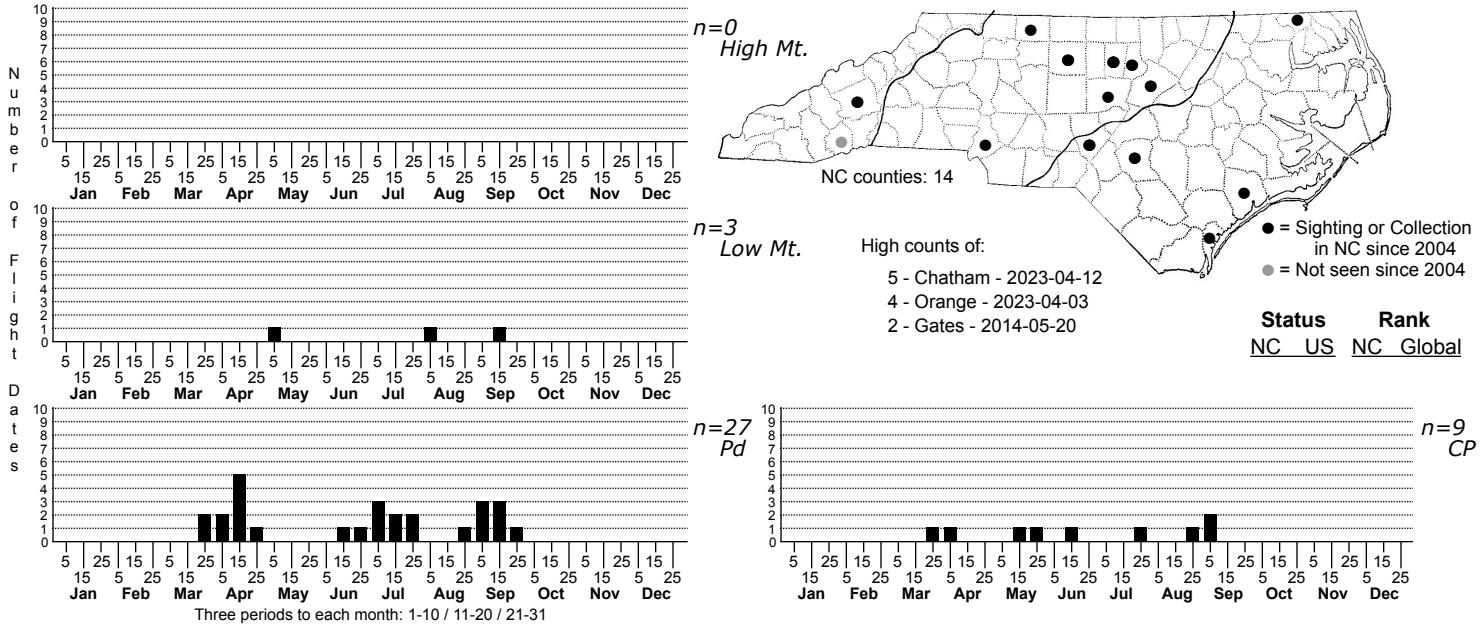
Battaristis nigratomella No common name



FAMILY: Gelechiidae SUBFAMILY: Gelechiinae TRIBE: Anacampsini
TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS: The genus Battaristis contains 31 described species that are mostly found in the New World. Most species are found in South America, and only five are currently recognized in North America.

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Leckie and Beadle (2018)
ONLINE PHOTOS:
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Forbes (1923)
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: The upper head, thorax and ground color of the forewing are light yellowish brown to grayish brown. The face is somewhat lighter and the underside of the head is black. The antenna is pale yellowish with inconspicuous darker annulations. The second joint of the labial palp is fuscous to blackish externally except at the extreme tip where it is lighter. The terminal joint is whitish to grayish white with a dark external fuscous line. The forewing ground color tends to be darkest on the dorsal two-thirds and often is noticeably lighter on the costal one-third, particularly on the basal half of the wing. The apical portion of the wing has a matching pair of posteriorly oblique white streaks at about three-fourths the wing length. These begin on the costal and dorsal margins and extend to the middle of the wing where the apices nearly touch. There is a small black subapical spot behind these that is followed by a well-developed dark marginal line through the cila. In additional to the subapical spot, two or more small black blotches are often present in the dorsal half between the paired streaks and the wing base. The costa has a short oblique, dark brown to blackish streak at about one-half the wing length. This is followed by a short white streak and a second dark streak that margins the longer costal streak at three-fourths. Between the paired streaks and the apex, there is a series of alternating dark and light bars that terminate at the dark marginal line in the cilia. The hindwing and cilia vary from grayish to light brown. The legs are blackish with whitish annulations on the tarsi.

This species is similar to Battaristis concinusella, but tends to be lighter overall, and the costal one-third of the wing on the basal half is lighter than the dorsal two-thirds. Battaristis concinusella tends to be less two-toned on the basal half of the forewing, and has the apical third of the wing more heavily speckled or dusted with whitish or light silvery gray scales relative to B. nigratomella. The postmedial costal line at about three-fourths is also faint relative to that of B. nigratomella.

DISTRIBUTION: Battaristis nigratomella is found primarily in eastern North America, with a few isolated records in the West from British Columbia, Alberta, Washington State, California, Arizona, and Colorado. In the East, the range extends from the New England states and adjoining areas of extreme southern Canada (Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia) southward to Florida and westward to eastern Texas, eastern Oklahoma, Illinois, and Minnesota. We have records from all three physiographic provinces within the state, with most from the Coastal Plain and Piedmont.

FLIGHT COMMENT: The adults have been found from March through October in areas outside of North Carolina, with a seasonal peak in May through August. As of 2021, our records extend from March through late-September.

HABITAT: The preferred habitats are poorly documented due to a lack of information on the host plants. Our records come from a variety of habitats that include semi-wooded residential neighborhoods, dry ridges, coastal sites with sandy soils, and more mesic hardwood and mixed pine-hardwood forests.

FOOD: The hosts are undocumented.

OBSERVATION_METHODS: The adults come to lights.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS: GNR SU

STATE PROTECTION: Has no legal protection, although permits are required to collect it on state parks and other public lands.

COMMENTS: We have scattered records from throughout the state, but need more information on the host plants and this species distribution and abundance before we can assess its conservation status.