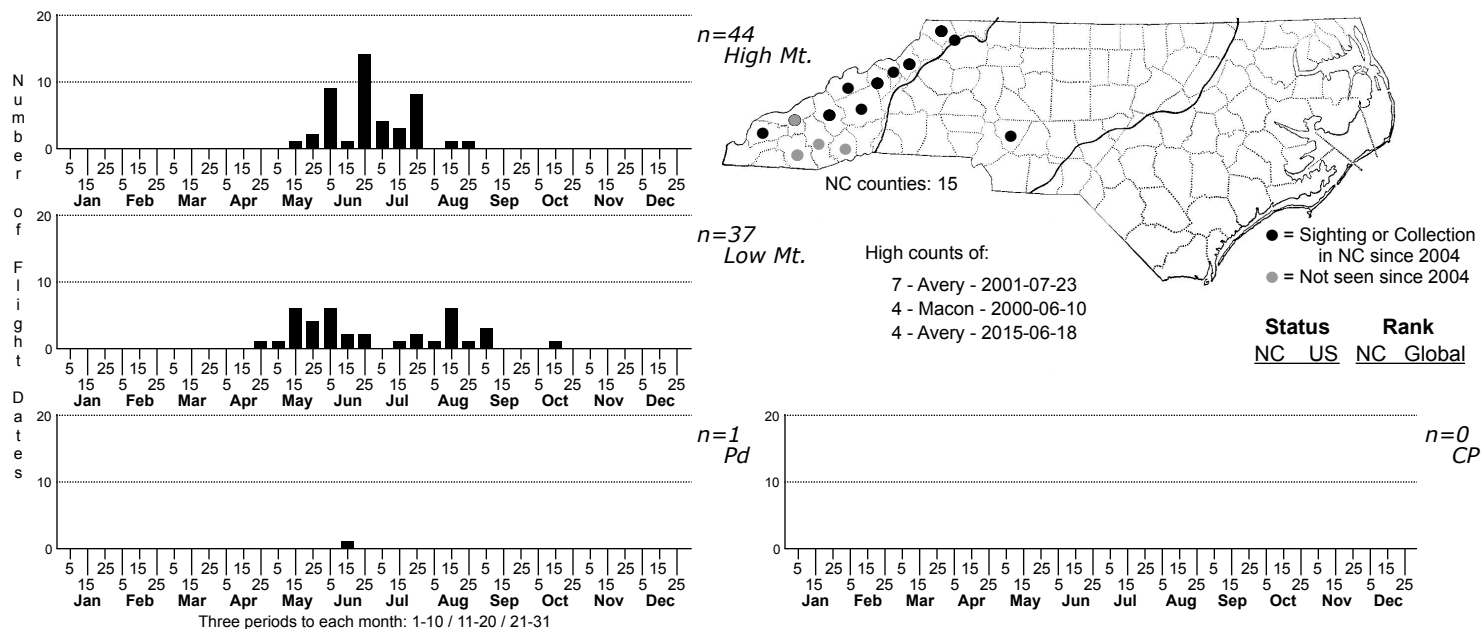


## *Hyppa contrasta* Summer Hyppa



FAMILY: Noctuidae SUBFAMILY: Noctuinae TRIBE: Xylenini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: Currently the genus contains 6 species (Troubridge and Lafontaine, 2004). The type is Eurasian but the remaining species are from North America, two of which occur in North Carolina. The pattern of maculation is strongly conserved.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1954)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Wagner et al. (2011) describe the larvae of *H. xylinoides* but state that characters that distinguish the two species have not yet been identified.

ID COMMENTS: The genus is fairly easy to recognize from the wing pattern, the two species are more difficult and shown in the accompanying figure. The brownish suffusion in *H. contrasta* and the overall darker appearance should separate it from *H. xylinoides*. Note that the orbicular and reniforms spots often touch in *H. contrasta* but are usually well separated in *H. xylinoides*. Both are collected together but *H. contrasta* is usually larger. Sexes are similar.

DISTRIBUTION: Restricted to the Mountains in North Carolina.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Appears to have two broods in North Carolina

HABITAT: Woodlands and forests in the mountains, usually at altitudes of 3000' or higher, but with at least a few records from below 3,000'. Most of our records come from mesic stands, including Cove Forests, Northern Hardwoods, or Spruce-Fir Forests.

FOOD: Wagner et al (2011) state that *Hyppa* caterpillars feed on a wide variety of forbs and low woody plants but they were unable to rear any caterpillars to adults and thus the food preferences and larval color pattern of the two species are inseparable at present.

OBSERVATION METHODS: Adults readily come to lights but information on their response to bait and flowers is lacking. Caterpillars should be sought at night.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: [G3G4] [S3S4]

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

COMMENTS: This species appears to be associated with mesic montane forests, often at high elevations. It is likely to be at risk due to climate change but more needs to be learned about its host plants and exact habitat requirements before its conservation status can be determined.