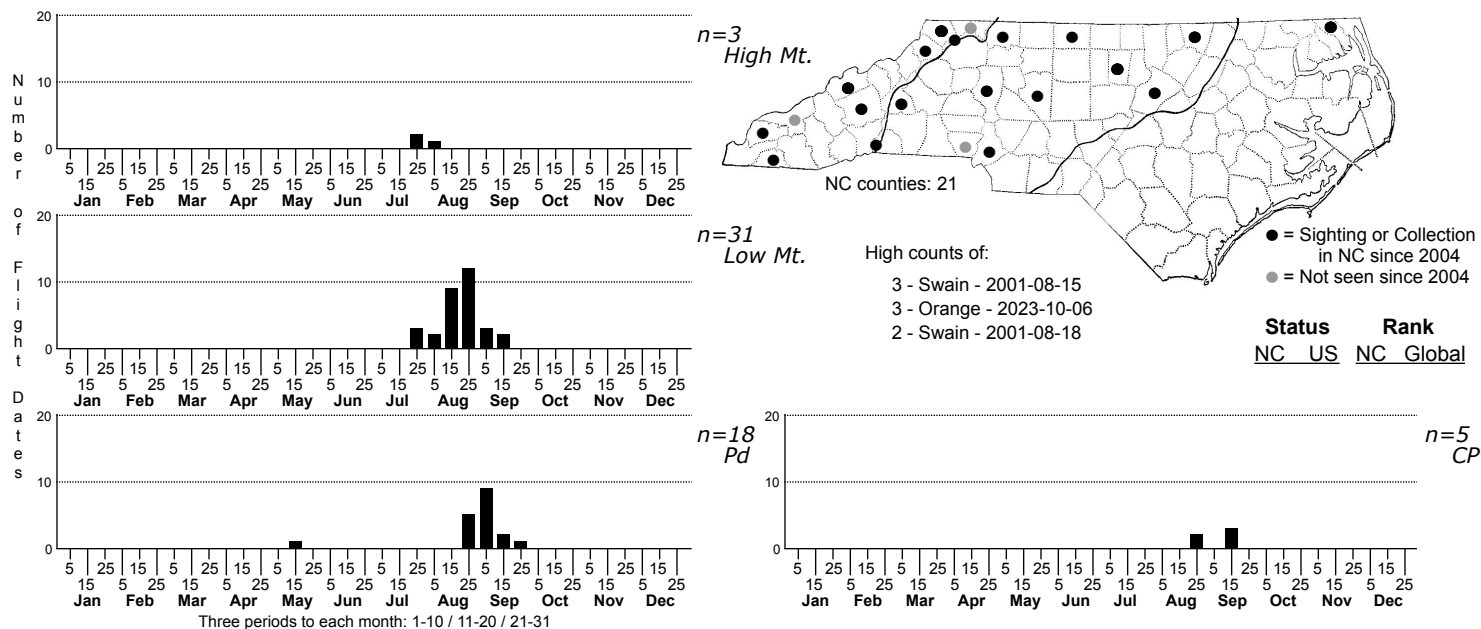


## *Basilodes pepita* Gold Moth



FAMILY: Noctuidae SUBFAMILY: Amphipyrinae TRIBE: Stiriini

TAXONOMIC\_COMMENTS: A very distinct genus of 7 species found from Costa Rica into Canada. One species reaches 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 (2005); Wagner et al. (2011)

ID COMMENTS: A large, lovely golden moth. The large, hollow spots and fine, dark postmedian distinguish this species from other bright yellow or gold-colored Noctuids, such as *Cirrophanus triangulifer*, *Stiria rugifrons*, and *Argyrogramma verruca*. Sexes are similar.

DISTRIBUTION: Found from the mountains into the western Coastal Plain.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Single brooded throughout the state, with adults on the wing primarily in late summer, from July through September.

HABITAT: The majority of our records come from wet, open habitats, where *Verbesina alternifolia* is common. A few records also come from upland habitats, including some from high elevations. Most of those appear come from mesic woodlands, including Rich Cove Forests and Northern Hardwoods. We have no records, however, from dense riparian forests in the Piedmont or Coastal Plain, nor from sandy or peaty wetlands, such as Longleaf Pine savannas or maritime swales.

FOOD: Larvae feed on the flowers of species of *Verbesina*. Wagner et al. (2011) mention that Wingstem (*V. alternifolia*) is commonly used, and the species has been recorded feeding on Wingstem and Yellow Crownbeard (*V. occidentalis*) in North Carolina.

OBSERVATION\_METHODS: Adults are attracted to light but it is unlikely they respond to bait. They may be found on *Verbesina* flowers where they lay eggs, but it is not likely that they nectar.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G4 S3S4

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

COMMENTS: We have relatively few records for this species but from a broad area of the state. 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.