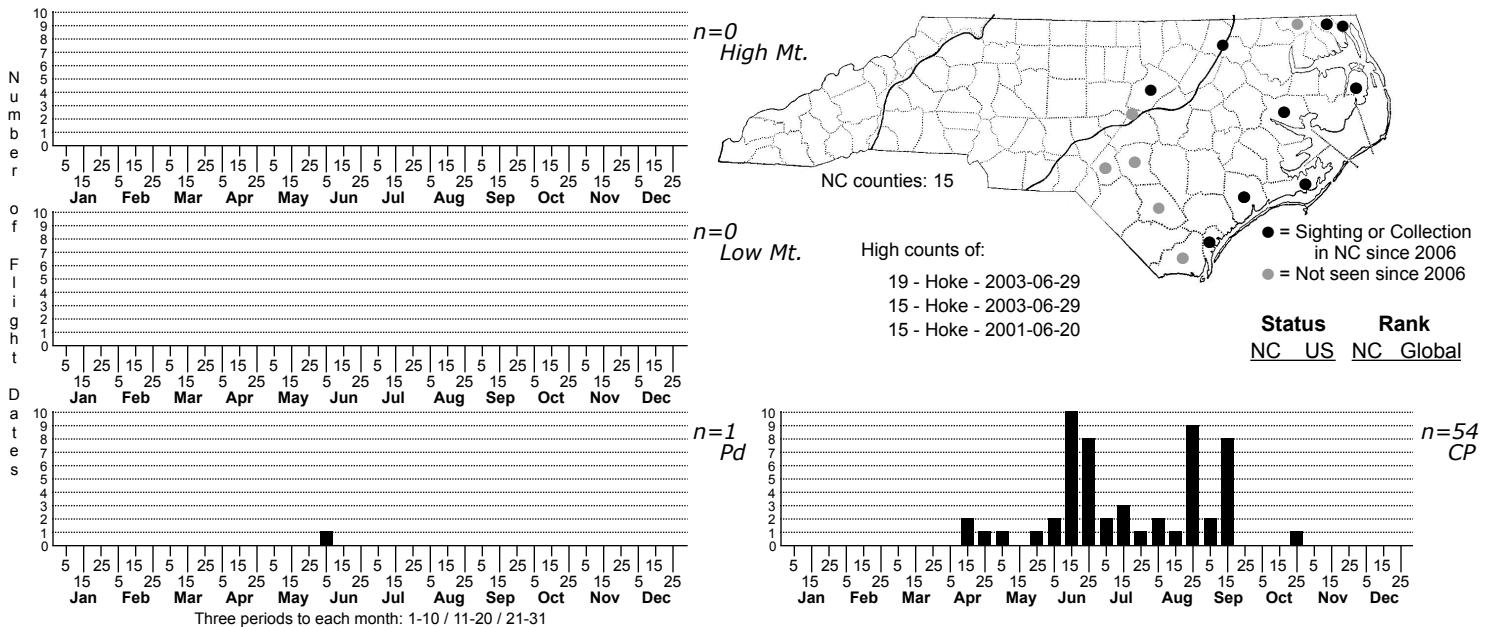


# *Acherdoa ferraria* Chocolate Moth



FAMILY: Noctuidae SUBFAMILY: Noctuinae TRIBE: Phosphilini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: This monotypic genus is known only from the southeastern US.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: No technical works appear to be available, but the species is well-described in Covell's Field Guide.

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: A medium sized, purplish- to chocolate-brown Noctuid; the zig-zagged antemedian is marked with white at the lower end, as is the lower portion of the postmedian and the outline of the reniform. Females are at least twice the size of males.

DISTRIBUTION: With the exception of one record from the Piedmont, our records are all from the Coastal Plain.

FLIGHT COMMENT: This species appears to have two broods (June and late August, early September) but sufficient data are lacking to confirm a pattern.

HABITAT: The largest number of our records come from streamhead swamp forests in the Sandhills, habitats where various species of *Smilax* are very common. In the Outer Coastal Plain, we have records from other wet habitats, including Coastal Fringe Evergreen Forests and Longleaf Pine savannas and flatwoods. Several records also common from maritime dunes on the barrier islands, where several species of *Smilax* occur in dry, open habitats.

FOOD: Wagner et al. (2011) report that larvae feed on greenbrier (*Smilax* spp.). There are BugGuide records of caterpillars feeding on Saw Greenbrier (*Smilax bona-nox*) in North Carolina and Alabama.

OBSERVATION METHODS: Adults seem to come readily to light but we have no records from bait or flowers. Carefully scanning greenbrier plants should produce larvae, a nice project for someone wishing to make a discovery.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G5 SNR [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 at least somewhat specialized in terms of food plants and habitats, but occurs in a fairly wide range of habitats over most of the Coastal Plain and appears to be secure within the state.