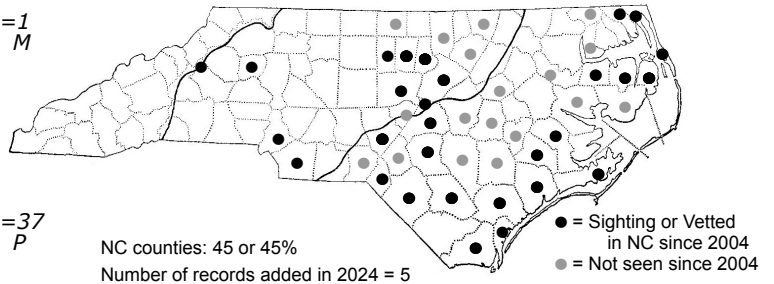
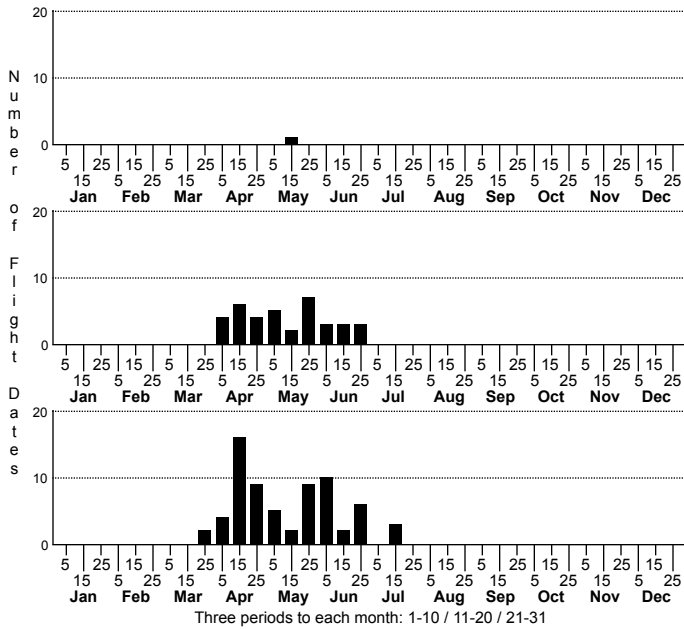


Gomphaeschna antilope Taper-tailed Darner



NC counties: 45 or 45%
Number of records added in 2024 = 5

Incomplete dates not graphed:
C=n+4

High counts of:
20 - Bladen - 2016-04-26
20 - Dare; Mainland - 2022-05-27
15 - Scotland - 2018-04-12

Earliest date: Washington 2008-03-28
Latest date: Dare; OBU 2007-07-20

Status		Rank	
NC	US	NC	Global
-	-	S4	G4

DISTRIBUTION: Essentially just the eastern 50-60% of the state; throughout the Coastal Plain, and in the southeastern third of the Piedmont, west to Caswell, Alamance, Chatham, and Mecklenburg counties. A photo record from Burke County in 2015 was most unusual and well to the west of the expected range, but a recent photo record from Alexander County in 2022 suggests that the species might occur throughout the state's Piedmont province. Nonetheless, there are still huge areas of the northwestern and western part of the region that still lacks records. No mountain records yet.

ABUNDANCE: Uncommon in the southern and central Coastal Plain, and close to the coast to the VA line, but rare in most of the northern third of the province. Rare to locally uncommon in the eastern Piedmont west to Caswell and Mecklenburg counties. Very rare to absent in the western 50-60% of the Piedmont.

FLIGHT: Spring into early summer only. In the Coastal Plain, the flight is mainly from early April (very rarely in late March) to late June, sparingly into July. In the Piedmont, the flight occurs from early April to late June. The peak is from mid-April to early May.

HABITAT: Typically in and near swamps, but also along nearby rivers and streams.

BEHAVIOR: Forages typically singly along wooded roads and openings near swamps and rivers, not over the water. As with the Harlequin Darner, it often perches vertically on tree trunks, where it can be photographed near human eye-level. A number of NC photos, especially on iNaturalist, show them perched on man-made structures, such as on sides of buildings (and porch screens).

COMMENTS: The species looks similar to Harlequin Darner, though its paired green spots on the abdomen become smaller toward the abdomen tip. Whereas the latter has a somewhat similar range and flight period to Taper-tailed, it is much more often encountered. There were few recent observations of Taper-taileds until about 2015, probably owing to better coverage of the Coastal Plain. Many new records have been made in the Piedmont, such as in Union and Mecklenburg counties that extend the range westward. Could the species be slowly expanding its range inland, or is this simply a matter of more observers gathering odonate data in the Piedmont? As mentioned above, many records on iNaturalist appear to be serendipitous -- a dragonfly that appears on the side of a person's house and is photographed and becomes added to the ever-growing set of records for this often difficult-to-find species!