984); Beadle and Leckie (2012)

ONLINE PHOTOS: MPG, Bugguide, BAMONA

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1960)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: (mentioned but not described in detail by Forbes, 1960)

ID COMMENTS: Wings are opaque and strongly bicolored: orange, yellow, or red basally and blue-black on the outer half. On the forewing, the colored basal portions extends from the costa to the inner margin; on the hindwing, only the basal portion of the costa is colored. Head and body are also blue-black. Similar but somewhat larger than *Pyromorpha dimidiata*, which also has an orange basal area and smoky black outer area on its wings. *Pyromorpha* is more translucent, however, and not as brightly colored. The colored portion of the wing also does not extend all the way across the wing, with the smoky dark coloration running along the inner margin all the way to the base (Forbes, 1923); the hindwings are completely dark. Male *Pyromorpha* can also be easily distinguished by their pectinate antennae. Both of these moths resemble species of Net-winged Beetles (Lycidae) and other flower-feeding beetles, all of which are probably involved in a mimicry complex. Should be identifiable based on a good photo, but sight records need to be accompanied by a detailed description that clearly considers the differences between this species and *Pyromorpha*.

DISTRIBUTION: Most records are from the Mountains or from Hanging Rock but specimens have been collected as far east as Bladen County in the Coastal Plain.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Not enough reliable records to determine a flight pattern.

HABITAT: Records for adult habitats have not been recorded in detail but appear to include open, herbaceous habitats as well as woodlands. Habitats used by larvae are not recorded.

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

OBSERVATION METHODS: Strictly diurnal; virtually all records are based on chance encounters rather than trapping or baiting; reported to visit flowers, unlike most other members of Lithosiini

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G5 S2S3

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

COMMENTS: Appears to be rare to uncommon, but is probably undersampled. Too little information currently exists on its distribution, abundance, and habitat associations in North Carolina to estimate its conservation status