Apantesis nais Nais Tiger Moth

n=2
High Mt.

n=38
Low Mt.

n=23
Pd

n=6
CP

Three periods to each month: 1-10 / 11-20 / 21-31

NC counties: 27

High counts of:

5 - Stokes - 1998-08-18
4 - Ashe - 2000-05-04
3 - Alleghany - 2000-05-02

● = Sighting or Collection in NC since 2004
● = Not seen since 2004

Status   Rank
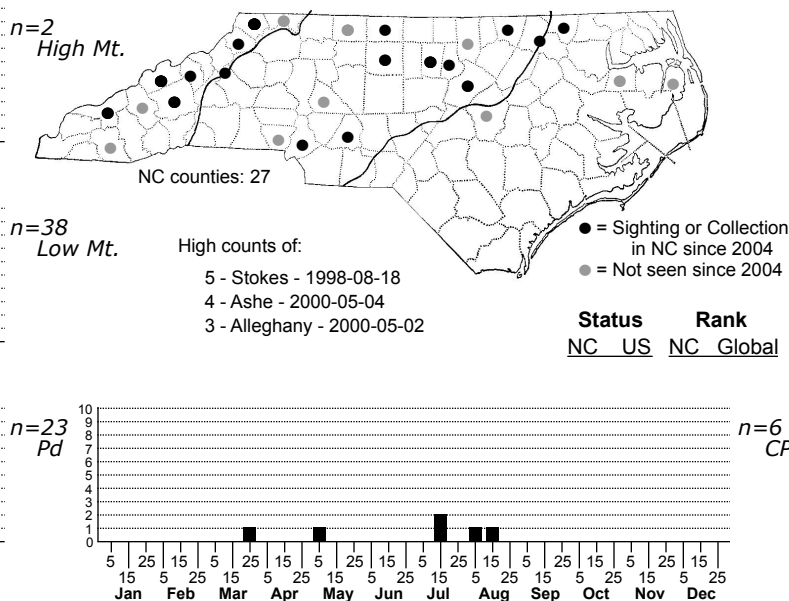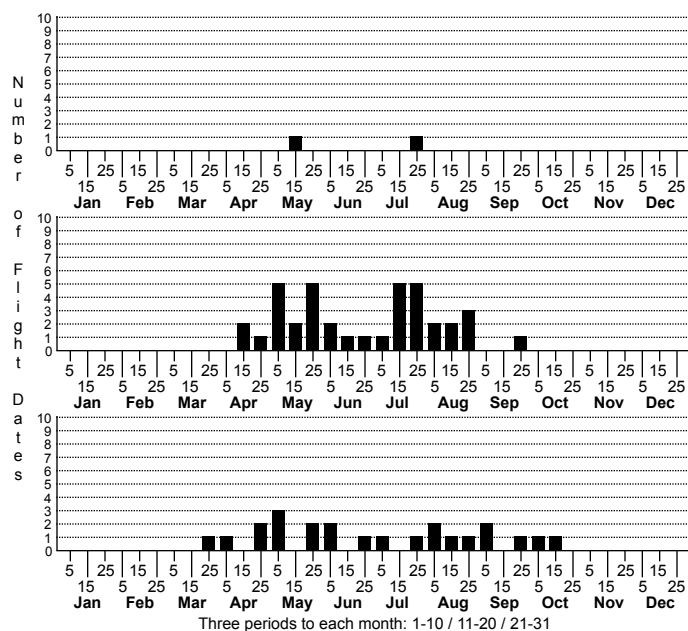NC   US   NC   Global

FAMILY: Erebidae   SUBFAMILY: Arctiinae   TRIBE: Arctiini
TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS: One of four species in this genus that occur in North America, all of which are found in North Carolina

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984); Beadle and Leckie (2012)
ONLINE PHOTOS: MPG, Bugguide, BAMONA
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1960); Ferguson (1985)
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Forbes (1960); Ferguson (1985)

ID COMMENTS: Species of *Apantesis* and *Grammia* resemble one another, but *Apantesis* are generally smaller and the the pattern of yellow lines is usually much more reduced, with the median, lower portion of the post-median, and fine vein lines always missing in *Apantesis*; a good quality photograph showing the forewing pattern is usually enough to distinguish between these genera. However, the hindwings must also be visible to distinguish between the species of *Apantesis*, and even then only the males can usually be diagnosed; photographs must show the hindwings to be acceptable as records for this genus. *Apantesis nais* is usually somewhat larger and broader-winged than the other species and males are usually identifiable where they possess a solid yellow hindwings with a row of large black spots or a broad band of black in sub-terminal area. *Grammia anna* is similar in color, but has a much more complete forewing pattern. *Apantesis carlotta* has an almost identical pattern but has a much paler shade of yellow on the hindwings and never has a solid band of black in the sub-terminal area (except in females). *Apantesis phalerata* can also have pale, cream on the hindwings, but has only small, scattered spots in the sub-terminal area. Males can also have hindwings that are largely red or yellowish-red, resembling *vittata*, although the subterminal black band usually broken into large spots in *nais* and more solid in *vittata*. Unfortunately, dissection does not provide a more definitive identification: the features of the valves and aedeagus in *vittata*, *nais*, and *carlotta* are all similar, showing similar patterns of variation. Female *nais* are similar to those of *phalerata* and *vittata* in having a highly reduced set of pale lines on the forewings and broad, confluent black bands in the sub-terminal area of the hindwing. Individuals with bright yellow in the basal and medial area of the hindwings are usually safe to identify as *nais*; female *carlotta* have a paler yellow shade and also have a much more complete set of yellow stripes on the forewings. Females with red hindwings probably cannot be safely distinguished from those of *phalerata* and *vittata*.

DISTRIBUTION: Appears to be absent over most of the southern Coastal Plain and uncommon in the Piedmont

FLIGHT COMMENT: Forbes (1960) states that A. nais has two flights, which appears to be the case in North Carolina, although our data are too sparse to determine a precise pattern.

HABITAT: Ferguson (1985) described *A. nais* as a woodland species, in constrast to *carlotta*, which he characterized as a grassland species. Our records are consistent with this description, almost all coming from hardwood forests and peatlands and none from the grasslands associated with Longleaf Pine habitats or the dune grasslands on the barrier islands.

FOOD: Probably polyphagous, feeding on a wide range of plants. Beadle and Leckie (2012) list plantain, clover, and violet, and Heppner (2007) adds dandelion, smartweed, and knotweed. We do not have any feeding records in North Carolina.

OBSERVATION_METHODS: Males come moderately well to blacklights but not at all to bait; females are collected at lights far less often.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G5 [S4]

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

COMMENTS: Uncommon but found in general forested habitats across at least two-thirds of the state; probably is secure.