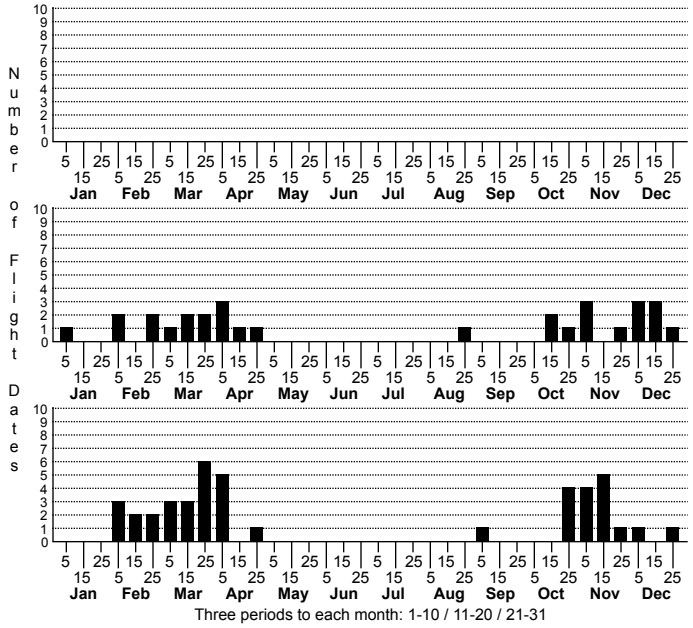
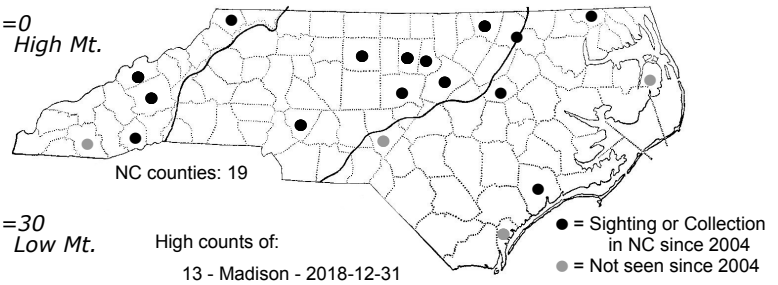
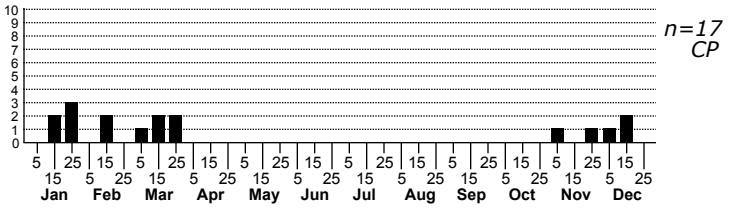
Sericaglaea signata Variable Sallow





Status NC	Status US	Rank NC	Rank Global



FAMILY: Noctuidae SUBFAMILY: Noctuinae TRIBE: Xylenini
TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS: A monotypic genus found across most of the eastern United States including North Carolina.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984)
ONLINE PHOTOS: MPG, BugGuide, BAMONA, BOLD
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1954)
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Forbes (1954); Wagner et al. (2011)

ID COMMENTS: A medium-sized Sallow. This winter moth is typically brown with variably contrasting yellow veins. In overall pattern, it is similar to Chaetoglaea sericea, but possesses a dentate rather than even postmedian line. The subterminal line is usually irregular in both species but often has a contrasting pale area immediately following it in Sericaglaea but is more concolorous on both sides of the subterminal in C. sericea. Sexes are similar.

DISTRIBUTION: Found across the state but absent from the high mountains and unrecorded from much of the Coastal Plain

FLIGHT COMMENT: Adults emerge in the late fall but do not breed until February and March preferring instead to hibernate through the coldest part of the season. It is usually one of the most regular larger noctuid species collected in the spring before the season is well under way, flying with Metaxaglaea violacea in the Coastal Plain but usually after Chaetoglaea species are done flying. Spring specimens can be quite worn and seemingly unlike fall specimens in pattern.

HABITAT: Recorded from various types of hardwood forests; we have no records from pine savannas or peatlands where hardwood trees are scarce to absent. In the Coastal Plain, our records come from both maritime forests and swamp forests. In the Piedmont, it has been recorded primarily in wet or mesic habitats, including reservoir shorelines, mafic slopes, and wooded residential neighborhoods. Our few record from the mountains also come from stands of riparian or mesic hardwoods.

FOOD: Recorded from many common trees, the larvae appear to favor cherry and several oak species. Exact foodplants being used in any one area are unknown.

OBSERVATION_METHODS: Adults come readily to lights and bait, but probably not to flowers since few are in bloom while the species is on the wing.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: G5 S4S5

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

COMMENTS: Although our records currently come from only a handful of the counties in the state, it will probably turn out to be fairly common throughout the state once more sampling is done in its late season flight period. There is no evidence to suggest that is restricted by either host plants or habitats, and it is likely to be secure within the state.