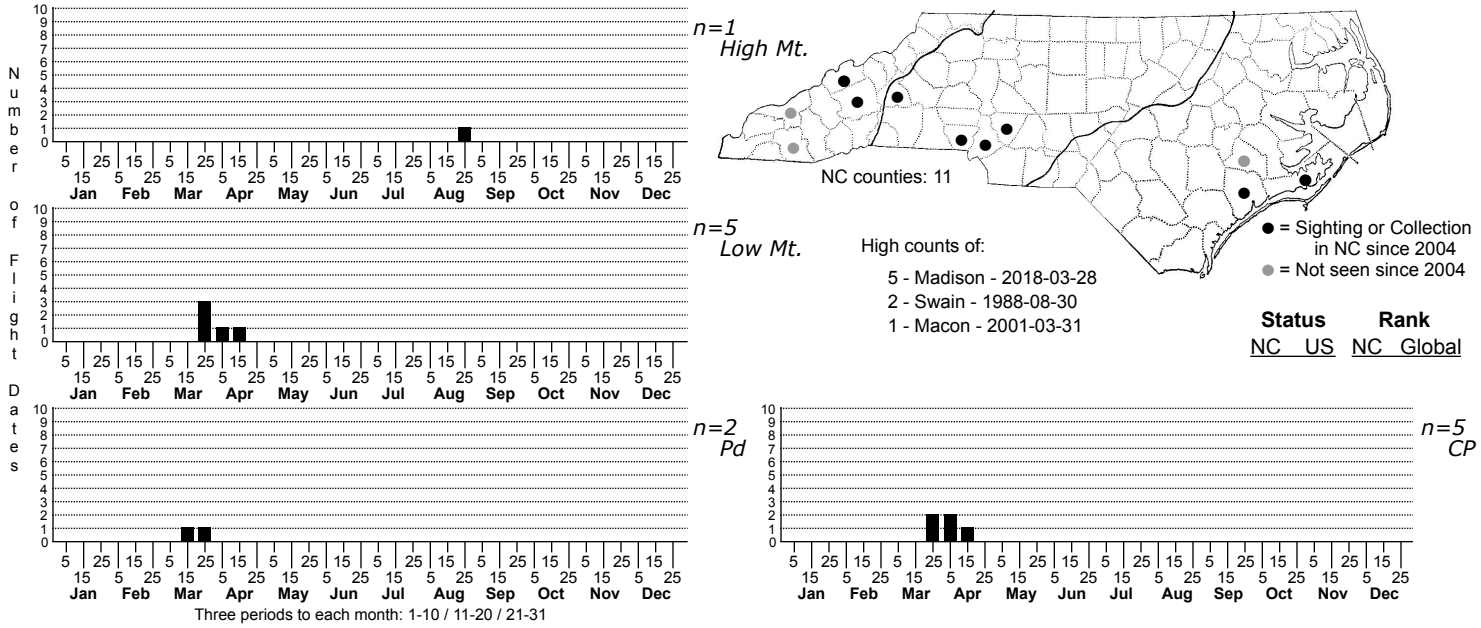
Psychomorpha epimenis Grapevine Epimenis Moth



FAMILY: Noctuidae SUBFAMILY: Agaristinae TRIBE:
TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS: A North American genus with a single species

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984); Beadle and Leckie (2012)
ONLINE PHOTOS:
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1954)
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Forbes (1954); Wagner et al. (2011)

ID COMMENTS: A medium-sized, strikingly marked Noctuid. The white windows on the forewing and red windows on the hindwing are unique. Sexes are similar.

DISTRIBUTION: Probably found throughout the state but we currently only have records from the Mountains and Outer Coastal Plain

FLIGHT COMMENT: Our records come primarily from March and April, but there is one historic record from August from the Great Smoky Mountains

HABITAT: One of our records comes from maritime scrub habitats on a barrier island, where grapes are abundant. Habitats at the other sites for which we have records are less clear but appear to include both upland and lowland forests.

FOOD: Vitis (grapes) although we know of no records of attacks to domestic varieties.

OBSERVATION_METHODS: Like many other agaristine noctuids, the adults are day flyers. Look for adults early in the spring when blues and orange tip butterflies are on the wing. Our only captures are from plum blossoms but adults are said to puddle. We have never seen adults in light traps or at lighted sheets. Wagner et al (2011) suggest looking for larvae in folded-over leaf patches about 6-7 leaves back from the growing tip. The caterpillar seems to feed within this folded shelter. Searches should be made along the edges of fields and woodlands.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G5 S3S4

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

COMMENTS: More diurnal surveys need to be conducted during the early spring before we can be sure how common and widely distributed this species is in North Carolina.