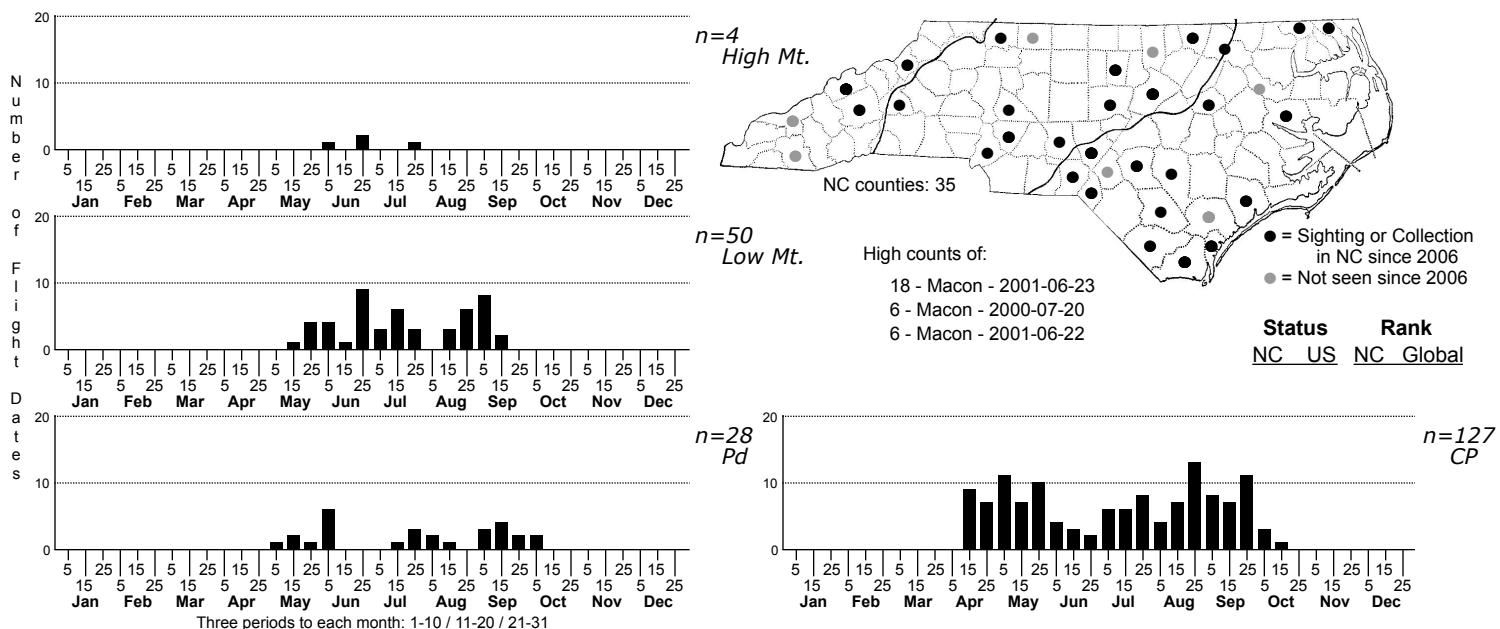


Dasychira manto Manto Tussock Moth



FAMILY: Erebidae SUBFAMILY: Lymantriinae TRIBE: Orgyiini

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 (the larvae of manto are not included in Forbes' key but are described in the text).

ID COMMENTS: One of our more easily recognized species of *Dasychira*. Males are generally dark brown with rufous shading in the basal and subterminal areas. The median area may be shaded with greenish or whitish, sometimes making the forewing appear to be strongly mottled. The reniform is usually bounded on either side with a pale patch. Both the antemedian and postmedian are thick and black; the postmedian is sinuous and concave towards the inner margin. Females are larger but similarly marked.

DISTRIBUTION: Probably occurs statewide.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Has a single extended flight in the Coastal Plain, with two main peaks, extending from spring to early fall. Data are fewer in the other regions and cover a more limited portion of the growing season; two peaks in activity may exist in the Piedmont and the Low Mountains, but there may be only a single compressed flight in the High Mountains.

HABITAT: Records from the Coastal Plain come primarily from Coastal Fringe Evergreen Forests and riparian forests, both of which contain essentially only Loblolly Pines, and from Longleaf Pine Savannas and Flatwoods, where Longleaf Pine is likely to be a host plant. While these areas also contain at least some Pond Pine, we do not have any records from pure stands of Pond Pine Woodlands or other extensive areas of peatland habitats. In the Piedmont, our few records again come from low-lying areas where Loblolly is present, but in the Mountains, records also come from at least some drier uplands where pines other than Loblolly are likely to be the hosts.

FOOD: Larvae are stenophagous, feeding on pines - probably on any of the southern species (Ferguson, 1978). Our records indicate that Loblolly Pine (*< i>Pinus taeda</i>*) may be the most extensively used species across the Coastal Plain and Piedmont, but that Longleaf Pine (*< i>P. palustris</i>*) and other species may also be used.

OBSERVATION METHODS: Our records all come from 15 watt UV light traps. 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: G5 SNR [S4S5]

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

COMMENTS: Occurs in a variety of pine-containing habitats in the state and probably feeds on Loblolly and other common species of pines. It thus appears to be secure.