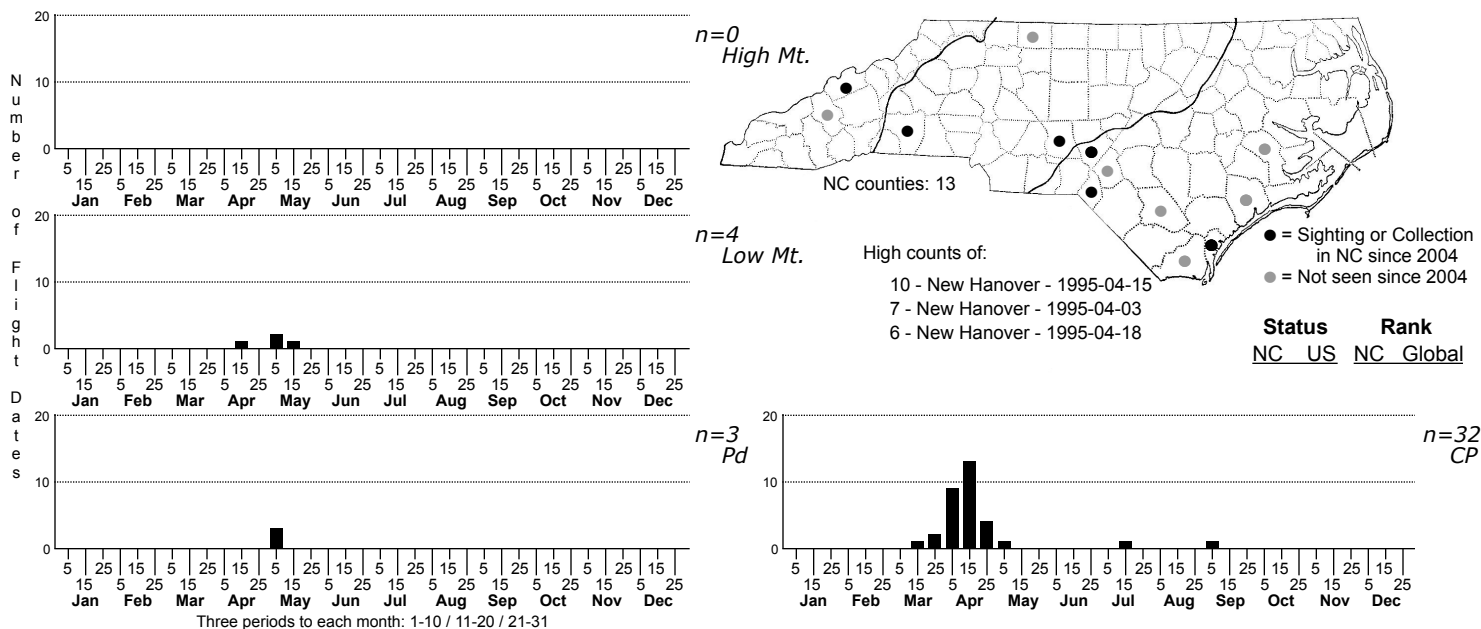


## *Ptichodis bistrigata* Southern Ptichodis Moth



FAMILY: Erebidae SUBFAMILY: Erebinae TRIBE: Euclidiini

TAXONOMIC\_COMMENTS: A wholly American genus containing 12 species from North and South America. As currently constructed the genus is polyphyletic and some species will eventually be moved elsewhere. There are 7 species found in North America and 3 in North Carolina.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1954)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: A medium-sized Erebid, with broad, pale violet-brown forewings (Forbes, 1954). The antemedian is yellow and runs straight across the wing; the outer side is lined with brown. The postmedian is slightly more sinuous and is also yellow, but edged on the inner side with brown and only faintly, if at all, on the outer side. This pattern of the dark lines or shading located on the median-side of the lines is different from that of both herbarum and vinculum, where the brown shading is on the outer sides of both lines. Bistrigata also lacks the dark apical spot found in both sexes of vinculum, and also lacks the dark basal spot found in males of herbarum. Hindwings are generally browner than the forewing and are unmarked. Sexes are similar.

DISTRIBUTION: Fairly widespread in Fall-line Sandhills and similar xeric habitats in the Outer Coastal Plain. Also occurs more sparsely in the Piedmont and Low Mountains.

FLIGHT COMMENT: There appears to be a single brood on the wing in April in the Coastal Plain and May in the western part of the state. Heppner (2003) gives additional records for July and August indicating a second brood occurs in Florida, if the determinations are correct. Interestingly, there are no July, August records there for *P. herbarum* whose females are easily confused for this species!

HABITAT: Appears to be most abundant in xeric Longleaf Pine sandhills, including both Coastal Fringe Sandhills and Pine-Scrub Oak Sandhills further inland. Also occurs in dry upland woodlands, particularly associated with monadnocks in the Piedmont and dry ridges in the Low Mountains.

FOOD: Host plants are unknown.

OBSERVATION\_METHODS: Adults come readily to lights and probably will come to bait but we have no records.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G3 S3S4

STATE PROTECTION: Listed as Significantly Rare by the Natural Heritage Program. That designation, however, does not confer any legal protection, although permits are required to collect it on state parks and other public lands.

COMMENTS: Based on our initial surveys in the Coastal Plain, this species appeared to be a strong habitat specialist, occurring in some of the most xeric sandhill habitats we sampled. However, later surveys turned up this species in areas in both the Piedmont and Mountains. Although we still regard it as a dry woodlands and barrens specialist, more needs to be learned about its host plants and exact habitat relationships before an accurate assessment can be made of its conservation needs. Consequently, we propose moving it out of the Significantly Rare category and onto the Watch List until more information is available to clarify its status.