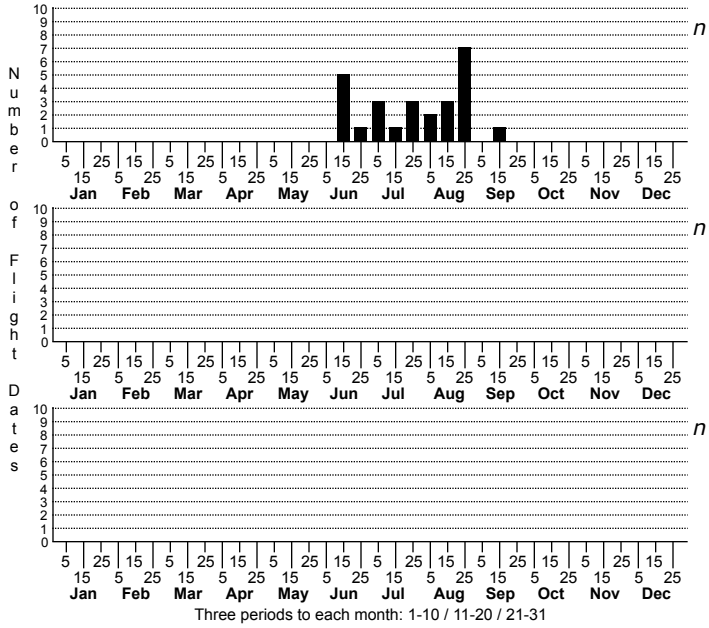
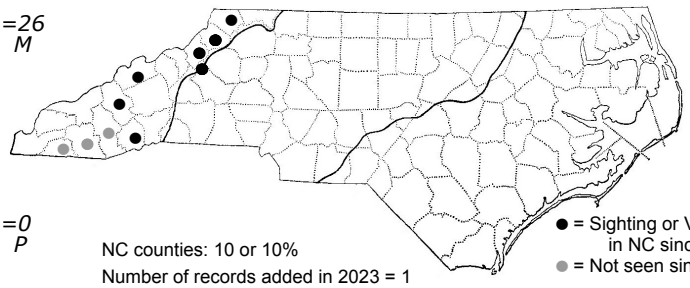
Somatochlora elongata Ski-tipped Emerald





● = Sighting or Vetted in NC since 2004
● = Not seen since 2004

NC counties: 10 or 10%
Number of records added in 2023 = 1

Photo (vetted) in 2023: Transylvania

High counts of:
4 - Macon - 1953-06-15
4 - Watauga - 2018-08-07
3 - Burke; M - 1991-08-23

Earliest date: Macon 1953-06-13
Latest date: Burke; M 1990-09-11

Status		Rank	
NC	US	NC	Global
SR	-	S2	G5

Other Name: Ski-tailed Emerald

DISTRIBUTION: Strictly the mountains (and perhaps along the Blue Ridge Escarpment in Piedmont counties). Known from just nine counties in NC (with Madison County added in 2021). The great majority of emeralds (genus Somatochlora) are Northern species, ranging south only to the mid-Atlantic states, and the Ski-tipped's range extends farther south than many of these, to northern GA.

ABUNDANCE: Rare to possibly uncommon in the northern mountains, but rare south of Avery and Burke counties. Considered to be "common" over its range by Dunkle (2000), but clearly it is a scarce species here near the southern end of its range.

FLIGHT: Mid-June to the end of August; one record in mid-September.

HABITAT: Slow-flowing streams, outlets of lakes and ponds, beaver ponds, bogs, etc., typically in open or partly open sites. In NC, favors open wetland sites at fairly high elevations (mainly over 3500 feet). Most records are from high-quality sites/natural areas.

BEHAVIOR: Males patrol territories over water about 1-2 feet high. However, in normal feeding, the adults often forage high, sometimes in shade.

COMMENTS: This is not an overly rare species in the northern mountain counties of NC. A handful of recent records have been made in the state, many documented with photos. As with many emeralds, the various species in the state can look very similar in flight, and observers and photographers must wait until they perch to be sure of the identification. Thankfully, most of the other emeralds in the state occur at lower elevations and often in somewhat more wooded settings than is this northern species.