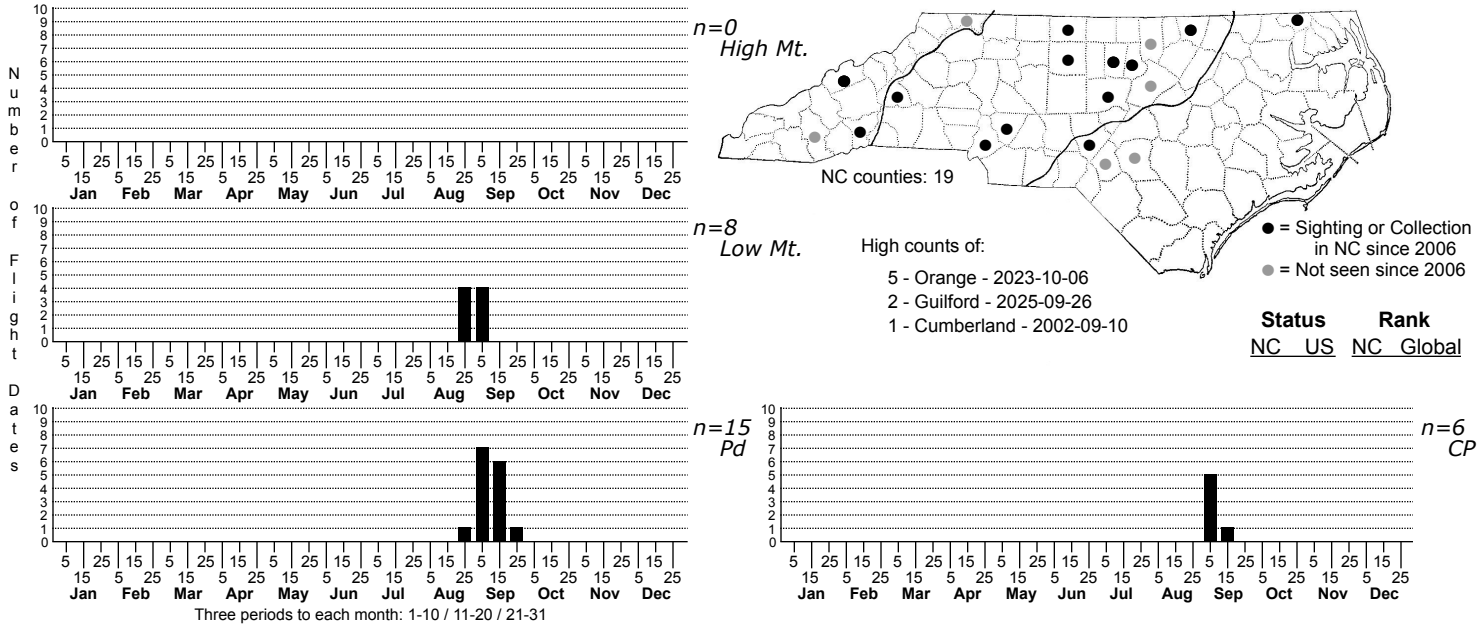
Cirrhophanus triangulifer Goldenrod Stowaway Moth



FAMILY: Noctuidae SUBFAMILY: Amphipyrinae TRIBE: Stiriini
TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS: A New World genus of some 13 very similar species found from Mexico through the United States and barely into Canada. One species occurs in North Carolina.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984); Beadle and Leckie (2012)
ONLINE PHOTOS:
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1954); Poole (1995)
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Wagner et al. (2011)

ID COMMENTS: A lovely species, whose pattern of orange or caramel streaks on a golden-yellow ground color distinguishes it from other golden-yellow moths, including Basilodes pepita, Stiria rugirfrons, and Argyrogramma verruca. Sexes are similar.

DISTRIBUTION: Cirrhophanus occurs from the Mountains to the Coastal Plain

FLIGHT COMMENT: Single brooded, with adults on the wing in August and early September

HABITAT: Our records come mainly from wet, open areas, including old fields, powerlines, borrow pits, and lakeshores, all habitats where Bidens are common. We have few, if any, records from Longleaf Pine savannas or wet maritime swales, habitats where Bidens are not considered important species (Weakley, 2015).

FOOD: Larvae feed on beggarticks (Bidens spp.) (Wagner et al., 2011). In North Carolina, we have found larvae on Bearded Beggarticks (B. aristosa).

OBSERVATION_METHODS: Attracted to light, but the moth has only a moderate number of records in the state, and one wonders if perhaps it is only weakly attracted. It is not recorded from nor expected at bait. Although it is not known if adults use nectar as a food source, they may occasionally be found on flowers during the day where they remain motionless.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G4 SNR [S3S4]

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

COMMENTS: For such a distinct moth, we have surprisingly few records, possibly reflecting a low tendency to come to lights. Host plants and habitats do not appear to be limiting factors, but more data are needed -- probably best obtained from larval surveys -- on the distribution, abundance, host plants, and habitats used in North Carolina before its conservation status can be accurately determined.