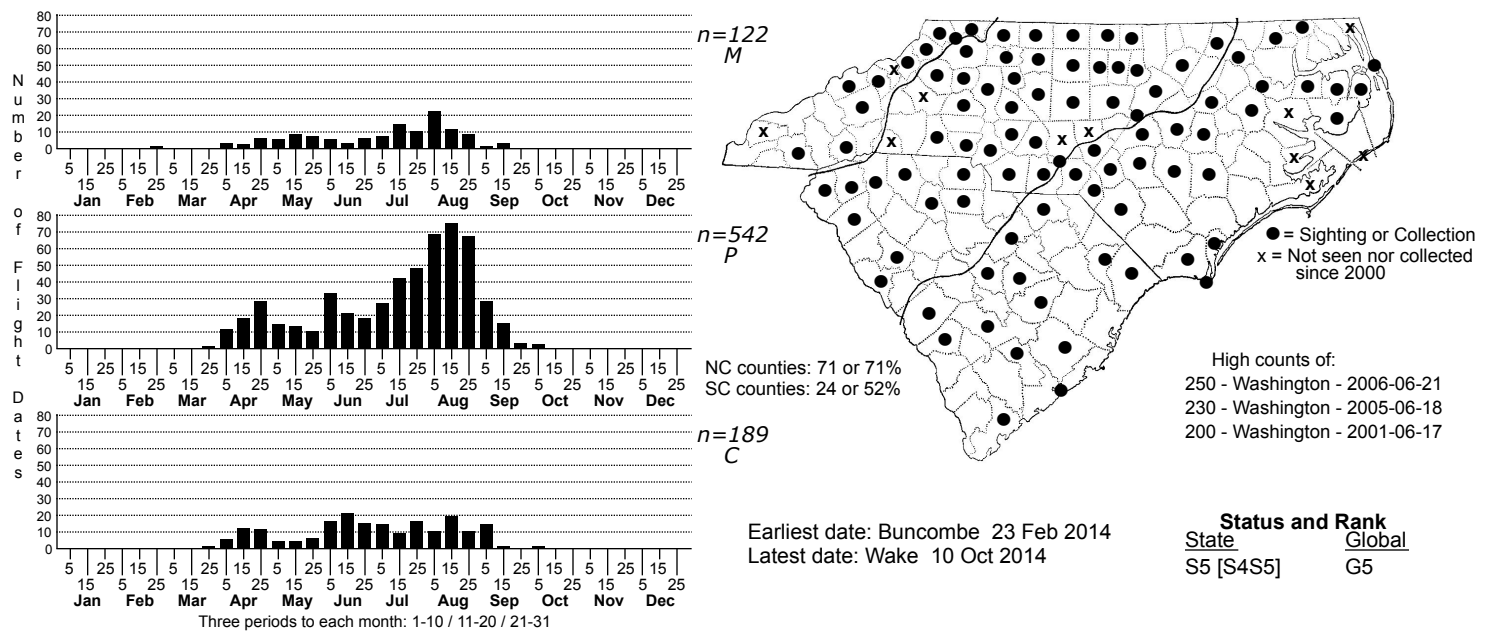


## Common Sootywing *Pholisora catullus*



**DISTRIBUTION:** Essentially statewide, but relatively few records for the southern and the northwestern parts of the Coastal Plain, and in the southwestern Mountains; nonetheless, it probably occurs in all counties.

**ABUNDANCE:** Uncommon in most places, but it may be locally fairly common to common. Despite it being fairly common in much of the Eastern U.S., it is not a common species in NC, at least not away from civilization. However, its abundance may be overlooked, as relatively little field work takes place in cultivated fields, pastures, and their edges. It has probably declined in numbers in recent decades, as most species of vacant lots and cultivated fields are losing habitat to development.

**FLIGHT PERIOD:** Apparently three broods in NC; a rather small brood from early April to mid-May downstate and to mid-June in the Mountains; seemingly two larger broods downstate from late May or early June to mid-September. One or two Mountain broods from late June into September.

**HABITAT:** This species is the most urban or suburban butterfly in NC. It is mostly found in margins of cultivated fields and pastures, vacant lots, and other places among humans much more than it can be found along remote wooded borders or powerline clearings, though it can be found in the latter habitats. It can be at times found in open, sunny gardens. It can also occur in brackish marshes, presumably where one of its foodplants -- Saltmarsh Water-hemp (*Amaranthus cannabinus*) -- is found.

**FOOD AND NECTAR PLANTS:** The foodplants are mostly weedy species such as Lamb's-quarters (*Chenopodium album*) and amaranths (*Amaranthus* spp.), which are found in vacant lots, pastures, etc. The species nectars on garden flowers, such as butterfly-bushes (*Buddleia* spp.), as well as clovers (*Trifolium* spp.) and other weedy flowers.

**COMMENTS:** To look for the Common Sootywing, don't waste your time along wooded edges and powerlines, but look in gardens where there are flowering plants such as butterfly-bushes, or in weedy lots and margins of croplands or pastures where vervains (*Verbena* spp.), clovers, and other introduced plants are blooming. The weedy fields and roadsides north of Lake Phelps have abounded with this species (at least in the past), and over 200 have been tallied on the butterfly count there on several occasions.