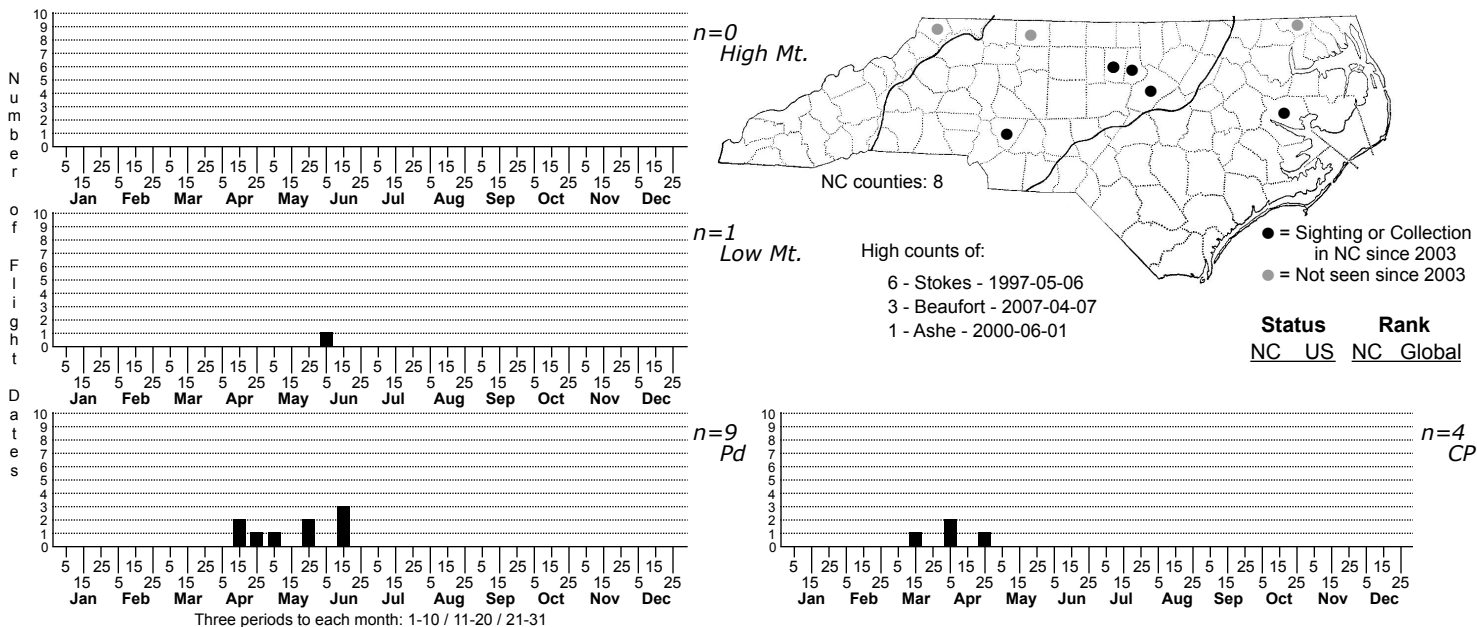


*Zale metatoides* Washed-out Zale



FAMILY: Erebidae SUBFAMILY: Erebinae TRIBE: Ophiusini

TAXONOMIC\_COMMENTS: One of 39 species in this genus that occur north of Mexico, 23 of which have been recorded in North Carolina

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

ONLINE PHOTOS: MPG, Bugguide

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: McDunnough (1943); Forbes (1954); Rings et al. (1992)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Forbes (1954); Wagner (2005); Wagner et al. (2011)

ID COMMENTS: Metatoides is similar in color but slightly darker than metata, confusa, and helata, all of which also have obscure medial lines. Helata can usually be distinguished by the brown shades that narrowly border its antemedial and postmedial lines; the brown shades in metatoides before the antemedial line extend all the way to the basal line. Metata and confusa are usually paler and less contrastingly patterned than either metatoides or helata. In many cases, dissection is needed to confirm the identities of these species.

DISTRIBUTION: Probably occurs across the entire state with the possible exception of the barrier islands and high mountains

FLIGHT COMMENT: Probably has a single spring adult flight, occurring in March, April, and May in the Piedmont and Coastal Plain and slightly later in the Mountains

HABITAT: Records come from a fairly wide range of pine-containing habitats, including Maritime Evergreen Forests, riparian and lakeshore forests, and dry ridges.

FOOD: Stenophagous, feeding solely on hard pines (subgenus Pinus). Wagner (2005) specifically mentions Pitch Pine (*Pinus rigida*), Shortleaf Pine (*P. echinata*), and Scrub Pine (*P. virginiana*), all of which occur in areas where metatoides has been recorded in North Carolina. Loblolly Pine (*P. taeda*) also occurs at most, if not all, sites where this species has been recorded and seems another likely host.

OBSERVATION\_METHODS: May come poorly to lights, which could explain the scarcity of records for what should be a fairly common species. Probably comes well to bait, like other members of this genus.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G5 S3S4

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

COMMENTS: Although seemingly an uncommon species in North Carolina, too little is known about the distribution and habitat affinities of metatoides to estimate its conservation needs.