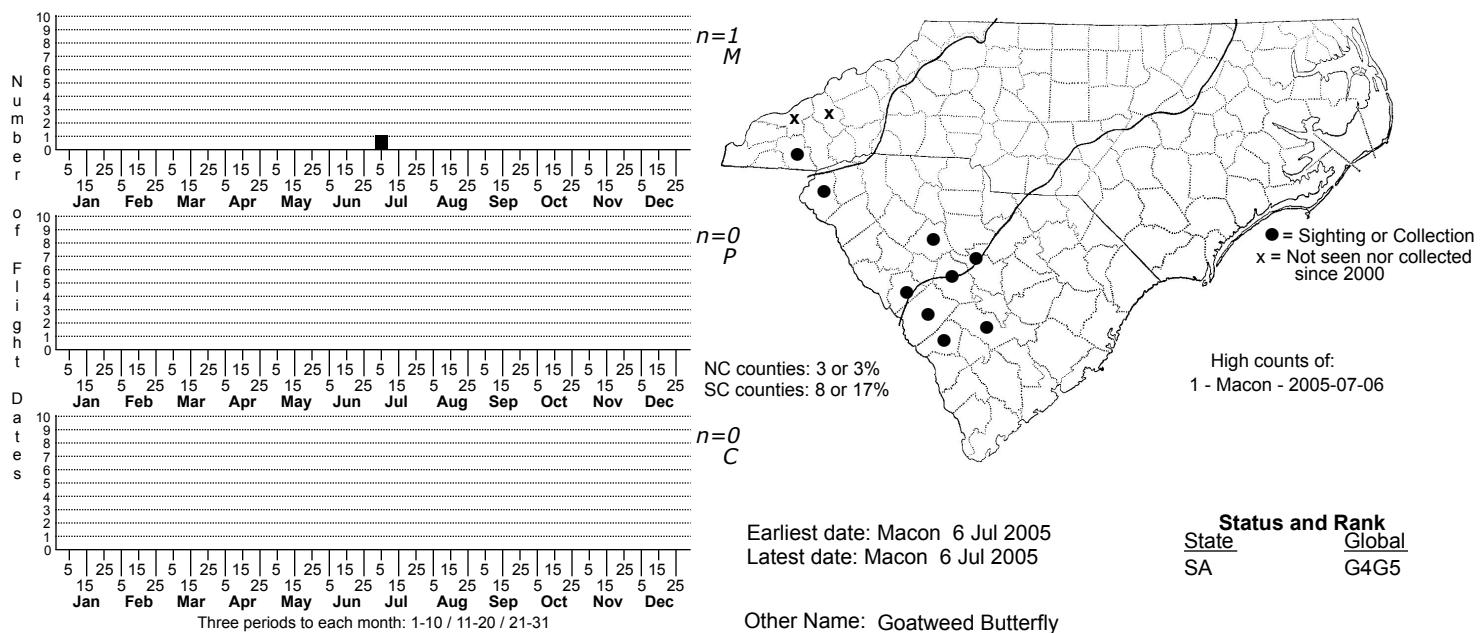


# Goatweed Leafwing *Anaea andria*



**DISTRIBUTION:** Casual migrant/stray; three county records (Swain, Haywood, and Macon), in the southwestern Mountains.

**ABUNDANCE:** This species breeds in the Midwestern states, and is regular east to east-central TN and western and southern GA, as well as in central SC. The NC records, and a record for Oconee County, SC, are probably of migrants (from TN or GA). It would be expected to occur as a migrant or vagrant at times in the extreme southwestern counties (Cherokee, Clay, and Graham) where not yet recorded. As it breeds regularly in central SC (probably north to Lexington and Richland counties), a stray record for the southern NC counties in the Coastal Plain or Piedmont would also be remotely possible.

**FLIGHT PERIOD:** Glassberg (1999) states: "2 broods, generally June/July - Aug; Aug - Oct, overwintering as adults and flying April - May". The only NC date available to us is one seen on July 6, 2005.

**HABITAT:** Open upland woods and scrub; wooded edges.

**FOOD AND NECTAR PLANTS:** The foodplants are crotons/goatweeds (*Croton* spp.), especially *C. monanthogynus* and *C. capitatus*. The former (a native species) is found in NC only in Madison County, where very rare; the latter (not a native species in the Atlantic Coast states) is rare in NC, but is the foodplant in central SC. Adults do not nectar, but feed on sap, carrion, decaying fruit, etc.

**COMMENTS:** Several biologists relocated a population of the rare *Croton monanthogynus* in the Hot Springs part of Madison County in late July 2012, but field work in the general area failed to turn up any leafwings. In addition, much field work in the county from spring to fall 2012, within a few miles of this plant population, yielded no leafwings. Thus, the butterfly is presumed to not have any breeding population there. The species is therefore most likely to be encountered by accident, mainly in the extreme southwestern corner of the state. The species has been reported from Haywood County in Great Smoky Mountains National Park (fide Don DeFoe). Whether the Swain County record is also from the park is not known to us. The first NC report in a number of decades was one seen by Jonathan Mays in Macon County in 2005. Fortunately, he saw it perched, both from above and below. (Leafwings of all species are more often seen in flight only, perching inconspicuously on tree trunks, and easily overlooked unless an observer sees it landing on the trunk.)

Of considerable interest was the finding of this species, documented with photos, at a site in Orangeburg County, SC, in late March 2009 and again in early September. Many field trips to this site from 2010 - 2024 have found multiple individuals, clearly indicating an established resident population. The foodplant at this site is *Croton capitatus*. Whether the butterfly species is resident elsewhere in southern or southwestern SC is uncertain, though one was seen in Aiken County in 2009, and another was seen in the county in 2010, suggesting that it might be a breeding species in that county. A 2018 record for Newberry County was likely of a migrant/stray, but a record in 2020 from Lexington County could possibly represent a breeding site there. There is also a recent record from nearby Richland County. Thus, it almost certainly has several breeding sites in central and west-central SC.