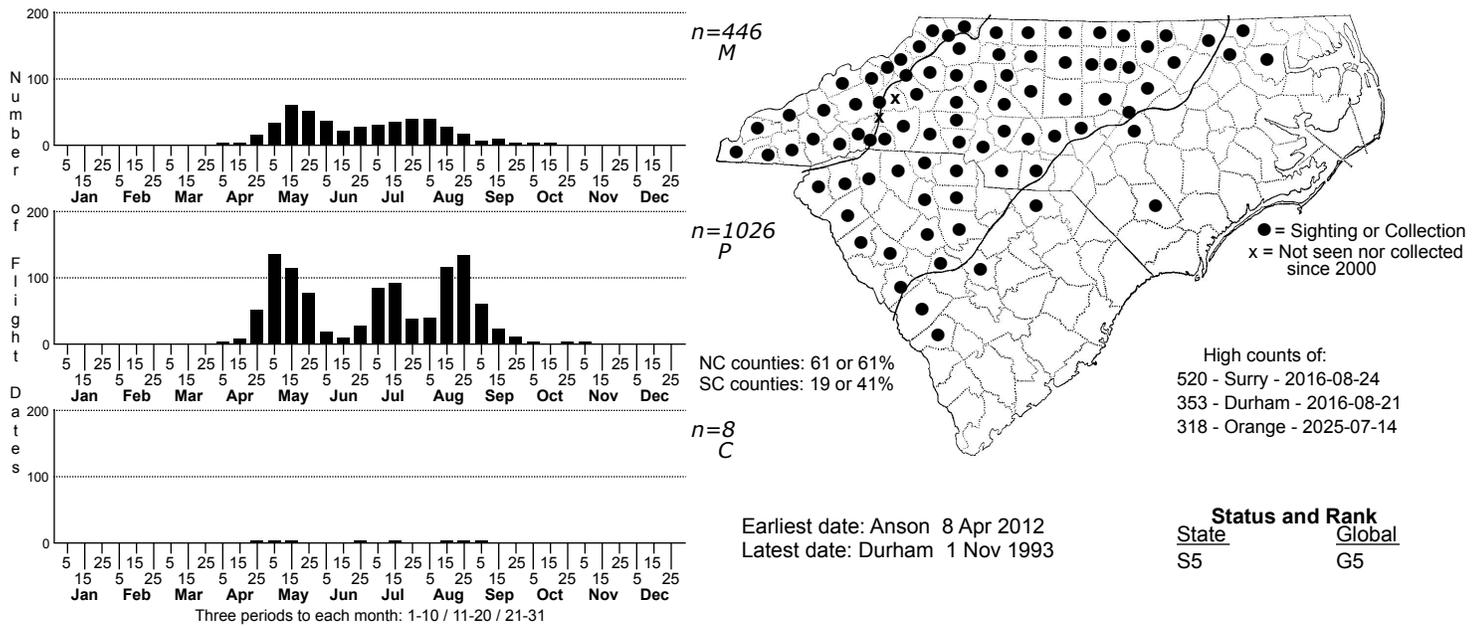


Silvery Checkerspot *Chlosyne nycteis*



DISTRIBUTION: Throughout the Mountains, and essentially throughout the Piedmont. Known from the Coastal Plain only close to the Roanoke River in Halifax, Northampton, and Bertie counties; and in 2022 along the Cape Fear River as far downriver as Bladen County (though no records yet from upriver Cumberland County).

ABUNDANCE: A noticeably colonial species; local, but fairly common to occasionally very common where found, in both the Mountains and in most of the Piedmont. Interestingly, two of our largest counts have come from near the eastern edge of the range. However, it is quite rare in the Piedmont counties that border the Coastal Plain, and also in the upper Coastal Plain.

FLIGHT PERIOD: Three broods; in the Piedmont and lower elevations of the Mountains, the first brood is from the latter half of April to early or mid-June. In these areas, the second brood is from mid-June to early August (and to late August in the Mountains); a third brood begins in mid-August in the Piedmont and in September in the Mountains; a few individuals linger into October, but the flights tend to be finished by the end of September. There might be just one brood in the higher Mountains (above 4000 feet); on some of these higher peaks, fresh individuals are seen in early and mid-June, and worn ones are found in mid-July.

HABITAT: Generally in moist areas -- in openings in floodplains, along moist woodland borders, and edges of wet thickets; however, also in dry places along wooded borders, even in woods on mountaintops (such as the top of Mount Jefferson). Often seen along sewerline clearings in floodplains, along dirt roads through bottomlands, etc.

FOOD AND NECTAR PLANTS: Foodplants are tall composites (Asteraceae), generally yellow-flowered species such as sunflowers (*Helianthus* spp.), Wingstem (*Verbesina alternifolia*), Yellow Crownbeard (*V. occidentalis*), and rosinweeds (*Silphium* spp.). The species also nectars on its foodplants, such as on rosinweeds, as well as other species. It frequently obtains moisture from moist dirt roads.

COMMENTS: This is one of the more colonial butterflies, as when one individual is seen, often five or more can be found with a little search. The species is strongly attracted to *Silphium* species that grow along wooded borders; when large clumps of them are in bloom in July and August, one should search the flowers for this butterfly. Some field guides and references seem to omit most of the NC Piedmont from the species' range, but the Silvery Checkerspot ranges east nearly to the edge of the province, and even extends into the Coastal Plain in the floodplain of the upper Roanoke River and the Cape Fear River. It may well be that the species has expanded its range eastward in the northeastern Piedmont and in the Roanoke River and Cape Fear floodplains in recent years, but this is just speculation. However, as we have records in the last ten years from essentially all Mountain and Piedmont counties, the species does seem to be slowly on the increase in NC.