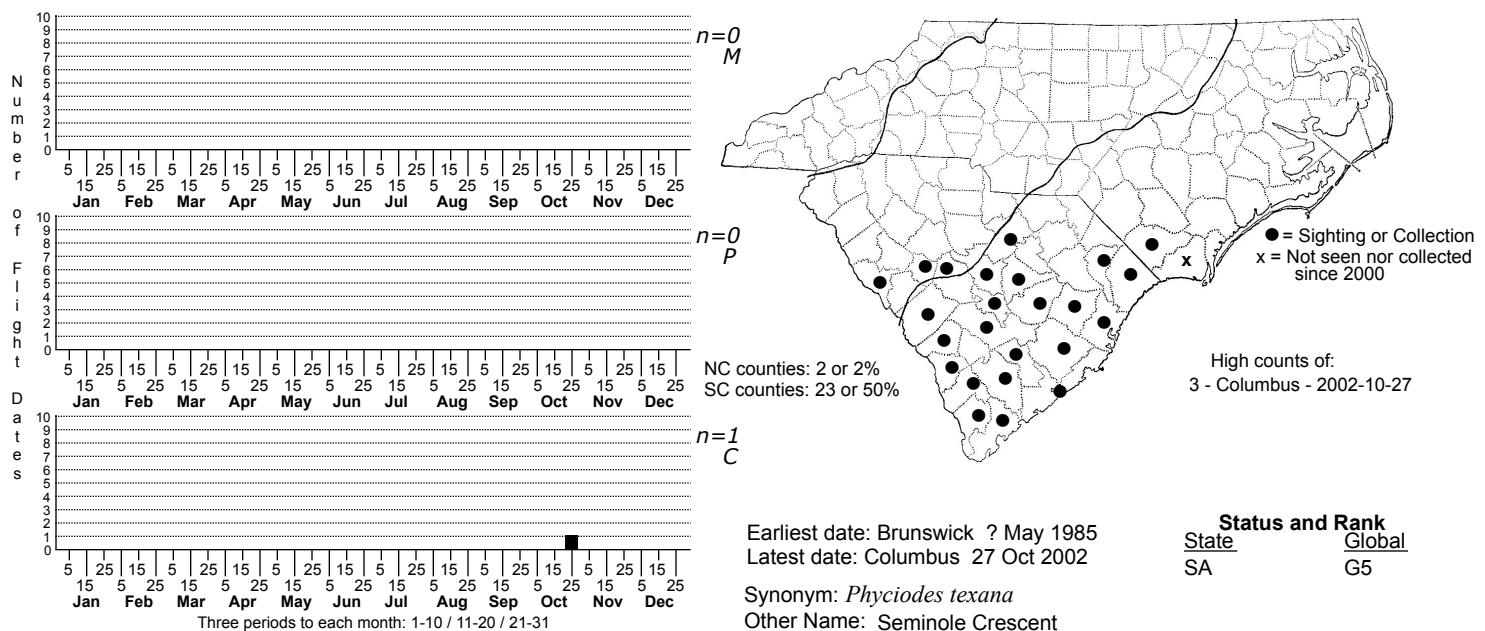


Texan Crescent *Anthanassa texana*



DISTRIBUTION: A presumed stray, known only from the extreme southeastern corner of the state, near the SC state line. Recorded in the 1980's from Brunswick County and in 2002 from Columbus County.

ABUNDANCE: Apparently a casual stray. There was a population explosion of the species in SC in 2002, and thus the discovery of a few crescents in Columbus County, NC, at a site just a few miles from the SC border, apparently reflected individuals dispersing from that larger population, because efforts to find a resident population at this site in more recent years has failed. And, despite a modest amount of field work in Brunswick County, there have been no recent reports of the species from that county.

FLIGHT PERIOD: Probably three broods, at least from SC to FL. If there are resident populations in NC, expected to fly in NC from late March or early April to late October, possibly into November in mild falls. NC records fall between May (unknown date) and late October.

HABITAT: Along the Atlantic coast, this taxon (the "Seminole" Texan Crescent [*Anthanassa texana seminole*]) is primarily found in bottomlands and swamps, especially in openings such as along the margins of roads through floodplains. The Columbus County individuals were found along a road margin near creeks that are tributaries to the Waccamaw River. The species is usually found in small sunlit openings in hardwood bottomlands and practically is never seen in full sun.

FOOD AND NECTAR PLANTS: The foodplants are various small members of the Acanthaceae family. Looseflower Water-willow (*Justicia ovata*) is a foodplant in GA and is likely the primary or sole foodplant in NC, if there are resident butterfly populations; this plant ranges over much of the NC Coastal Plain in swampy situations. Nectar plants are not well reported in the Carolinas, though large numbers of individuals in the Carolinas in October 2002 were nectaring on various asters (*Symphyotrichum* spp.).

COMMENTS: Randy Emmitt decided to try to find this species in NC in late October 2002 after visiting one or two known sites in SC, which was undergoing a boom in the populations in that year. Sure enough, near the Waccamaw River he found three moderately worn adults on October 27, thinking that this was a first state record. News of this discovery prompted a response from Leroy Koehn, who had collected the species in Brunswick County, NC, in May 1985 and September 1987. Oddly, these 1980's records had apparently never been made public, as no field guide, reference book, or website has shown the range to include NC.

I have made several trips between 2003 and 2006 to the Waccamaw River area where Emmitt saw his crescents in 2002. Unfortunately, I have found no individuals, and I strongly suspect those adults were strays from a breeding population in nearby SC. However, strays do not normally appear in spring, so the May NC record could well indicate that the species is or was, indeed, a very rare resident in the state. Nonetheless, because of the lack of any additional records, and because there has been a moderate amount of recent field work in potential habitat along the Waccamaw and Lumber rivers, the NC Natural Heritage Program is no longer considering this as a likely breeding species in the state, and is considering it as an accidental/stray visitor. The species is a sporadic/explosive breeder in SC (a few big years among many poor ones); thus, small colonies can easily go unnoticed for years, and we hope there are a few breeding colonies to be discovered in the southeastern part of NC.