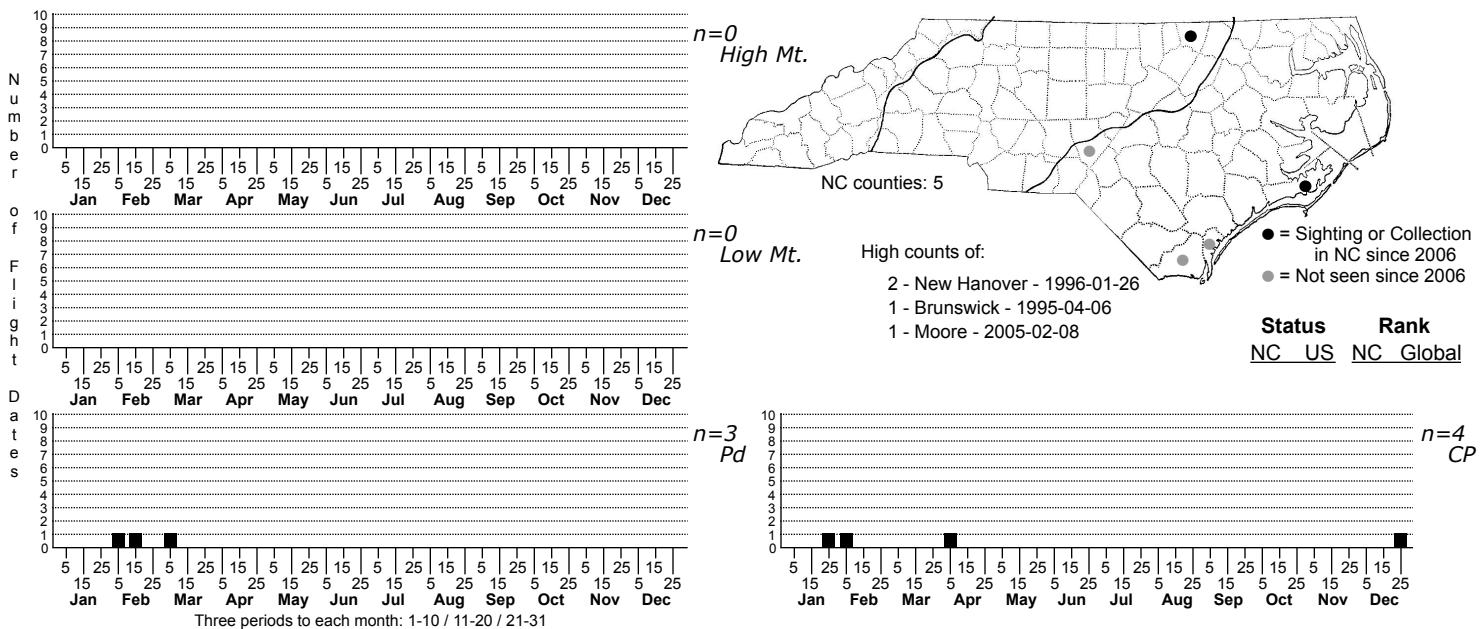


Lithophane laceyi None



FAMILY: Noctuidae SUBFAMILY: Noctuinae TRIBE: Xylenini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: One of 51 species in this genus that occur in North America (Lafontaine and Schmidt, 2010, 2015), 25 of which have been recorded in North Carolina.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS:

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Barnes and McDunnough (1913; original description)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: A pale gray, moderately large Pinion. As detailed in Barnes and MacDunnough's original description of this species, a short, slender basal dash is present, above which a patch of whitish gray -- paler than the ground color -- extends to the costa. The antemedian line is fairly prominent, double, filled with gray, and dentate; a distinctive w-mark is located below the cell, beyond which extends a dagger-shaped claviform spot. The large, figure-8 shaped orbicular is filled with the same lighter gray shade as the patch at the base of the costa and is the most contrasting feature of the forewing. The reniform is also large, but is filled with the same shade as the ground color and is less contrasting; a lower lobe is usually present and filled with a darker gray or is outlined more heavily in black. The postmedian is generally inconspicuous but the subterminal line is dark and prominent, usually represented by a series of sharp wedges. Hindwings are grayish-brown. Barnes and MacDunnough noted that *L. laceyi* can be distinguished from other members of the *Cinerosa* (= *grotei*) Group -- which appears to correspond to Forbes' *Lithophane* Group III -- by its lighter ground color, sharper and more contrasting lines, and by its more dentate antemedian line.

DISTRIBUTION: Our few records for this species come from the Coastal Plain and adjoining portions of the Piedmont.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Univoltine, with adults probably emerging in the fall and becoming active in the spring, when all of our records have been obtained.

HABITAT: Our records come primarily from fairly dry sites dominated by xerophytic oaks, including Maritime Forest, Coastal Fringe Sandhills, and Pine/Scrub-Oak Sandhills. A site in Warren County where this species has been observed multiple times is located next to a large reservoir, but contains at least a remnant of somewhat dry oak-hickory forest.

FOOD: Hosts are poorly documented, but we have one record for a larva feeding on cherry (<i>Prunus</i> sp.) in North Carolina.

OBSERVATION METHODS: Apparently comes fairly well to blacklights, but like most Pinions probably comes better to bait.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G4 SU

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: Considered rare but poorly known over most of its range (NatureServe Explorer, 2016). We have very few records for this species, and too little information to determine whether it is a true habitat specialist. As with other winter moths, which have been generally poorly surveyed, more information is needed before its conservation status can be accurately determined.