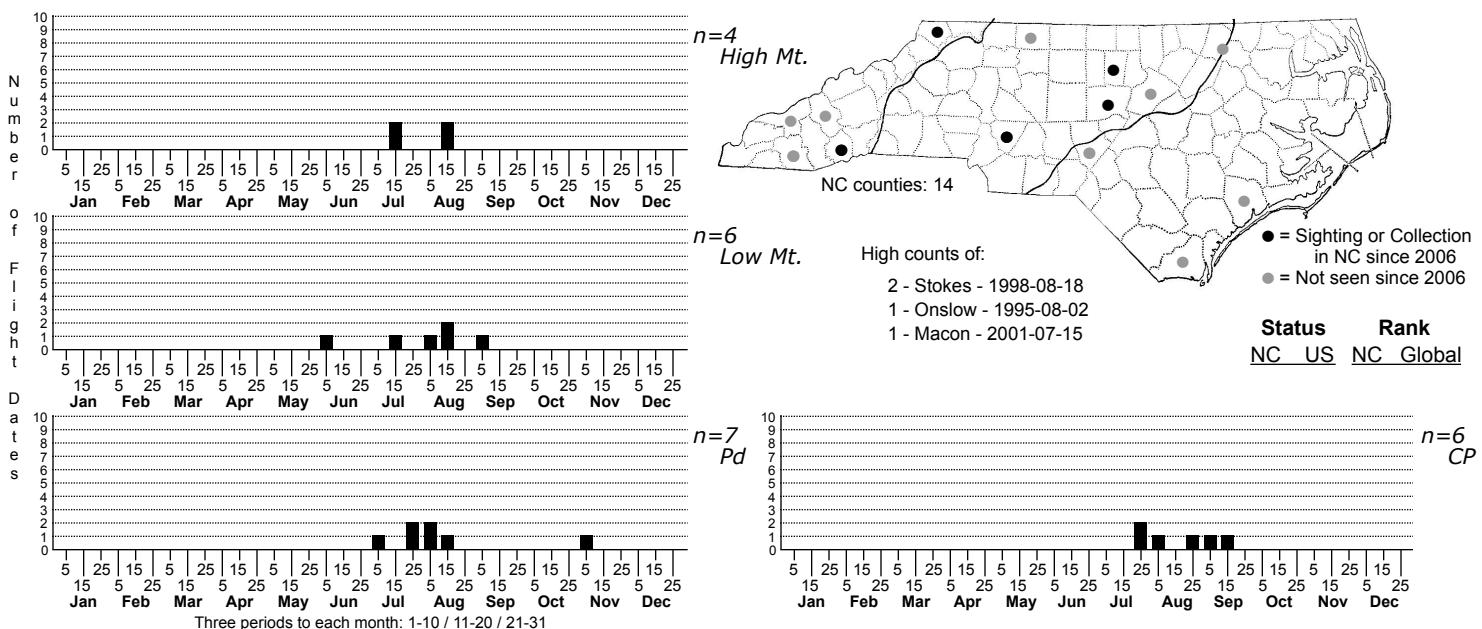


# Catocala ulalume Ulalume Underwing



FAMILY: Erebidae SUBFAMILY: Erebinae TRIBE: Catocalini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: One of 103 species in this genus that occur in North America (Lafontaine and Schmidt, 2010, 2015), 67 of which have been recorded in North Carolina. Included by Barnes and McDunnough (1918) in their Group VI (also adopted by Forbes, 1954). This group comprises 15 species, all of which feed on Hickories or Walnuts (Juglandaceae). In addition to *Catocala ulalume*, other members of this group that occur in North Carolina include *resecta*, *dejecta*, *insolabilis*, *myristica*, *vidua*, *maestosa*, *lachrymosa*, *palaeogama*, *nebulosa*, *subnata*, and *neogama*.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: French (1922); Forbes (1954); Sargent (1976)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Brower (1922); Forbes (1954); Wagner et al. (2011)

ID COMMENTS: A large, medium-gray Underwing with black hindwings. This species is similar in pattern and color to both *Catocala lacrymosa* and *dejecta* (French, 1922; Forbes, 1954; Sargent, 1976), but tends to be peppered with dark specks and is coarser in appearance overall. It is less blue than *dejecta* and the oblique pale patch running outside the antemedian from the costa to the reniform is much less conspicuous in *ulalume*. Compared to *lacrymosa*, it lacks prominent brown shading, although it may have some dull brown in the subterminal space and the reniform; the pale lunules at the inner margin that are prominent in *lacrymosa* are either indistinct or at least much less developed in *ulalume*. The hindwings are black with a white fringe. As in *dejecta* and *lacrymosa*, the fringe is white but with black teeth marking the veins where they cross the fringe.

DISTRIBUTION: Potentially occurs statewide.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Univoltine, flying from July to September (one record from June needs to be confirmed).

HABITAT: Our records come primarily from sandhills in the Coastal Plain and dry ridge tops in the Piedmont and Mountains. Records are absent from bottomlands.

FOOD: Larvae are stenophagous, feeding on Mockernut Hickory (*Carya tomentosa*) (Wagner et al., 2011) and possibly other hickories. We do not have any feeding records in North Carolina.

OBSERVATION METHODS: Comes to some extent to lights and bait.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G4 SNR [S2S4]

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

COMMENTS: Records from only three sites are current; the rest are historic. This species is generally considered rare or uncommon, although its exact status is often viewed as uncertain, given the possible confusion with *Catocala lacrymosa* or *dejecta*. Its wide distribution in North Carolina, together with the commonness of its host plants suggests that it may be secure but far more information is needed on this species before its conservation status can be accurately determined.