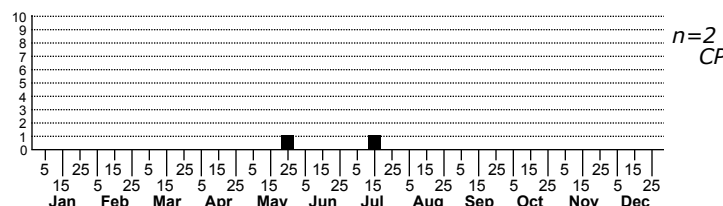
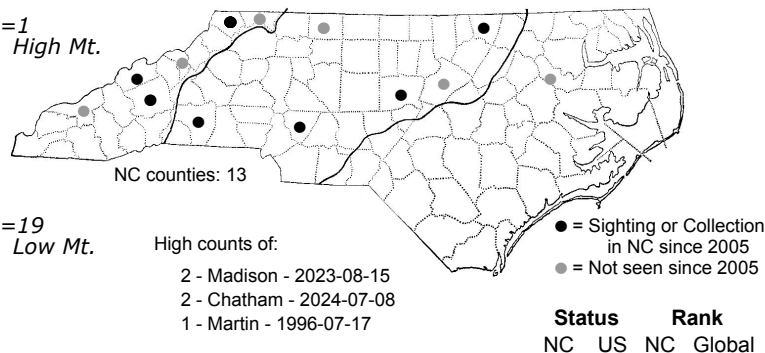
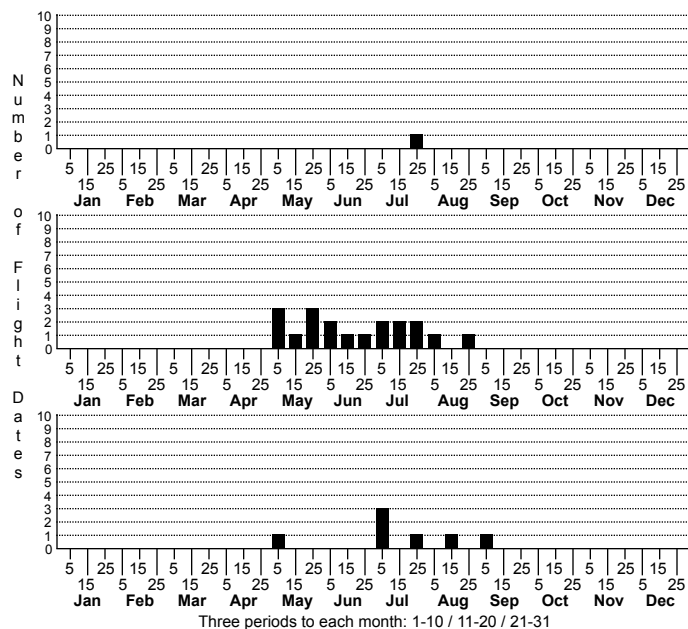


Acronicta hamamelis Witch Hazel Dagger



FAMILY: Noctuidae SUBFAMILY: Acronictinae TRIBE:

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: One of 74 species in this genus found in North America north of Mexico (Schmidt and Anweiler, 2020), 42 of which have been recorded in North Carolina. *Acronicta hamamelis* is a member of Species Group II of Forbes (1954), which includes 17 additional species in North Carolina.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984; as *Acronicta subochrea*)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1954); Schmidt and Anweiler (2020)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: The ground color is whitish but is heavily dusted and mottled with coal black, producing an overall effect of blue-gray (Forbes, 1954). A luteous patch -- conspicuous in spread specimens but often hidden in the normal resting posture -- is located at the extreme base of the forewing, contrasting with a diffuse dark patch in the fold just above it; no well-defined dashes are otherwise present although there is usually a dark triangular mark in the middle of the terminal area, as well as one located subterminally. The lines are jet black and the postmedian is lunulate and has a whitish filling. The orbicular and reniform are also completely outlined with black, and the filling of the orbicular lacks white or black scales (Schmidt and Anweiler, 2020). The hindwings are characteristically bronzy-luteous, unlike all or our other members of this genus.

DISTRIBUTION: Please refer to the dot map.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Please refer to the flight charts.

HABITAT: Schmidt and Anweiler (2020) describe this species as associated with rich, mesic hardwood forests. This description fits the majority of the sites where this species has been recorded in North Carolina, despite the fact that its host plant appears to use a much wider range of forest types (see Vascular Plants of North Carolina). Coastal Plain records come from brownwater river floodplains, Piedmont records from mesic slopes, and Mountain records from cove forests, particularly in the Amphibolite Mountain region.

FOOD: Larvae are monophagous on American Witch-hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*) (Wagner et al., 2011), which has been confirmed as the host in North Carolina. Reports from other hosts are questionable and need verification.

OBSERVATION_METHODS:

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G4 SNR [S3S4]

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

COMMENTS: