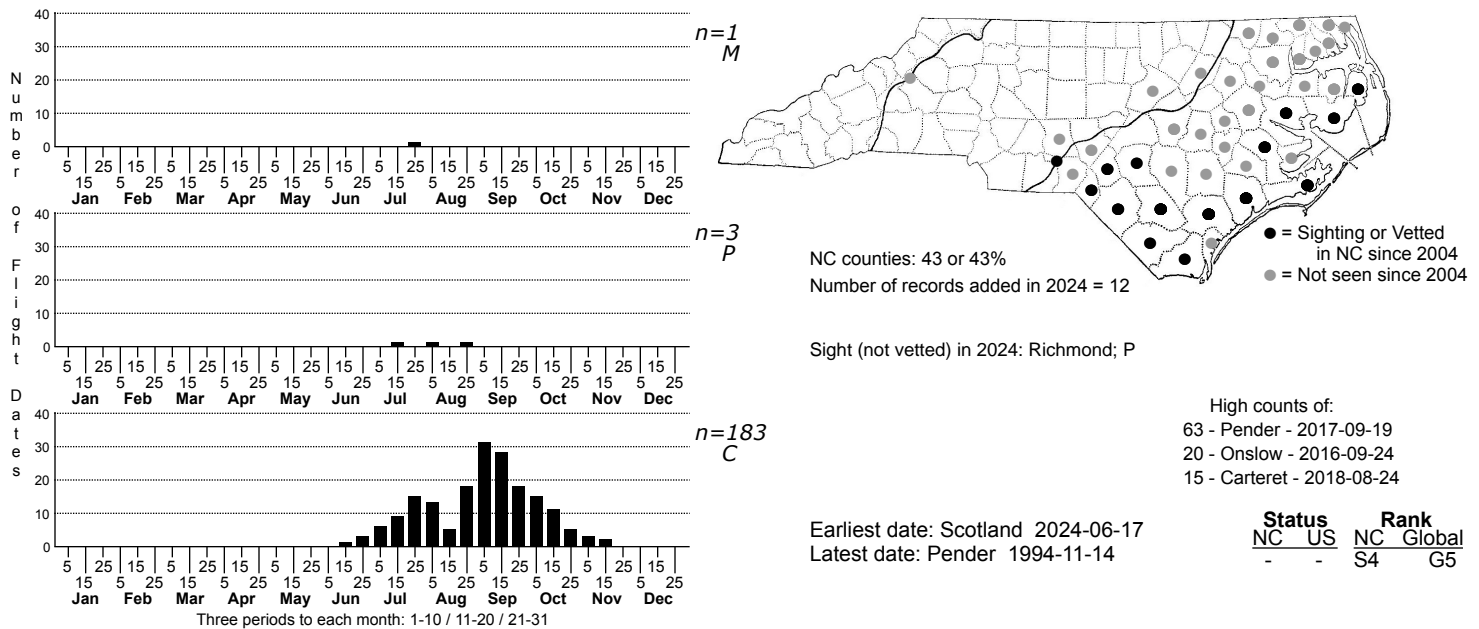


Somatochlora filosa Fine-lined Emerald



DISTRIBUTION: Throughout the Coastal Plain, with records for nearly every county in the province, even along the coast. Occurs along the Fall Line in the extreme eastern Piedmont, and there is a collection record from far inland Burke County (mis-identified?).

ABUNDANCE: Fairly common and widespread in much of the Coastal Plain; probably uncommon in some areas closer to the Piedmont. It is one of the few dragonflies that is more numerous in the lower Coastal Plain than in the upper part of this province. It is very rare in the eastern Piedmont. According to Roble and Cuyler (1998), "Cuyler found that this species is common and widespread in the Coastal Plain of North Carolina, including the Dismal Swamp area."

FLIGHT: Late June to mid-November, being one of the few dragonflies whose main flight is the fall season, where it often peaks in September or even into October. Interestingly, the three records from the Piedmont/foothills are from late July to late August, and not in the fall season at all.

HABITAT: Both Dunkle (2000) and Beaton (2007) indicate that the breeding habitat is unknown, but suggest swamps, seeps, and other slow-moving waters in forested areas. This seems correct for NC, as it is often found near forested, swampy habitats, as opposed to flowing waters of riverine/creekside habitats or wide open waters of lakes and ponds.

BEHAVIOR: As with most emeralds, adults forage widely away from water, such as along forest edges and along roads and wide trails. They often fly quite high (over 10-20 feet), but occasionally they can be observed as they perch on a twig, at times within a few feet of the ground.

COMMENTS: This species can be numerous in the fall season near swampy woodlands and forested margins near wetlands, though finding one perched within easy viewing or photographing can be a challenge. Often the best way to see one is to net the dragonfly as it flies by, frequently over one's head. The "fine lines" on the side of the thorax, which give the species its common name, are not easily seen. Most other emeralds have more distinct thorax stripes/lines, whereas the numerous Mocha Emerald is solid-colored on the sides of the thorax.