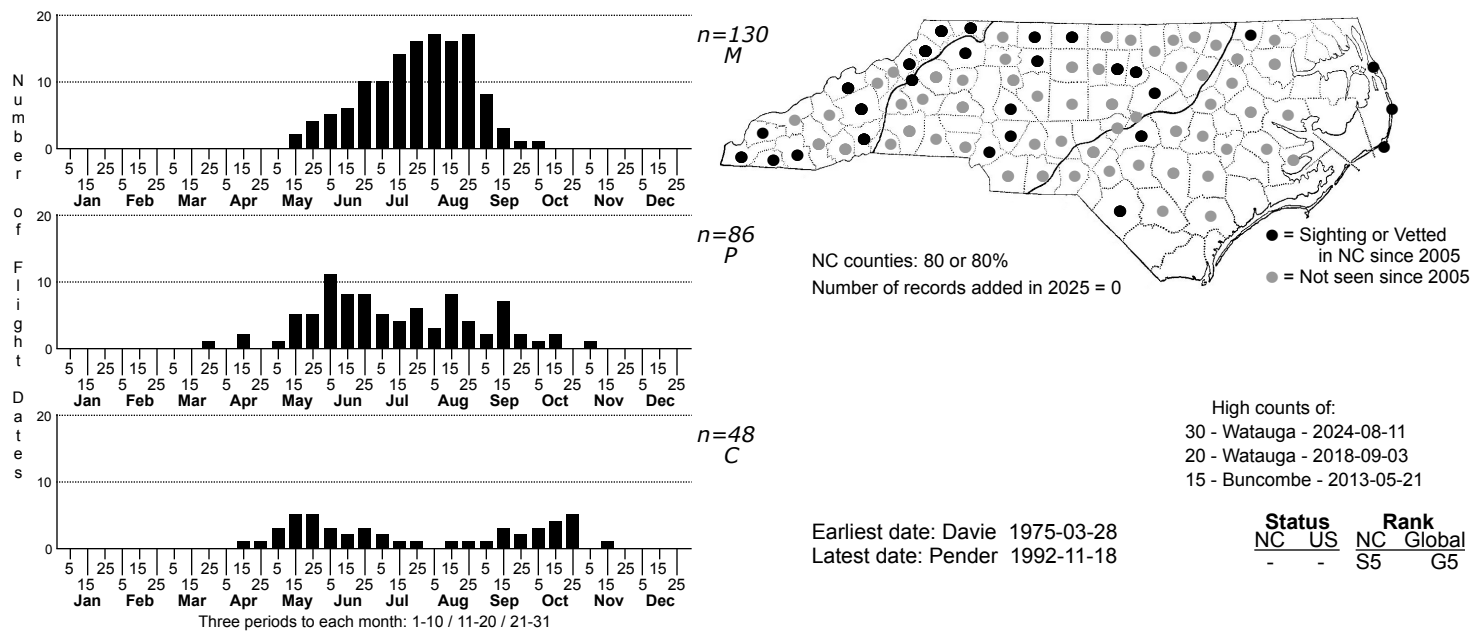


Lestes rectangularis Slender Spreadwing



DISTRIBUTION: Nearly statewide, but practically absent close to the coast. This species ranges over most of the eastern United States.

ABUNDANCE: Fairly common to locally common, and widespread, in the mountains; generally uncommon in the Piedmont; rare to uncommon in the western and central Coastal Plain. Only two records for the counties north or south of Albemarle Sound (both in Dare County), and no records in most southern coastal counties. Clearly more numerous in the mountains than downstate, with our three highest single-day counts from this province, and roughly 1.5 times the number of records there than in the Piedmont, despite having only 1/3rd the geographic area.

FLIGHT: A long flight period, covering most of the odonate season. From late March to early November in the Piedmont, and mid-April to mid-November in the Coastal Plain. Surprisingly, the earliest record in the mountains isn't until mid-May, and it occurs to at least early October.

HABITAT: Marshy areas, typically around ponds or lakes, but also sometimes slow streams with emergent vegetation.

BEHAVIOR: As with other spreadwings, despite its large (i.e., very long) size, adults are usually inconspicuous down into grassy vegetation fairly low along a pond or large shore.

COMMENTS: This is one of the more numerous damselflies in the mountains, but it is widespread (though scarce) downstate. Its range in the lower Coastal Plain needs more elucidation, though it is certainly rare close to tidal water.