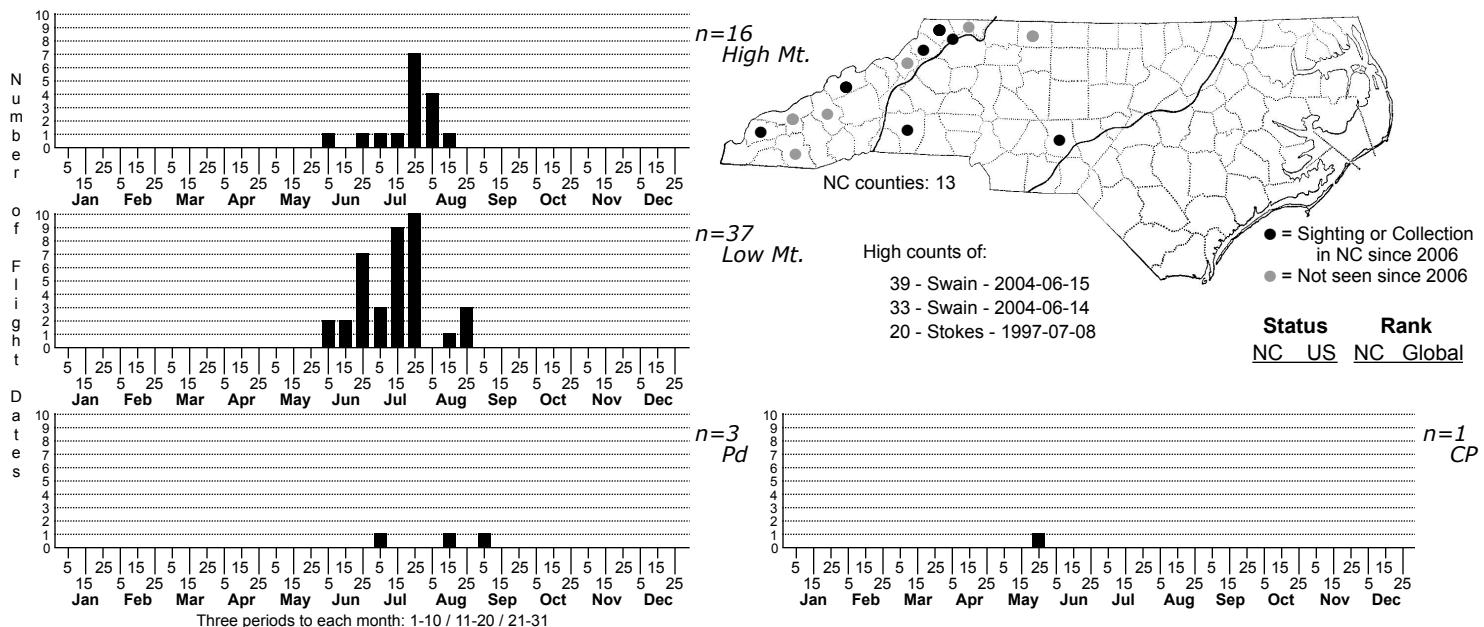


Dasychira dorsipennata Sharp-lined Tussock Moth



FAMILY: Erebidae SUBFAMILY: Lymantriinae TRIBE: Orgyini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: One of 16 species in this genus that occur in North America, 10 of which have been recorded in North Carolina.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1948); Ferguson (1978)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Both Forbes (1948) and Ferguson (1978) provide keys to the larvae.

ID COMMENTS: Males are light grayish-fuscous with a greenish tint and usually only a small amount of whitish in the median area (Forbes, 1948; Ferguson, 1978, however illustrates two males with a pale area extending from the costa to the inner margin). The antemedian line is crenulated (but not dentate) and the postmedian is fairly sinuous -- convex in the upper half and concave below with no special tooth at M3 (Forbes, 1948; Ferguson, 1978, states that it is more concave than in other similar species, especially on the underside of the wings). No barred forms apparently exist in this species (Ferguson, 1978); the common name Sharp-lined Tussock Moth does not refer to the bar (which is sharply pointed only in obliquata) but rather to the sharply defined antemedian and postmedian (Covell, 1984). Females are larger than the males and similarly colored, but typically with more white in the median area.

DISTRIBUTION: Found throughout the Mountains, including at high elevations. Also recorded disjunctly in the lower elevation but still montane-like habitats of Sauratown range of monadnocks in the western Piedmont.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Probably has a single adult flight in North Carolina.

HABITAT: Habitats in the Mountains include both riparian habitats at lower elevations and mesic slopes at high elevations.

FOOD: Larvae are polyphagous, feeding on a broad range of hardwood trees and shrubs. Ferguson (1978) reared larvae on oak, hazel, shadbush, and willow. Other hosts he mentioned from other sources include birch, poplar, beech and Chinese Elm. We do not have any feeding records in North Carolina.

OBSERVATION METHODS: Appears to come moderately well to 15 watt UV lights. Adults do not feed, so do not come to bait or to flowers. Larvae are distinctive and should be looked for on low-growing trees and shrubs. The hair of all Lymantriinae larvae are possibly urticating, however, and should be handled with care (Ferguson, 1978).

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G4G5 SNR [S3S4]

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

COMMENTS: This species has a fairly restricted range in North Carolina but ranges widely throughout the Mountains and occurs in at least one location in the western Piedmont. It does not seem to be strongly restricted by either habitat type or host plants and appears to be secure within the state.