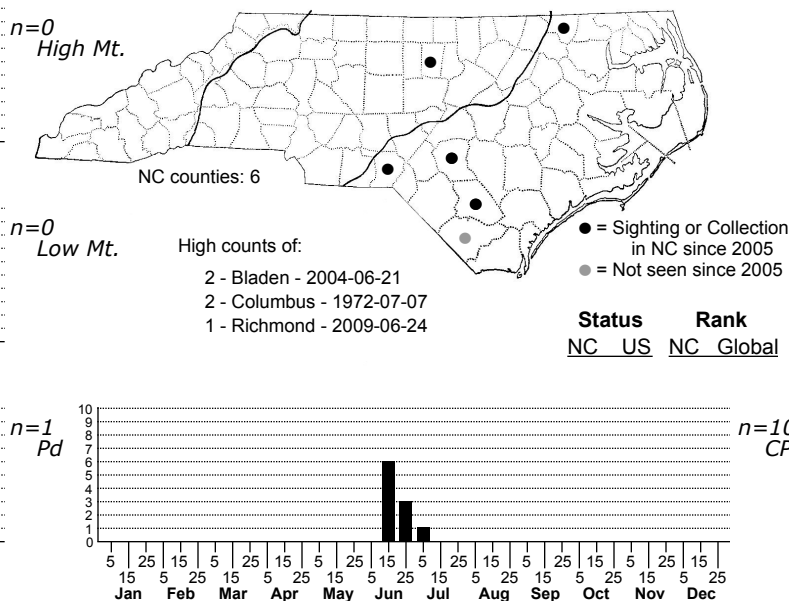
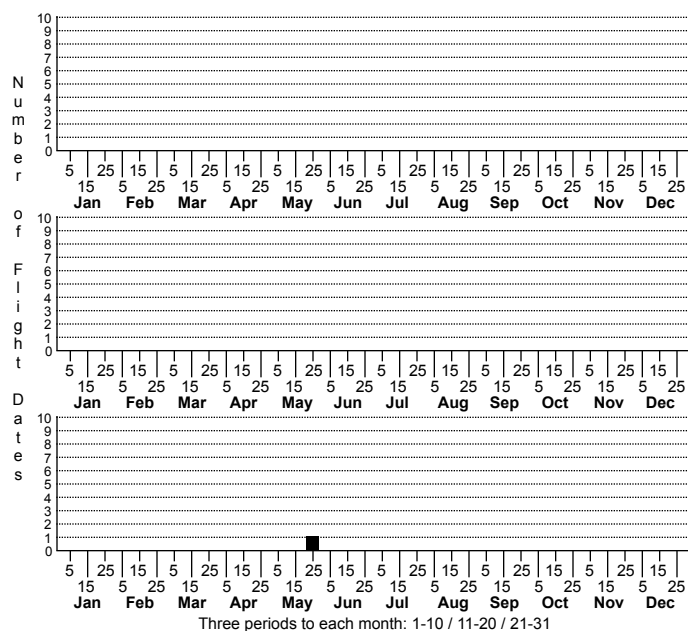


# *Catocala alabamae* Alabama Underwing



FAMILY: Erebiidae 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 XVII (also adopted by Forbes, 1954), which feed mainly on members of the Rosaceae; 12 other members of this group (as redefined by Kons and Borth, 2015b) also occur in North Carolina.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Barnes and MacDunnough (1918); Forbes (1954); Sargent (1976)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Wagner et al. (2011)

ID COMMENTS: A medium-sized Underwing (smaller than other members of the Rosaceae-feeding group), with fairly plain forewings and yellow-and-black banded hindwings. In the typical form, the ground color of the forewings is a dull yellowish-green, with fairly uniform shading from the base to the outer margin. A dark brown form also exists in our area, but apart from differences in the ground color has markings similar to the typical form, not more reduced as in form titania. No basal dash is present whatsoever and the antemedian and postmedian are mainly thin black lines except where they intersect the costa; the lower portion of the postmedian, where it bends back towards the base of the wing and parallels the inner margin, is also usually darker, with an amber shade below it. *Catocala alabamae* is similar to *C. grynea*, which is usually a darker, olive green and possesses a more extensive and contrasting orange-brown shade between the horizontal portion of the postmedian and inner margin. *Catocala praeclara* can also have a similar greenish color, but characteristically has a well-developed basal dash and more heavily darkened antemedian and postmedian lines.

DISTRIBUTION: Known only from the Coastal Plain in North Carolina

FLIGHT COMMENT: Univoltine, with our records concentrated in June and early July

HABITAT: Most of our records come from xeric sand rims bordering Carolina Bays; this is the same type of habitat used by *Catocala grisatra* and both species may be feeding on *Crataegus munda* in those areas. The same may be true for records in the Fall-line Sandhills but the record from Northampton County comes from rich bottomland hardwoods, where riparian hawthorns are common and support a number of hawthorn-feeding *Catocala* species.

FOOD: Larvae are apparently stenophagous, feeding only on hawthorns (*Crataegus* spp.) (Sargent, 1976; Wagner et al., 2011). Covell (1984) also listed apple and cherry, but these records need to be verified. We do not have any feeding records in North Carolina.

OBSERVATION METHODS: Comes to lights, at least to some extent; probably also comes to bait, but we have no records for that method in North Carolina

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G4 S2S3

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

COMMENTS: We have few records for this species in North Carolina, where it appears to be strongly associated with xeric sand ridges with large populations of hawthorns; some use of riparian hawthorns is also likely. More information is needed on the distribution, abundance, habitat associations, and host plant range before an accurate assessment of its conservation status can be made.