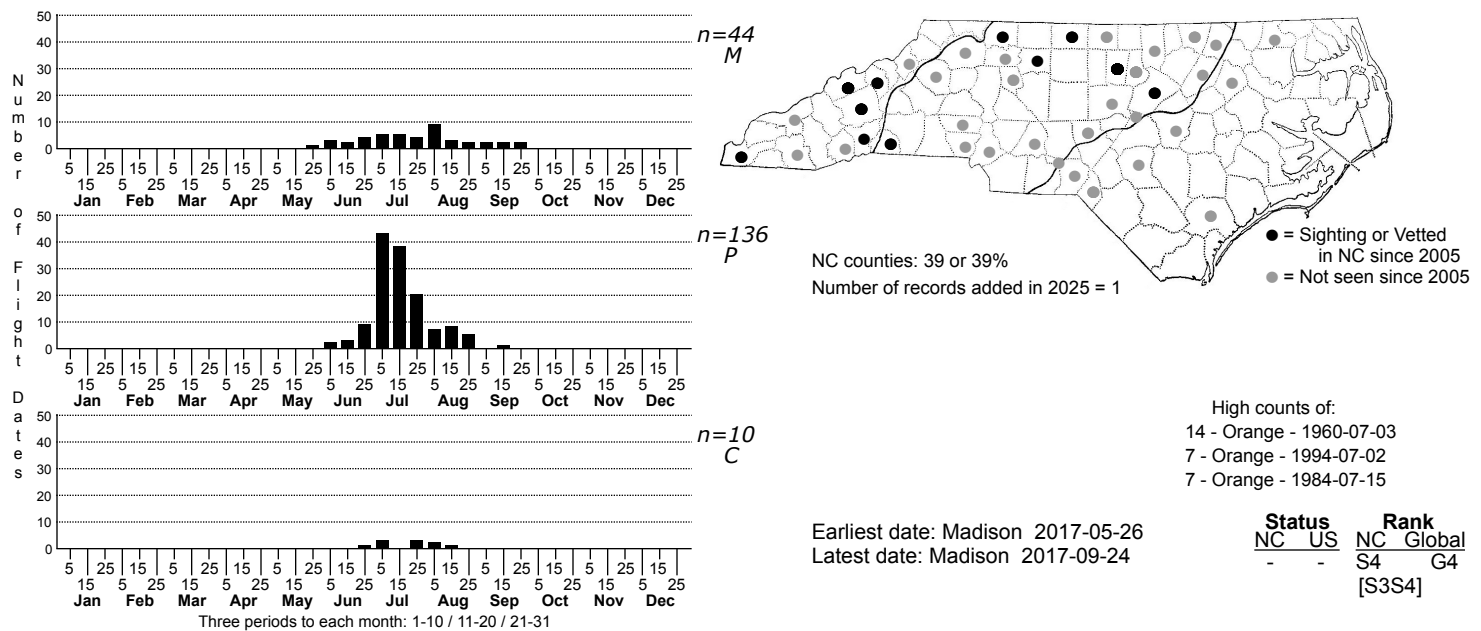


Macromia alleghaniensis Allegheny River Cruiser



DISTRIBUTION: Scattered across the mountains, Piedmont, and western Coastal Plain, with a disjunct (?) record from Pender County. Though probably occurring in all counties east to Hertford, Edgecombe, Cumberland, and Scotland, the range is spotty, probably owing mainly to the difficulty of identification.

ABUNDANCE: Apparently uncommon in the mountains, Piedmont, and extreme western Coastal Plain -- at least in the past. Very rare to absent over nearly all of the eastern two-thirds of the Coastal Plain. Poorly known by most recent observers because of the difficulty in separation from both the Swift River Cruiser and the Mountain River Cruiser without a specimen or multiple photos of the same individual from different angles. It should not be assumed to have declined in the several decades since Cuyler collected so many specimens. Nonetheless, only four observers have successfully/conclusively photographed this species in the state, and by now (2020's), it could possibly be rare, except along the French Broad River.

FLIGHT: The flight in the Piedmont and mountains occurs between early June and late September. This is likely also the flight period in the Coastal Plain, but known records there -- all historical -- fall in a narrower range from late June to mid-August.

HABITAT: Creeks and rivers.

BEHAVIOR: Similar to other river cruisers, in that males cruise back and forth quickly along the length of the stream or river. Adults often forage in long patrols along wooded roads and wide trails, typically higher later in the day. They can be difficult to see perched.

COMMENTS: Though an observer without a net can frequently identify a "river cruiser" by its bright green eyes, yellow spots or bands on the black abdomen, and rapid back and forth cruising along a creek or a dirt road, identification of most species is tricky, even when seen perched. Often, they must be identified in the hand, or collected to study the genitalia. This species has a nearly complete yellow ring on abdominal segment 2 (a slight break dorsally). Refer to reference books and photos for identification. The scarcity of observational data in NC is understandable, as such data likely would be inconclusive or questionable (without photo or specimen). Thankfully, several people in the mountains have provided excellent recent documentation through photographs. However, there are disturbingly very few photos to document recent records from the Piedmont. Our website editors carefully scrutinized photo reports of all of the river cruisers (in late 2016), and several photos had been misidentified. Thus, the number of counties and records for most species of river cruisers changed due to moving records from one species to another. Though the N.C. Natural Heritage Program has retained a State Rank of S4, a revised (less numerous) rank of S3S4 might be better, if not even S3.