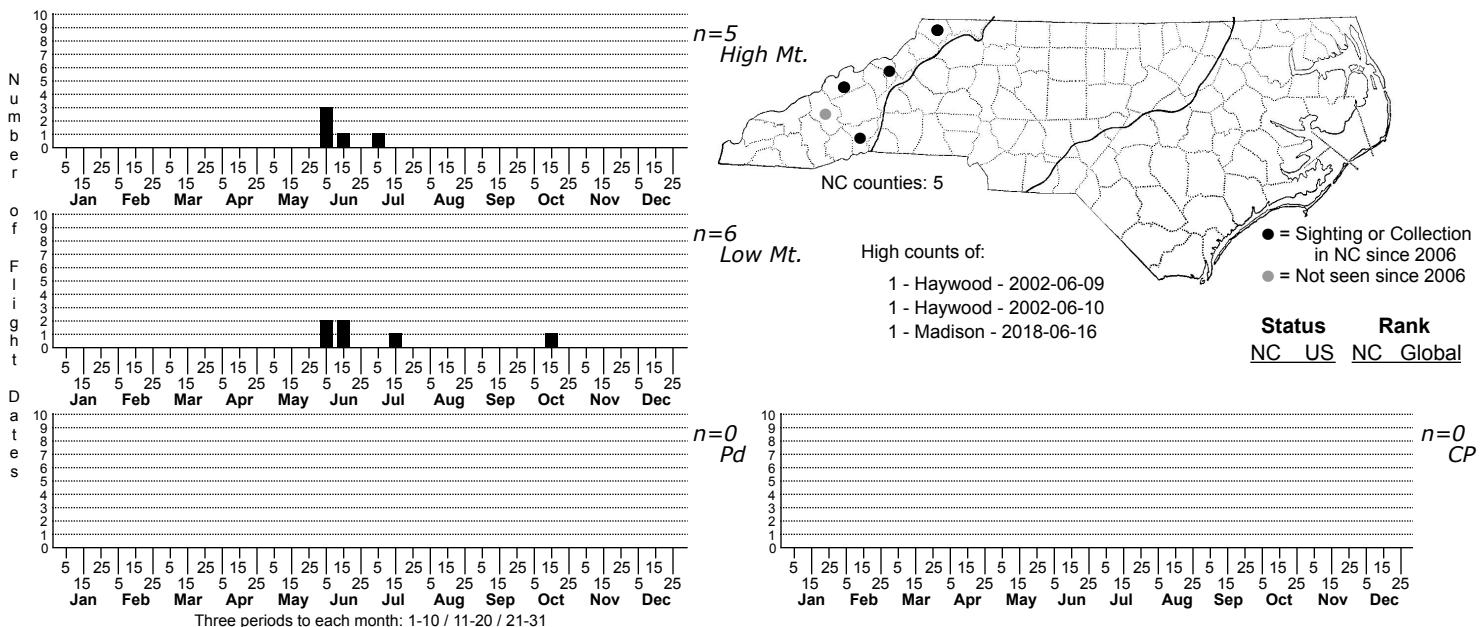


# Agonopterix *flavicomella* None



FAMILY: Depressariidae SUBFAMILY: Depressariinae TRIBE: [Depressariini]

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: <i>Agonopterix</i> is a large holarctic genus with more than 125 species, with most occurring in the Palearctic Region. Currently, there are 47 recognized species in North America. Our species are largely confined to the western mountains.

## FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

### ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Clarke, 1941

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: The following description of the adults is based primarily on that of Clarke (1941). The labial palps and head are pale whitish ochreous. The second segment of the palp is strongly irrorated and suffused with blackish fuscous exteriorly, while the third segment is immaculate. The antenna is grayish fuscous and narrowly annulated with fuscous. The thorax and basal part of the forewing (except the costa) are light ochreous to pale yellow. The posterior tip of the thorax is blackish, and there is a blackish spot on each side beneath the inner edges of the tegulae. The ground color of the forewing is light ochreous with fine blackish specks. The ground color is often heavily overlaid with reddish brown and fuscous coloration. Adjoining the light basal patch there is a zone of dark blackish-fuscous shading that fades to reddish and then to ochreous. The basal part of the costa is suffused with fuscous, and the costa and termen have a series of black bars or spots that become more pronounced towards the apex and around the termen. At the basal third of the wing there is a black discal spot that is followed by a similar one at the middle, and another larger more diffused one at the end of the cell. The latter may have one or two white scales. The first two are sometimes faint or missing, and the last is often masked by a dark blackish-fuscous blotch. The hindwing is grayish fuscous with a series of blackish-fuscous dashes around the apex and outer margin, while the cilia are yellowish fuscous with an indistinct dark sub-basal band. The legs are light whitish ochreous and strongly overlaid or suffused with shining sooty black except at the joints and on the posterior tibia. The pale yellowish to whitish ochreous coloration, the dark blotch near the third discal spot, and the overlay of dark fuscous to dark yellowish brown scales across the forewing are helpful in distinguishing this species from other species in North Carolina. The dark overlay is highly variable and can range from slight to very heavy. <i>Agonopterix canadensis</i> is similar, but has a yellowish gray ground color and a dark patch at the mid-wing that is displaced more towards the costa.

DISTRIBUTION: <i>Agonopterix flavicomella</i> is found in North America across a wide swath of southern Canada from British Columbia to Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. In the US the range extends from Maine and Connecticut, westward to Illinois and Michigan, and southward primarily along the Appalachians to eastern Tennessee, western North Carolina, northern Georgia, and northern Alabama. As of 2020, all of our records are from lower to higher elevations in the mountains.

FLIGHT COMMENT: This species is univoltine. The adult records span from April through October, with a seasonal peak in June and July. As of 2020, our records are from early June through Mid-July.

HABITAT: The habitats and hosts in North Carolina are poorly resolved. The larvae feed on members of the Apiaceae. Of the known hosts, Cow Parsnip and Yellow Pimpernel are the mostly likely hosts given that the other two known hosts are ornamentals. Cow Parsnip prefers mesic and somewhat sunny habitats such as moist roadsides, wet meadows, streambanks, and grassy balds. Yellow Pimpernel is found in sites with relatively high soil pH and prefers drier habitats such as dry woodland borders, open woods and roadbanks. Two of our records are from a site where neither of these species is present, which suggest that other members of the Apiaceae may be used.

FOOD: Reported hosts include Cow Parsnip (<i>Heracleum maximum</i>) and Yellow Pimpernel (<i>Taenidia integerrima</i>) (Godfrey et al., 1987; Robinson et al., 2010).

OBSERVATION METHODS: The adults are attracted to lights.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR SU

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

COMMENTS: We currently do not have sufficient information on the distribution and abundance of this species within the state to assess its conservation status.