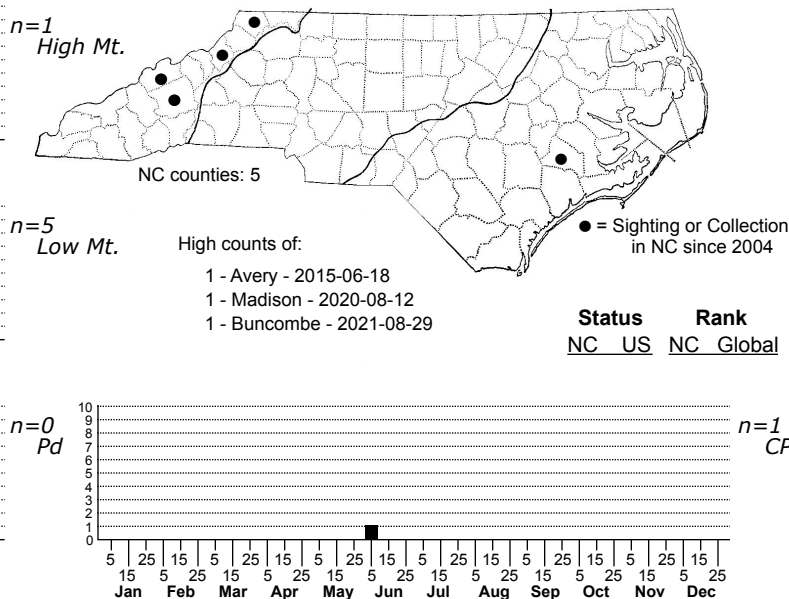
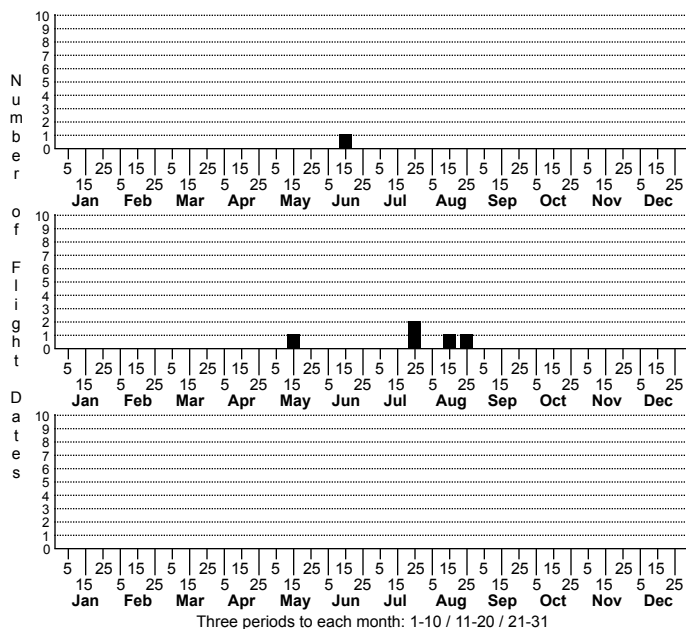


Dichomeris bilobella Bilobed Dichomeris Moth



FAMILY: Gelechiidae SUBFAMILY: Dichomeridinae TRIBE: [Dichomeridini]
TAXONOMIC_COMMENTS:

FIELD GUIDE DESCRIPTIONS: Beadle and Leckie (2012)
ONLINE PHOTOS:
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, ADULTS: Hodges (1986)
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION, IMMATURE STAGES:

ID COMMENTS: *Dichomeris bilobella* and *D. setosella* are two closely related species that have very similar patterning and coloration on the forewings. The basal half has a dull, pale-yellow wash except for a conspicuous dark mark along the inner margin. The mark begins basally as a roughly triangular-shaped feature that contracts posteriorly to a narrow neck before expanding again into a broad, weakly curved, diagonal bar that projects towards the costa. The bar terminates before reaching the costa and is followed posteriorly by a wide zone of grayish to grayish-black wash in the post-medial area. Within this is a small black spot at the end of the cell that is bordered basally and distally to varying degrees with pale-yellow scales. The grayish zone is followed by a narrow, pale-yellow, transverse line that can vary from straight to wavy, particularly in the medial area. The subterminal portion of the forewing has a similar grayish to grayish-black wash, but is often a shade darker than that in the postmedial region. A line of dark dots is present at the base of the termen, with the dots having varying degrees of yellow scaling posteriorly.

North Carolina specimens are best identified using either genitalia, size, or the morphology of the labial palps. For a large series of specimens that have been identified using genitalia (J.B. Sullivan, pers. comm.), the wing length of *D. bilobella* typically varies from 8-9 mm versus 6-7 mm for *D. setosella*. The scaling on the second segment of the labial palps is also diagnostic (Hodges, 1986), with *D. setosella* having a strong ventral tuft at the apex that projects forward. In contrast, *D. bilobella* lacks a prominent tuft and has scales on the ventral side that are more or less appressed to the second segment. The most conspicuous scaling is on the dorsal surface. Worn specimens of *D. setosella* may not have an obvious projecting tuft and can cause confusion. Another feature is that helpful is that the third palp segment is much wider in *D. bilobella*, about twice the width of that in *D. setosella* (J.B. Sullivan, pers. comm.).

Because external patterning on the forewing widely overlaps between these two species, specimens should be submitted with either a wing length measurement or a lateral view of the labial palps.

DISTRIBUTION: Monroe (1986) noted that *D. setosella*, *D. bilobella*, and *D. vindex* (a more northern species) have commonly been misidentified or confused and many records are unreliable. He reported this species to occur from Nova Scotia, southern Quebec and Ontario southward to Maryland, and westward to Minnesota, Missouri, and eastern Kansas. The range extends at least as far south as North Carolina. Within the state this species appears to occur statewide, but additional collecting is needed to determine its exact distribution.

FLIGHT COMMENT: Monroe (1986) reported that the adults fly from mid-May until late August, which is consistent with our records from North Carolina.

HABITAT: Local populations are generally associated with open woodland settings, woodland edges, and open habitats such as old fields that support asters and goldenrods.

FOOD: The larvae are leaf rollers on composites, including asters (*Symphyotrichum* spp.) and goldenrods (*Solidago* spp.; Monroe, 1986).

OBSERVATION_METHODS: The adults are occasionally found at lights. More information is needed on host use and the larval life history for North Carolina populations.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM RANKS:

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

COMMENTS: