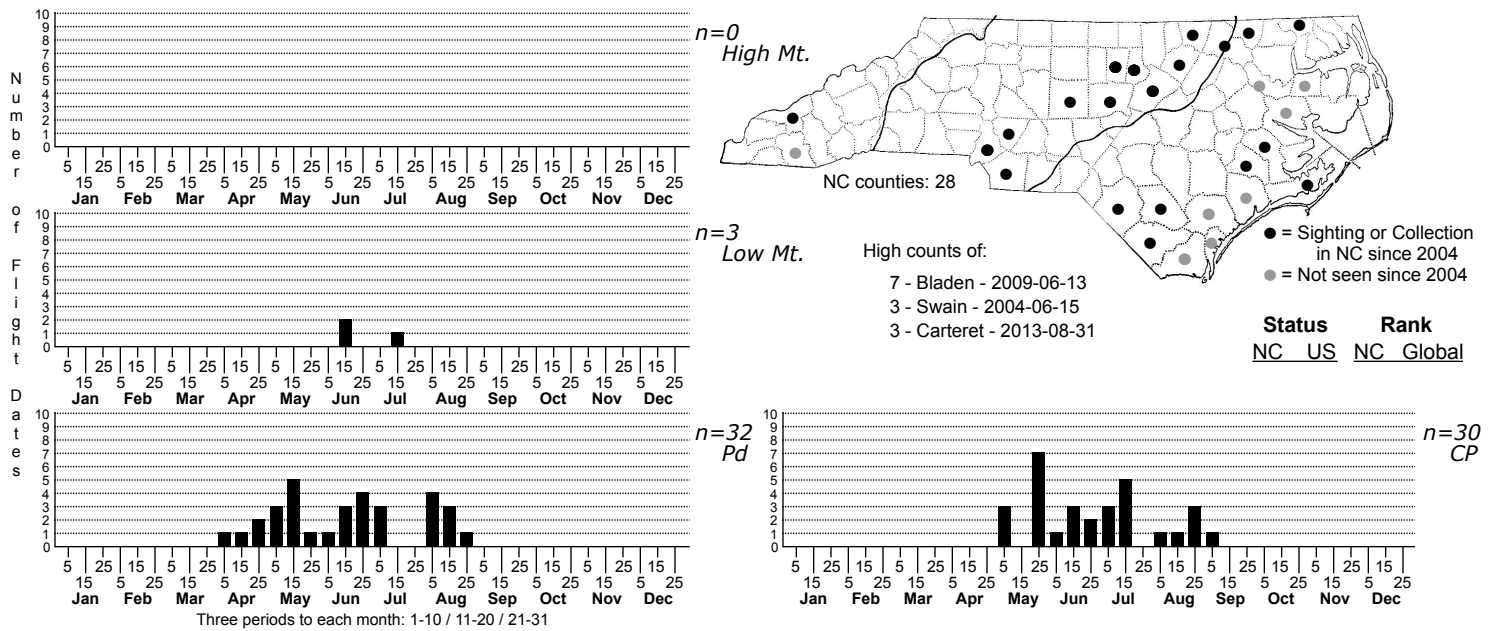


## *Ledaea perditalis* Lost Owlet Moth



FAMILY: Erebidae SUBFAMILY: Pangraptinae TRIBE:

TAXONOMIC\_COMMENTS: Three species comprise this genus, two from Central America and one from the US and Canada that occurs throughout most of North Carolina.

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

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1954)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Wagner et al. (2011)

ID COMMENTS: A medium-sized, tan Erebid with a strong, dark postmedian that runs diagonally from near the apex to the middle of the inner margin. Adults hold their wings to form a triangle much like many herminines, none of which are similar in pattern. *Spargaloma sexpunctata* is also similar but is a darker gray and the postmedian runs a less slanted course across the wing.

DISTRIBUTION: Found over most of the state, but we do not have any records from the High Mountains or Barrier Islands.

FLIGHT COMMENT: There seem to be as many as three broods in the Coastal Plain, but probably just two in the western Piedmont and Lower Mountains.

HABITAT: Virtually all of our records come from shallow impoundments, including beaver ponds, floodplain sloughs, depression ponds, open swamps, lakeshores, and coastal freshwater marshes, all habitats occupied by Buttonbush.

FOOD: Monophagous, feeding solely on Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*)

OBSERVATION\_METHODS: Adults come to light and we have seen one at bait. Their response to flowers is unknown and someone should check the flowers at night to see if adults are as attracted to Buttonbush as are many other insects, particularly skippers and other butterflies. Caterpillars are usually easy to locate by beating the foliage of Buttonbush.

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: Although highly specialized in terms of host plants, *Ledaea* occurs across most of the state and is associated with a wide range of common freshwater habitats, including artificial ponds, reservoirs, and borrow pits. It appears to be secure within the state.