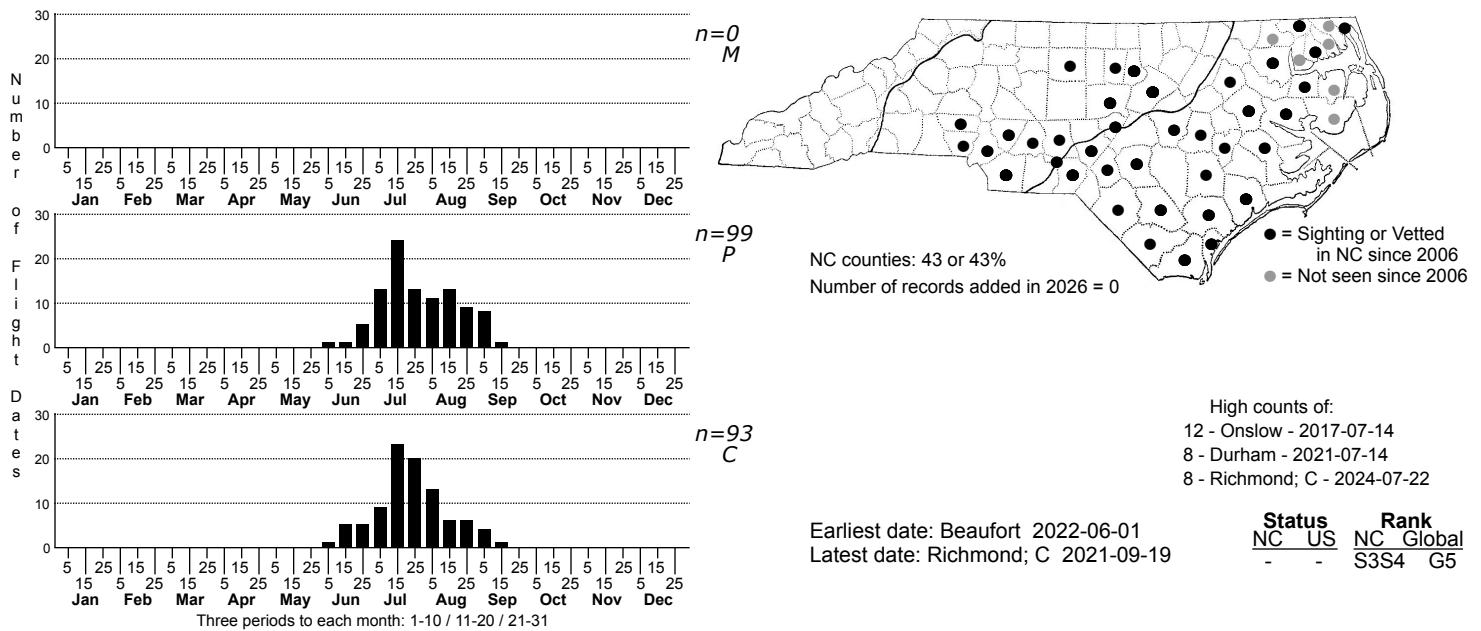


## *Aphylla williamsoni* Two-striped Forceptail



**DISTRIBUTION:** Formerly (prior to 2005), mainly just the lower half of the Coastal Plain. However, in the past handful of years the range is expanding westward rapidly, west currently to Guilford and Lincoln counties. Thus, now it is scattered over nearly all of the Coastal Plain and the southeastern Piedmont. In fact, in 2020, a remarkable five new counties were added to the range map, several in the Coastal Plain filling holes in the range there (Bladen and Currituck), but several in the Piedmont expanding the western edge of the range (Durham, Chatham, Guilford, and Gaston). Beaton (2007) states that in GA it is "rare above [the Fall Line] but expanding into the middle Piedmont". It is certainly expanding its range inland (westward) in NC, as well; Cuyler never collected the species farther west than Pitt and Pender counties.

**ABUNDANCE:** Clearly increasing in recent years. Formerly scarce (rare to uncommon) and limited almost solely to the Tidewater counties. Now it occurs essentially throughout the Coastal Plain and southeastern Piedmont, where uncommon and a bit local, but formerly it was nearly absent in these areas. In fact, the species has been recorded now at many lakes and ponds in Wake County alone, and two of the three highest one-day counts have been in Piedmont counties.

**FLIGHT:** The flight periods in both the Coastal Plain and Piedmont are very similar -- mid-June to mid-September. A new early date in 2022 was 6 June, in the eastern Piedmont.

**HABITAT:** Vicinity of ponds and lakes, as well as canals, especially muck- or peat-bottom ones. These waters can be somewhat disturbed and not "high-quality", and many or most are in full sun.

**BEHAVIOR:** May perch on the ground near a pond, or on vegetation around a pond. Most often seen at ponds and small lakes.

**COMMENTS:** Because Cuyler never collected the species in NC farther inland than Hertford, Bertie, and Pitt counties, it is certain that these farther western records represent a recent inland expansion of the range. The range is still spotty, in that there are many Wake County records but very few from the Sandhills or the adjacent counties to the east (e.g., Robeson, Sampson, etc.). There is also a near lack of recent records for the northeastern counties (east of Gates, Bertie, and Craven), though a 2020 record came from coastal Currituck County. A number of records have been made from canoes and kayaks, on large ponds and lakes, less so along rivers.