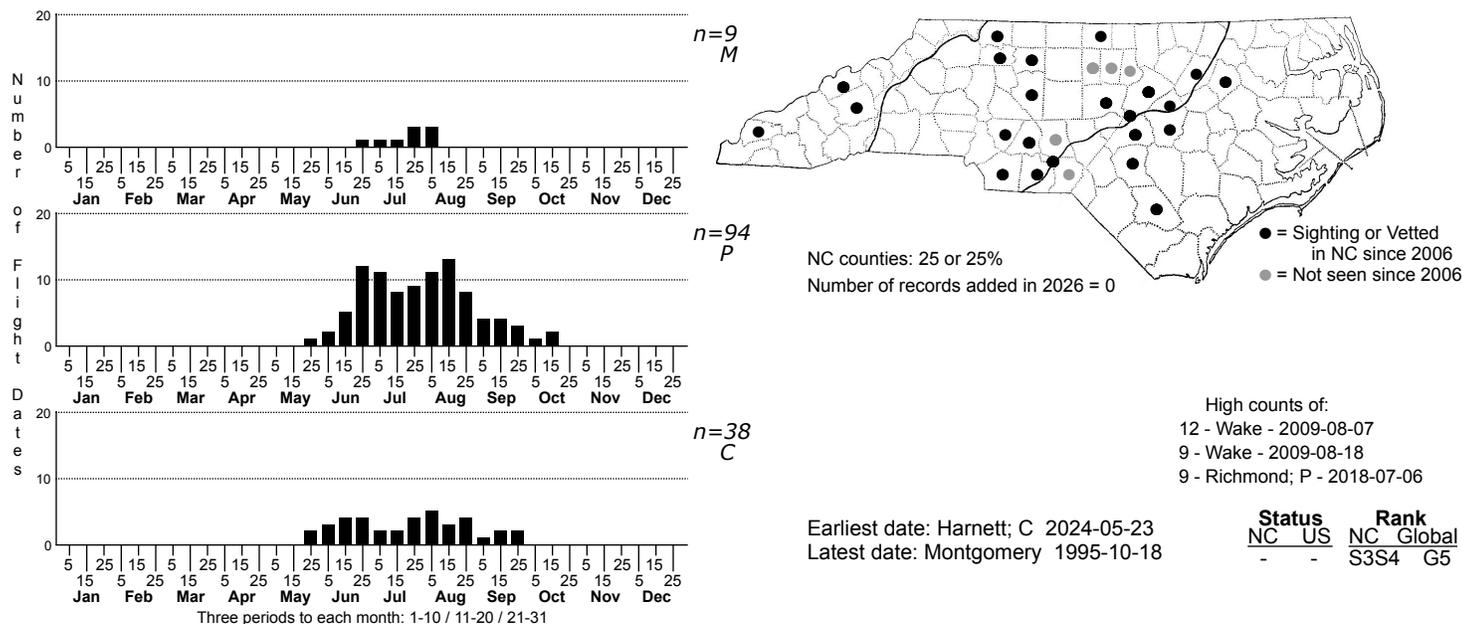


Erpetogomphus designatus Eastern Ringtail



DISTRIBUTION: Mainly found in the Piedmont and the adjacent southwestern Coastal Plain, but finally found in the Mountains -- in 2011 in Madison and Buncombe counties (mostly close to the French Broad River), and in Graham County in 2014. (Range maps in references tend to show the western 60-80% of the state within the range, and Paulson [2011] even shows the entire state within the range). Likely occurs in the western Piedmont, where disturbingly lacking of records south and southwest of Yadkin County.

ABUNDANCE: Rare to locally uncommon in the central and eastern portions of the Piedmont. Rare in the Coastal Plain portion of the range, and obviously rare and local in the lower elevations of the Mountains and in the western Piedmont. However, seems to be increasing in numbers and range in the lower Piedmont and upper Coastal Plain, with many records since 2020, especially in Harnett County.

FLIGHT: The flight in the Piedmont occurs between late May and mid-October, with the Coastal Plain flight slightly narrower in time -- about late May to late September. The Mountain records fall in a narrow window between late June and early August, though the flight period there is certainly wider, and likely extends into September.

HABITAT: Generally at brownwater rivers and wide streams, especially with riffles and somewhat fast flow. All records from the Coastal Plain seem to be close to brownwater rivers -- Tar, Neuse, and Cape Fear.

BEHAVIOR: Not as confined to rivers and streams and their margins as some NC clubtails; they often move to open fields, jeep roads, etc., well away from flowing waters. Perches on low vegetation, banks, rocks along shores of rivers and streams, and even on the ground. In fact, most photos in NC are of individuals well away from water.

COMMENTS: Until a few years ago, there were very few recent records for this "widespread" species. However, in the past 15 years there have been numerous records from the Neuse River just below the Falls Lake dam (Wake County), and near the Cape Fear River in the Lillington area (Harnett County). There are also a handful of recent records from Buncombe and Madison counties, mainly not far from the French Broad River. Mike Turner expanded the range eastward to Edgecombe County in summer 2017. This is one of the more "colorful" of the clubtails -- chartreuse and rusty colors, along with the standard black and yellow colors of most clubtails -- and for that reason, it may be the easiest clubtail in the state to identify.