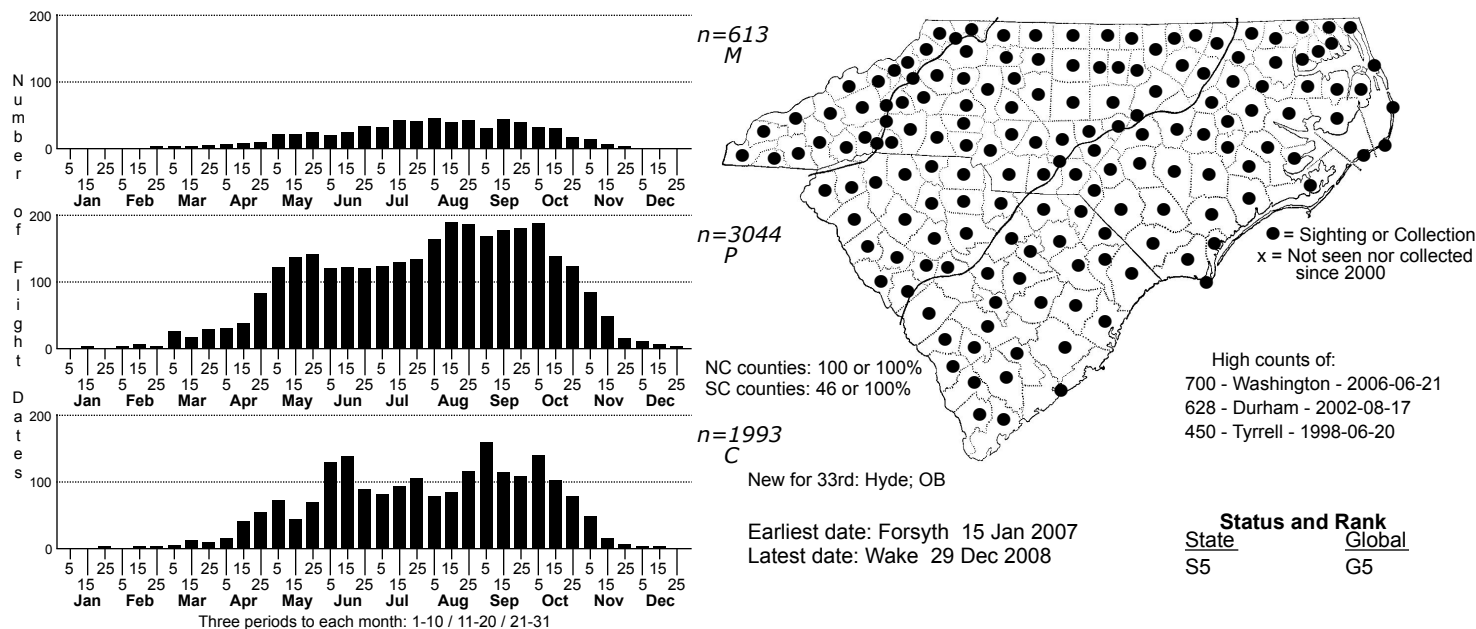


Variegated Fritillary *Euptoieta claudia*



DISTRIBUTION: Statewide; occurs in all 100 counties.

ABUNDANCE: Common to locally very common in the Coastal Plain; common in the eastern and southern Piedmont; fairly common in the northwestern Piedmont and in the Mountains. Noticeably more numerous in the eastern half of the state than in the western half.

FLIGHT PERIOD: Three, and possibly four, broods; however, it has a continuous presence in NC from March (rarely from January) into December. It is definitely a "late" flier among our widespread and common butterflies and is not numerous until June. It is not clear if it is a breeding resident in all of the state or is simply a migrant to at least the western portions.

HABITAT: Widespread in open disturbed habitats -- fields, roadsides, cultivated areas, vacant lots, dunes, etc. This is not a woodland species, nor is it common in "pristine" habitats such as savannas. It is often seen in arboreturns and gardens, and it also frequents croplands with some flowers (and can occasionally be very common in some cultivated fields).

FOOD AND NECTAR PLANTS: Foodplants are varied; violets (*Viola* spp.), passionflowers (*Passiflora* spp.), etc. I have seen females ovipositing on Common Blue Violet (*V. sororia*) along a field edge. Nectar plants are extremely varied, with no particular group singled out.

COMMENTS: This is the only fritillary seen in most of the Coastal Plain. It is also seen along with the Great Spangled, Meadow, and Aphrodite fritillaries in Mountain meadows. Some of the populations seen in summer and fall are probably migrants from farther south. It remains common in parts of NC well into October, when relatively few species are still numerous. On warm days in winter, one or two can at times be seen, as well.