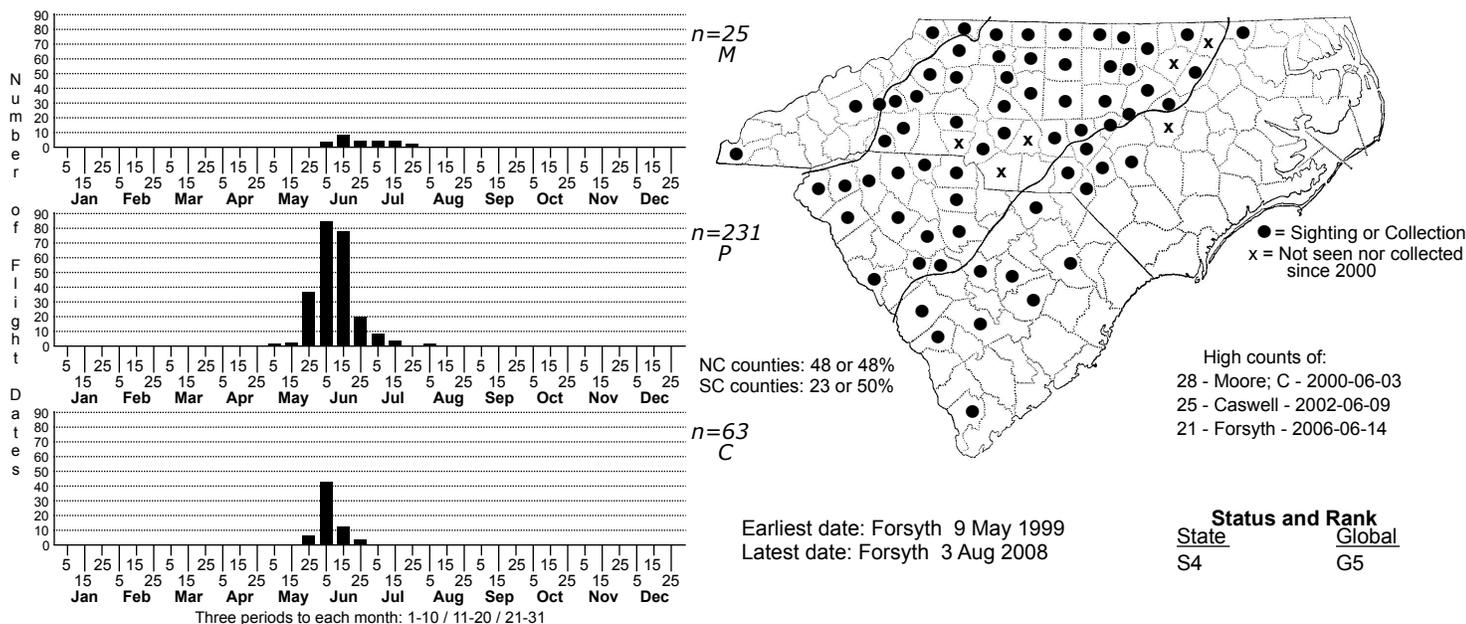


Coral Hairstreak *Satyrium titus*



DISTRIBUTION: Throughout the Piedmont and extreme western Coastal Plain, at least in the Sandhills portion of the latter province. Only four known counties reported for the Mountains; presumably very scarce in that province. The 2023 record from Cherokee County, in the western tip of the state, fills in a huge gap in the state range; however, it is not unexpected, as that county contains large areas of elevation below 2000 feet.

ABUNDANCE: Generally uncommon in the Piedmont; rare to uncommon in the Sandhills. Very rare in the Mountains, where it could occur over most of the province, but so far only known from counties along the VA line and in Buncombe and Cherokee counties. There have been relatively few records in recent years, especially in the eastern Piedmont, but is this due to decreased searching for it? Or are its early succession habitats being cleared, herbicided, or becoming overgrown?

FLIGHT PERIOD: One brood; late May to mid-July downstate, with a peak during the first half of June. In the Mountains, it flies from early June to late July.

HABITAT: Old fields and borders of upland woods are favored habitats. Powerline clearings, brushy thickets, etc., are also suitable habitats. It is scarce or absent in moist habitats. Of the *Satyrium* species, it occurs in more open areas than all others.

FOOD AND NECTAR PLANTS: Species of *Prunus*, mainly Black Cherry (*P. serotina*) and plums, are favored foodplants. Black Cherry and Chickasaw Plum (*P. angustifolia*) are common Piedmont species of old fields, clearcuts, etc. The species nectars especially on Butterfly Milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*). Other flowers are used much less frequently -- New Jersey Tea (*Ceanothus americanus*), Indian-hemp (*Apocynum cannabinum*), Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*), and others.

COMMENTS: Many hairstreaks are notoriously difficult to find; most are rare or uncommon, and many spend the majority of their time perched on leaves of trees, where they are hard to locate. Fortunately, the distinctive Coral Hairstreak is easily searched for, though not necessarily found. Scan blooming Butterfly Milkweeds growing along dry woodland borders, along edges of thickets, and in powerline clearings. As with most hairstreaks, groups are seldom found, but you may find three or four individuals of Coral Hairstreaks on an outing, with a diligent search of this conspicuous wildflower. Individuals are tame on the flowers and are easily studied.