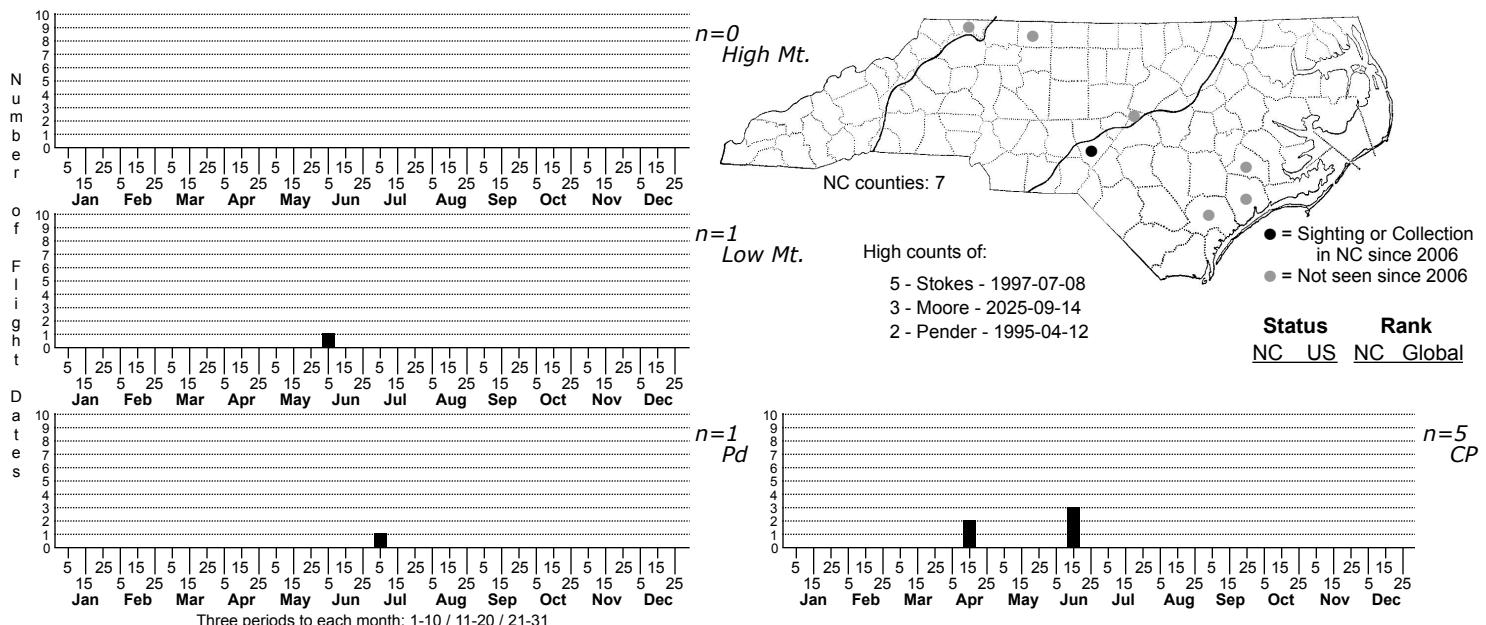


## Cycnia collaris Unexpected Cycnia



FAMILY: Erebidae SUBFAMILY: Arctiinae TRIBE: Arctiini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: This is one of three species in this genus that occur in North America, all of which have been recorded in North Carolina. *Cycnia inopinatus* is a previously described species that has been recorded from North Carolina, but was synonymized with *C. collaris* based on comparison of genitalic structures and DNA barcode variation (Lafontaine and Schmidt, 2015; Pohl and Nanz, 2023). These two forms are very similar, except that *C. inopinatus* has solid gray legs (see above) versus bicolored legs in *C. collaris* (sensu stricto). In North Carolina the gray-legged form of *C. collaris* is found in the Coastal Plain, while the banded-legged form occurs in the western Piedmont and Blue Ridge.

### FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

#### ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1960)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Forbes (1960); Wagner (2005)

ID COMMENTS: This species is similar in appearance to the other *Cycnia* species in having pale wings that often have a yellow streak along the costal edge of the forewing, yellow on the head and collar, and a yellow or orange abdomen with a dorsal row of black spots. The forewing is pale gray with whiter veins. The head and basal portion of the forewing costa are yellow, and the abdomen is ocherish-yellow with a row of mid-dorsal black spots. *Cycnia tenera* is similar but has an orange costal streak that extends beyond the middle of the wing.

DISTRIBUTION: Please refer to the dot map.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Wagner (2005) states that there are two generations in New Jersey; our records are too few to detect any pattern.

HABITAT: Our few records from the Coastal Plain are all from open grasslands associated with Longleaf Pine, as well as wet savannas, sandhill seeps, or depression meadows, with drier sandhills habitats usually located in adjoining areas. Our two records from the Piedmont and Blue Ridge are from farmland and a site with open woods.

FOOD: This species is stenophagous and feeds primarily or exclusively on milkweeds (Forbes, 1960; Wagner, 2005; Bess, 2005). The known hosts include Clasping Milkweed (*Asclepius amplexicaulis*), Tall Green Milkweed (*A. hirtella*), Pinewoods Milkweed (*A. humistrata*), Butterfly Milkweed (*A. tuberosa*), Whorled Milkweed (*A. verticillata*), Green Milkweed (*A. viridiflora*). Forbes (1960) also mentions records from Sea Ivy (*Cissus trifoliata*) which is only known from a single site in the state in Wilson County. We have a feeding record for North Carolina for Pinewoods Milkweed.

OBSERVATION METHODS: All of our records are from UV light traps, but the larvae openly forage on milkweeds and should be easy to spot.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G4 SNR [S1S2]

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

COMMENTS: