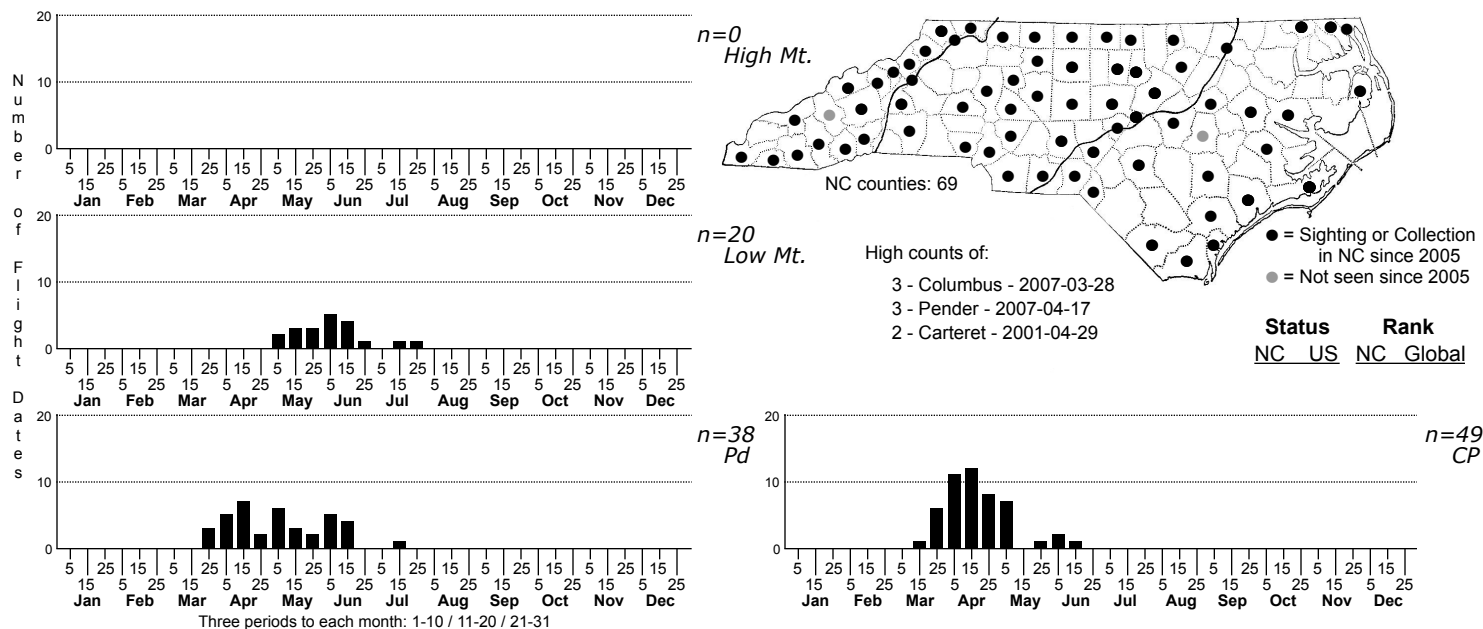


Alypia octomaculata Eight-spotted Forester



FAMILY: Noctuidae SUBFAMILY: Agaristinae TRIBE:

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: Nine species are included in this genus from the United States and Argentina, a rather peculiar distribution! North Carolina has but a single species.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984); Beadle and Leckie (2012)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1960)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Forbes (1960); Wagner et al. (2011)

ID COMMENTS: A medium-sized, strikingly marked Noctuid. The pattern found on this species is quite unique but *Anania funebris*, a pyraustid moth, seems to mimic that pattern (see photo for that species). The moth is diurnal and frequently found on flowers in the spring.

DISTRIBUTION: Found across the state except at the higher altitudes.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The species is most common in the spring but even so, few are seen and we have little indication how common this species really is. The spring brood is followed by stragglers for several months but it is unclear whether emergence is staggered or there are multiple broods but fewer concentrations of attractive flowers later in the season so we just do not see them. Bryant (1982) had adults from a single batch of eggs hatch over a period of 4 years indicating there probably is a staggered emergence.

HABITAT: Usually found along the edges of fields and woodlands, particularly at spring blooming shrubs. Whether the females penetrate woodlands in search of foodplants appears to be unknown.

FOOD: Like many other Agaristine moths, this species feeds on grape (*Vitis*), Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*), and peppervine (*Ampelopsis*) (Wagner, 2005), which are typically found in woodland and field edges, but can also be found in small clearings inside wooded areas. In North Carolina, the species has been recorded feeding on Virginia Creeper and Muscadine (*Muscadinia rotundifolia*).

OBSERVATION METHODS: Adults will come to light but probably sparingly so. They are unrecorded from bait but readily visit flowers and are considered primarily diurnal.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G5 SNR [S5]

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

COMMENTS: This species is only infrequently recorded, but as a primarily day-flying species, it has not been effectively sampled by the light traps and baiting that are the main-stays of our systematic moth surveys. Judging by the frequency of citizen scientist sightings, it may actually not be that uncommon in North Carolina. More diurnal searches are needed for this, as well as other species of day-flying moths. Currently, we have records from a wide area of the state and from a broad range of habitats. Consequently, it appears to be secure, if uncommon, across the state.