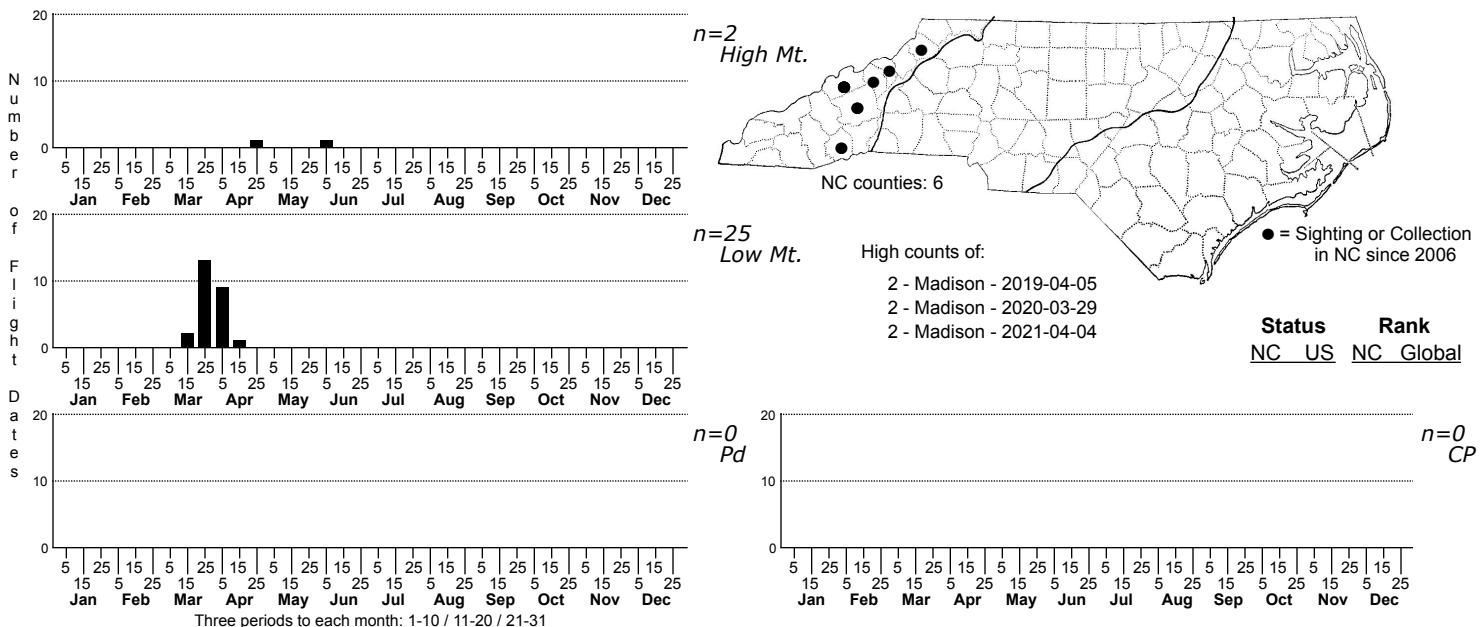


Semioscopis merricella Merrick's Semioscopis



FAMILY: Depressariidae SUBFAMILY: Depressariinae TRIBE: [Depressariini]

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: *Semioscopis* is a small genus with 13 recognized species, six of which occur in North America.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Leckie and Beadle (2018)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Clarke (1941); Hedges (1974)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: The following is primarily based on the description by Clarke (1941). The labial palp is white and the second segment is suffused with blackish fuscous exteriorly. The third segment has a fuscous spot at the base anteriorly and a broad black sub-apical annulus. The antenna has a dark base, while the remainder is light fuscous with narrow and indistinct gray annulations. The head and thorax are gray, with the latter suffused with fuscous. The forewing is light gray to grayish brown and lightly shaded and strigulated with brown. The costa from the base to the middle of wing is slightly lighter. Beginning at the end of the cell there is a sinuous narrow black bar that widens anteriorly and continues to about one-third the wing length. The outwardly curved portion at the beginning of the cell is followed by a rapidly fading and spreading brownish shade. Between the discal portion of the bar and the costa, there is a short, poorly defined blackish-fuscous bar followed by a blackish-fuscous spot before the apex. A series of blackish-fuscous spots extends from the apex around the termen. The cilia are pale gray and lightly suffused with brown. The hindwing is shining gray with a fine terminal brown line. The cilia are lighter and shining, with a narrow sub-basal and two sub-terminal faint brown bands. The legs are shining creamy white and strongly overlaid with blackish fuscous except at the joints and on the hind tibia. The abdomen is sordid ochreous and faintly suffused with fuscous beneath.

DISTRIBUTION: *Semioscopis merricella* is primarily found in eastern North America, but scattered populations have been found out west in Washington, California, British Columbia, Alberta, and elsewhere. In the East, the range includes portions of southern Canada (Ontario; Quebec; Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island) and the northeastern states westward to Minnesota and Illinois. The range extends as far south as northern Mississippi and northern Georgia. As of 2020, all of our records are from the mountains.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Local populations are univoltine with a peak in seasonal activity between March and May. As of 2020, most of our records are from late March through April, with one late season record (2 June) from Roan Mountain.

HABITAT: The specific habitat requirements are poorly documented. We have records from the lower valleys to the highest peaks in the mountains, and most are associated with hardwood forests.

FOOD: The hosts are unknown.

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: As of 2020, we have records from only six localities, suggesting that this species is uncommon in the state. We need additional data on its distribution and abundance before we can assess its conservation status.