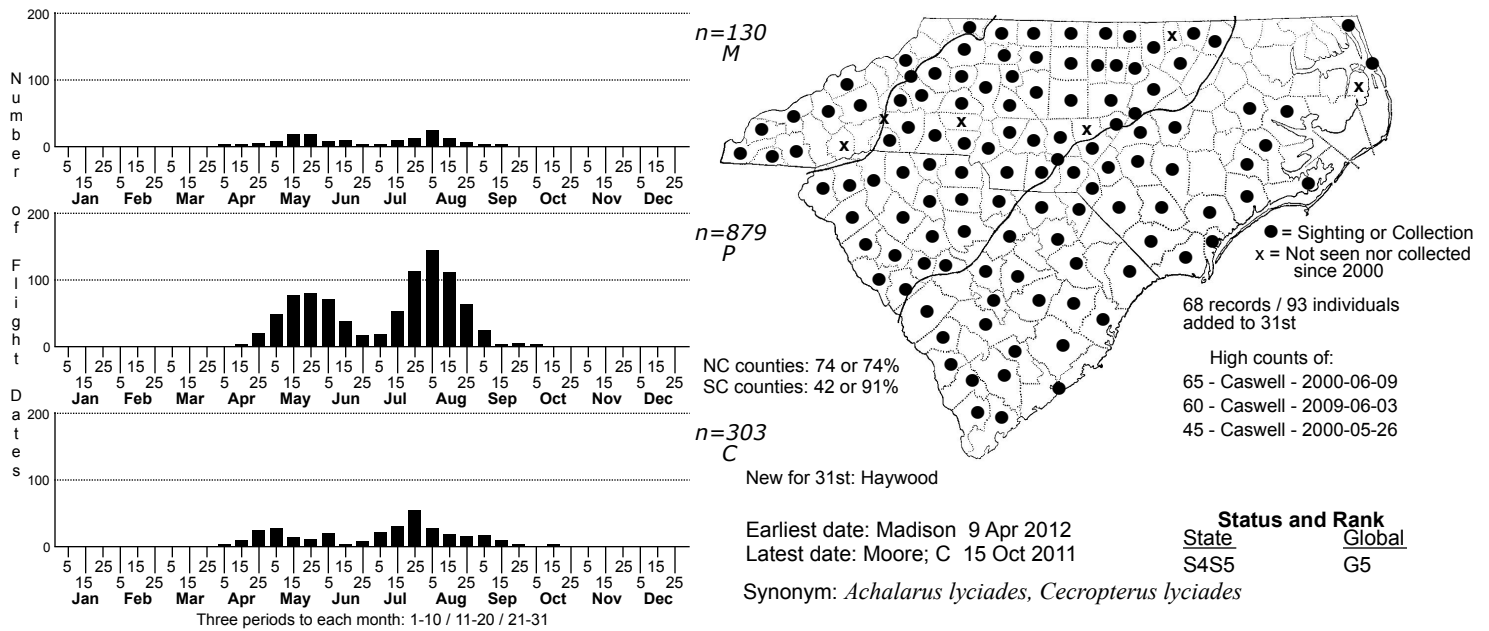


# Hoary Edge *Thorybes lyciades*



**DISTRIBUTION:** Nearly statewide, but possibly absent in the higher Mountains and in most of the northern Mountains. Throughout the Piedmont and the southern Coastal Plain, though there is a major gap in the county dot map in the northern Coastal Plain (where obviously very scarce). The gap in the west-central Coastal Plain is an artifact of observation effort.

**ABUNDANCE:** Uncommon to fairly common in the lower Piedmont and upper Coastal Plain; most numerous (at times common) in the Sandhills. Uncommon in many parts of the state, such as the upper Piedmont and the southeastern Coastal Plain. Rare in the Mountains, where probably found only at the lower elevations. Rare in the central Coastal Plain, and very rare in the northern counties in the Coastal Plain (where certainly not just an artifact of field work). It might be truly absent in a few such northeastern Coastal Plain counties owing to a scarcity of suitable dry/upland habitats.

**FLIGHT PERIOD:** Two distinct broods -- in the Coastal Plain from mid-April to mid-June, and early July to mid-September, rarely mid-October. Broods in the Piedmont fly slightly later -- late April to late June, and early or mid-July to early or mid-September, rarely to early October. The Mountain flights are from early May to mid- or late June, and mid-July to the end of August. The second brood is apparently larger than the first, even though the three highest counts for the state have been from the first brood (but all from the same general area in Caswell County).

**HABITAT:** This is a butterfly of dry places, in partial sun. It is found in xeric, sandy open woods in the Sandhills, around rock outcrops in the Piedmont, along margins of dry woods, dry powerline clearings, old fields, etc. It is infrequently found in wetlands, though it does wander to sites such as lakeshores, where it nectars on plants such as Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*).

**FOOD AND NECTAR PLANTS:** The foodplants are herbaceous legumes, especially tick-trefoils/beggar's-lice (*Desmodium* spp.). The species nectars on many flowers.

**COMMENTS:** This species is somewhat reminiscent of the much more abundant Silver-spotted Skipper, but whereas the latter is found practically anywhere, the Hoary Edge normally is scarce in damp places. It likes to perch on warm, sunny rock outcrops, and it is also characteristic of the hot sandy soils of sandhills habitats in the Coastal Plain. But, even in its favored habitats, it is usually outnumbered by its "big cousin", the Silver-spotted Skipper.