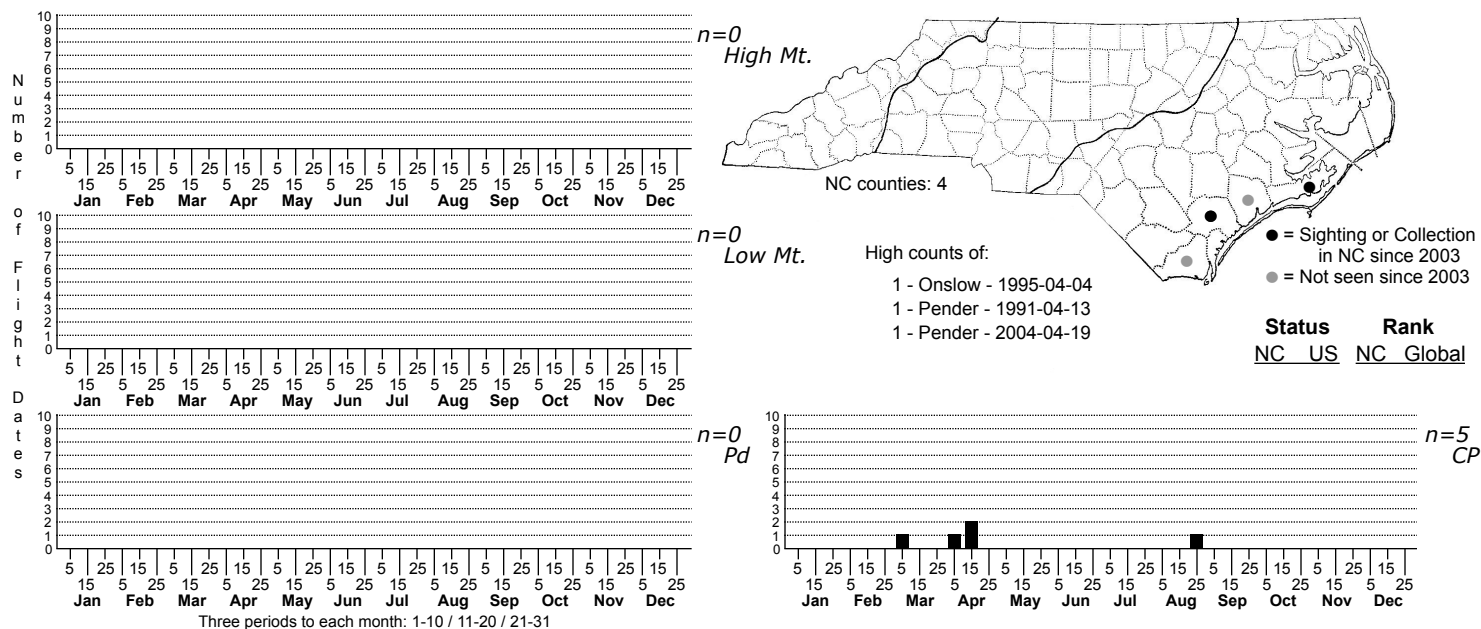


Acronicta lanceolaria Narrow-winged Dagger



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 lanceolaria* is a member of Species Group V of Forbes (1954), which in North Carolina also includes *A. impleta*, *A. noctivaga*, *A. impressa*, *A. longa*, *A. oblinita*, and *A. sinescripta*.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Beadle and Leckie (2012)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

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

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Forbes (1954); Wagner et al.(2011); Schmidt and Anweiler (2020)

ID COMMENTS: A medium sized, pale gray *Acronicta*. *A. lanceolaria* is similar to both *A. oblinita* and *A. sinescripta* in possessing narrow forewings with little or no dark transverse lines, and whitish hindwings. *A. lanceolaria* is larger than these other two and has narrower forewings and a more strongly pointed apex. Like *A. sinescripta*, there may be a dark streak located where the reniform spot usually occurs, but it lacks the basal dash found in that species (Ferguson, 1988). Although markings are usually more reduced in *A. lanceolaria* than in the other species, Ferguson noted that *A. lanceolaria* often has a pale, sinuous postmedian that is absent in *A. sinescripta* and is better defined and dentate in *A. oblinita*. The row of terminal dark dots characteristic of *A. oblinita* is missing in *A. lanceolaria*.

DISTRIBUTION: Appears to be restricted to the Outer Coastal Plain in North Carolina

FLIGHT COMMENT: Univoltine, flying only in the early spring

HABITAT: All of our few records for this species come from wet shrublands, including pocosins, depression ponds, and wet pine flatwoods

FOOD: Polyphagous, feeding on a wide variety of shrubs and small hardwoods. Forbes (1954) specifically lists Willow, Poplar, Blueberry, Wild Cherry, and Sweetfern. Wagner et al. (2011) add Alder, Blackberry, Bush Clover, Oak, Pine, and other species.

OBSERVATION METHODS: Adults are rarely collected at lights and almost never at bait (Wagner et al., 2011). Larvae are more easily found than the adults.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G4 S3?->[S2S3]

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

COMMENTS: Despite feeding on a wide range of host plants, this species appears to be strongly specialized on shrublands associated with both peatlands and barrens. We have very few records for adults of this species but more extensive larval surveys need to be conducted in pocosins, flatwoods, and upland heath barrens in order to determine its actual distribution, abundance, and habitat associations in North Carolina. Only after that information has been obtained can its conservation status be determined.