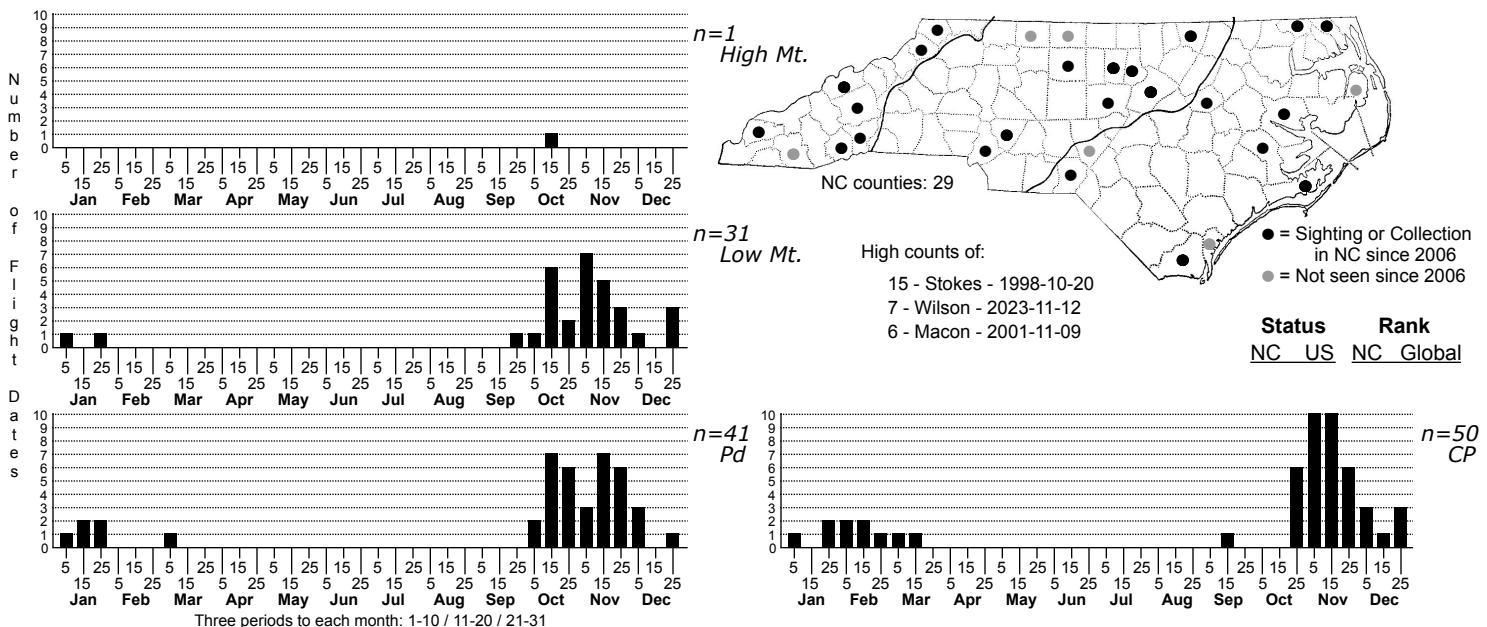


Metaxaglaea viatica Roadside Sallow



FAMILY: Noctuidae SUBFAMILY: Noctuinae TRIBE: Xylenini

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: One of five species in this genus that occur in North America, all of which have been recorded in North Carolina.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Covell (1984); Beadle and Leckie (2012)

ONLINE PHOTOS:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Schweitzer (1979)

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES: Schweitzer (1979); Wagner et al. (2011)

ID COMMENTS: *Metaxaglaea viatica*, *violacea*, and *semitaria* are all medium-large Noctuids with similar wing patterns: dentate postmedian and antemedian lines; large, red-encircled orbicular and reniform spots and a contrastingly dark band between the postmedian and the subterminal lines. Externally, they differ primarily in color, which can be subtle and highly dependent on the lighting conditions. The ground color of *viatica* is usually a leather brown, with less red/violet than *violacea* and less yellow/orange than *semitaria* (see Schweitzer (1979) for details).

DISTRIBUTION: Probably occurs statewide, from the barrier Islands to the high mountains.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Univoltine, with adults flying primarily in the fall and early winter, but with at least some individuals persisting into January, or even as late as March in the Coastal Plain.

HABITAT: Our records come from a variety of habitats, including Maritime Forests, Longleaf Pine Savannas and Sandhills, lakeshores and swamps, and upland ridges.

FOOD: Larvae are polyphagous, probably feeding primarily on members of the Rosaceae, and have been found in the wild on apple (<i>Malus</i>), chokeberry (<i>Aronia</i>), and mountain-ash (<i>Sorbus</i>) (Wagner et al., 2011). In captivity, larvae also accept blueberry (<i>Vaccinium</i>), Red Maple (<i>Acer rubrum</i>), and oak (<i>Quercus</i>), although with variable results and with at least some of these hosts becoming unsuitable as their leaves mature (Schweitzer, 1979). In North Carolina, a larva has been recorded feeding on Winged Elm (<i>Ulmus alata</i>).

OBSERVATION METHODS: Like other <i>Metaxaglaea</i>, this species appears to come well to both blacklights and bait.

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: With a statewide distribution, association with a number of common host plants and common habitats -- including residential areas -- this species appears to be secure within the state.