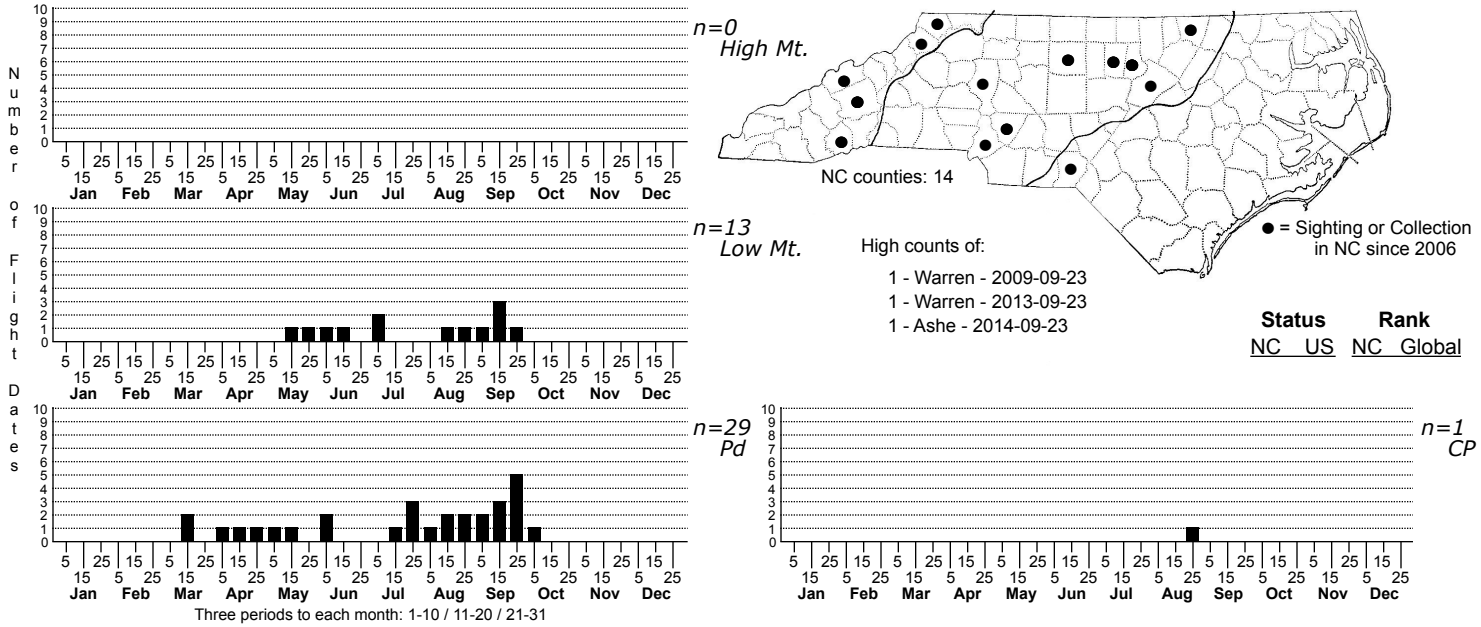
Rusicada privata Hibiscus-leaf Caterpillar Moth



FAMILY: Erebidae SUBFAMILY: Scoliopteryginae TRIBE: Anomini
TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS:

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:
ONLINE PHOTOS:
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS:
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Wagner et al. (2011)

ID COMMENTS: The ground color is yellowish to dark fuscous, sometimes with a heavy dusting of red and a paler patch of mouse gray or reddish-yellow in the fold where it is crossed by the postmedian (Forbes, 1954). The transverse lines are dark brown, edges with gray. The antemedian is excurved and moderately scalloped. The postmedian runs irregularly in from the costa but then makes a sharp right angle bend inward to the basal edge of the reniform, to which it appears to be an extension. From that point, it runs straight to the inner margin (Forbes, 1954). The subterminal is represented by a series of fuscous patches, bordered outwardly by a pale line. The orbicular is a small ring that may be filled with white. The reniform is a narrow lunule with a straight base that lines up with the inner portion of the postmedian.

Anomis erosa generally has a more yellowish ground color but is similar in pattern. The postmedian, however, is more smoothly curved in from the costa, although also strongly offset inward, again reaching the base of the reniform. From that point, it curves across the wing, joining the antemedian just above the inner margin. In contrast to R. privata, A. erosa has a well-developed tooth on both the antemedian and postmedian lines. In R. privata, the antemedian line appears scalloped, without the obvious tooth of A. erosa.

DISTRIBUTION: We have scattered records across the Piedmont and Mountains, but so far only one from the Coastal Plain.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Please refer to the flight charts.

HABITAT:

FOOD: Larvae feed on Hibiscus species, including non-native Rose-of-Sharon (H. syriacus) (Wagner et al., 2011). In North Carolina, David George has observed larvae feeding on Rose-of-Sharon planted along an urban road in Durham, and there is a BugGuide record (Jamie M. Simancas, 2024) for a larva on an unidentified Hibiscus in Guilford County. Rose-of-Sharon is likely the primary host in North Carolina for this introduced species, but there is also an iNaturalist record (Brian Antczak, 2022) of a larva on Swamp Rosemallow (Hibiscus moscheutos) in Ashe County.

OBSERVATION_METHODS:

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR SNR [SNA]

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

COMMENTS: This species is an introduced Old World Species (Wagner et al., 2011).