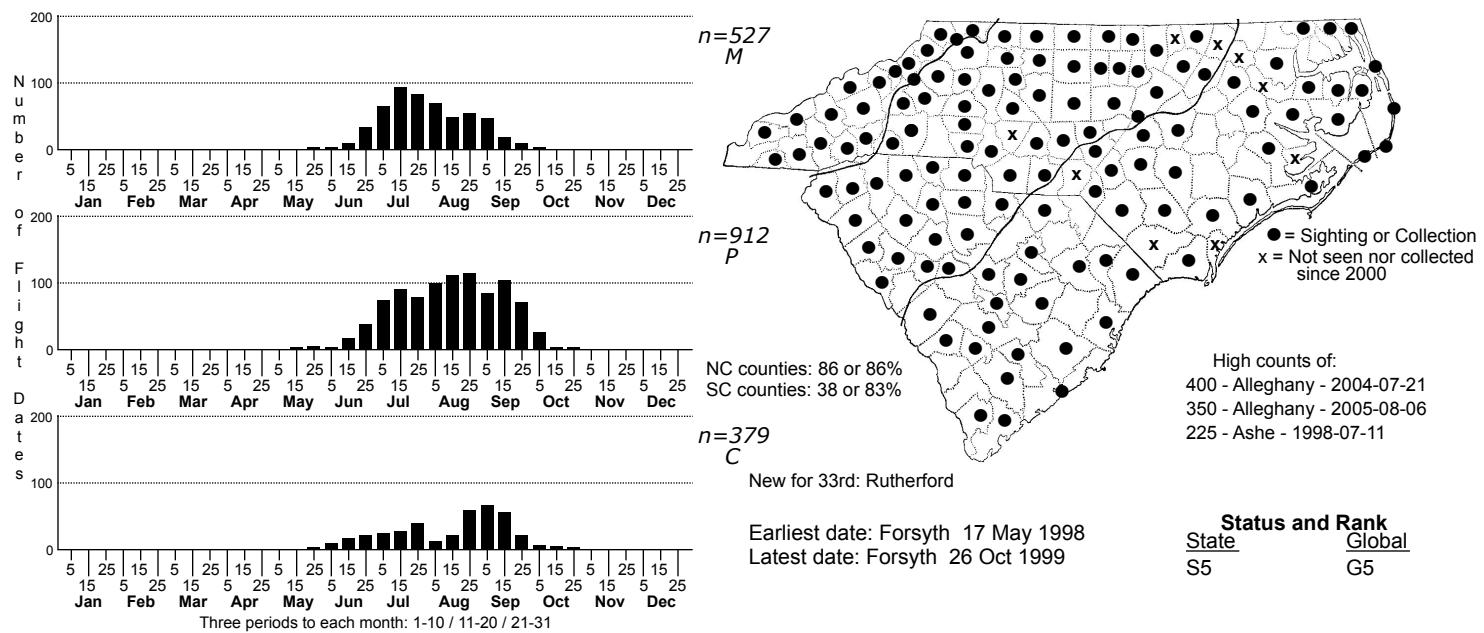


Common Wood-Nymph *Cercyonis pegala*



DISTRIBUTION: Statewide, probably occurring in all NC counties. Still lacking a number of records for the Coastal Plain, though presumed to occur in all of them.

ABUNDANCE: Locally common to very common in the northern Mountains, but mostly uncommon (to locally fairly common) elsewhere in the state. Can be numerous on the Outer Banks. Seems quite scarce in many counties, especially in much of the Coastal Plain, despite this being considered a common butterfly in the Eastern United States.

FLIGHT PERIOD: A single, long brood; continuous presence in NC from the end of May or early June to late October. However, many individuals apparently aestivate for awhile in midsummer, especially in August when a clear drop in numbers is evident. Evidence of the "single-broodedness" of the species can be seen in fall, when individuals are quite faded, and the ochre forewing band is often worn to a white color. This is one of the latest of the common butterflies to appear each year, usually not being numerous until late June.

HABITAT: Quite varied; it occurs in more open areas than most of the satyrs, ranging from dunes, savannas, wooded edges, old fields, meadows, powerline clearings, and many other semi-open areas. It is not usually seen in woodland interiors, nor is it typical of cultivated fields or gardens. In the Mountains, the species can be quite numerous in meadows, where the adults are not in evidence until flushed nearly underfoot.

FOOD AND NECTAR PLANTS: Foodplants are grasses. The species seldom nectars; adult foods are those typical of satyrs, pearly-eyes, etc. -- sap, animal droppings, moisture, etc.

COMMENTS: This is a frequently seen butterfly near maritime thickets, brackish marsh edges, savannas, and other semi-open places in the lower Coastal Plain. They range well into the Mountains, where seen over 4000 feet in elevation. Some meadows in Ashe and Alleghany counties teem with this species, and a remarkable one-day count of 400 was made in the latter county in 2004. In fact, the three highest one-day totals were made in these two Mountain counties, which border VA.