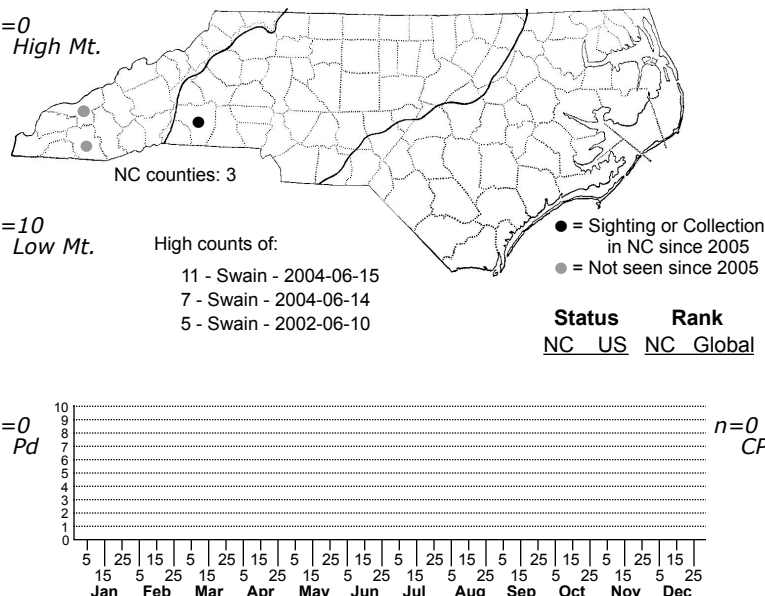
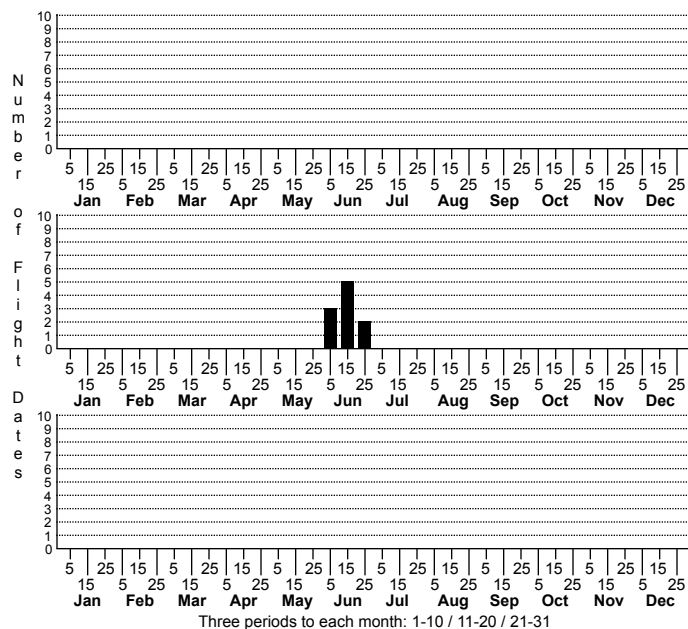


# *Cherokeea attackullakulla* None



FAMILY: Noctuidae SUBFAMILY: Noctuinae TRIBE: Apameini

TAXONOMIC\_COMMENTS: The sole member of this genus, which is entirely confined to the Southern Appalachians (Quinter and Sullivan, 2014). Previously considered a form or species related to the *Oligia semicana* complex, which has now been revised by Troubridge and Lafontaine (2002), who placed most of the group in a new genus, *Neoligia*. Only *Neoligia crytora* of that group is known to occur in North Carolina.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Quinter and Sullivan (2014)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: A medium sized Noctuid, with somewhat elongated and pointed wings. The ground color of the forewings is a dull gray-brown, with the hindwings an even paler, unmarked gray. Two slightly different forms exist, one with a more mottled, strongly marked forewing pattern, the other more obscurely marked (Quinter and Sullivan, 2014). In strongly marked specimens, a black basal dash and a black bar in the median area that connects the antemedian and postmedian lines are both conspicuous; a subapical dark triangle on the costa and anal dash or triangle located on the lower outer margin may also be present. The antemedian and postmedian lines, when well-developed, are double and black, with pale gray filling. The orbicular and reniform spots are also filled with the same pale gray shade. Quinter and Sullivan note possible confusion with worn specimens of the similar-sized *Protodeltote muscosa*, which usually has a strong dark shade between the orbicular and reniform which is missing in *Cherokeea*. While some members of *Neoligia* have similar markings to *Cherokeea*, *Neoligia crytora*-- our sole species -- is quite different, with forewings strongly divided between a dark inner half and whitish outer half.

DISTRIBUTION: Please refer to the dot map.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Univoltine with adults flying from the 8th through the 24th of June (Quinter and Sullivan, 2014)

HABITAT: All of our records for this species come from sites supporting populations of Hill Cane (*Arundinaria appalachiana*) (Quinter and Sullivan, 2014). Unlike the more widespread River Cane (*A. gigantea*) and Switch Cane (*A. tecta*), which grow in wet, low-lying habitats, Hill Cane grows on well-drained, often rocky slopes, usually in the understory of Southern Mountain Pine-Oak Forests and other forest types composed of a mixture of pines, oaks, and heaths; the moisture regime ranges from mesic to fairly dry.

FOOD: Larvae are probably monophagous on Hill Cane (*Arundinaria appalachiana*) (Quinter and Sullivan, 2014). We do not have any feeding records in North Carolina.

OBSERVATION\_METHODS: Appears to come fairly well to blacklights. Like other cane-feeding moths, it may be easier to find by direct searching in canebrakes at night, for both larvae and adults (Quinter and Sullivan, 2014).

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G2? S1S2

STATE PROTECTION: Listed as Significantly Rare by the Natural Heritage Program. That designation, however, does not confer any legal protection, although permits are required to collect it on state parks and other public lands.

COMMENTS: This species has a very small global range and probably merits a Global Rank of at least G2G3. All known populations are associated with Hill Cane, a species that itself has a small global range and has apparently suffered as much as a 50-90% decline (NatureServe Explorer, 2016), probably due to the suppression of the natural fire regime. As in several other species of cane-feeding Lepidoptera, populations of *Cherokeea* may be far more localized than those of its host plant. As an extreme specialist on an uncommon and declining habitat type and as a species that is nearly endemic to North Carolina, *Cherokeea* clearly should be given a high degree of conservation concern in this state.