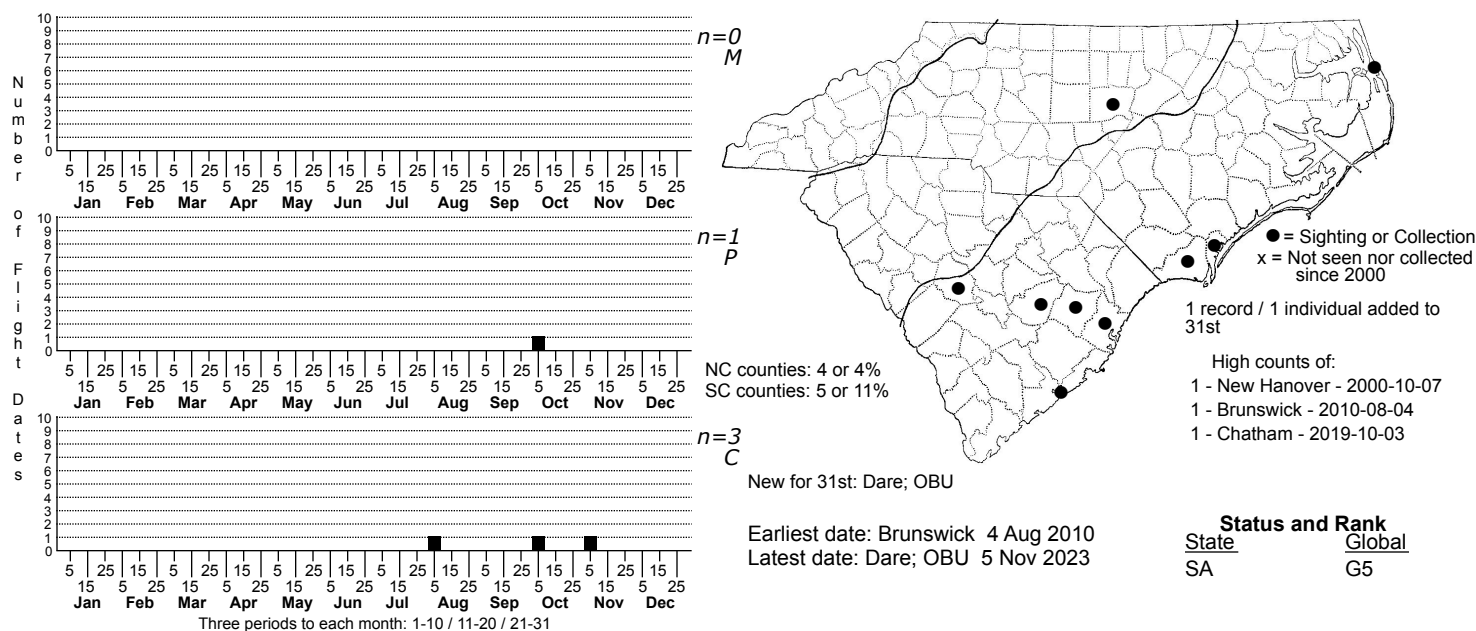


Funereal Duskywing *Erynnis funeralis*



DISTRIBUTION: Accidental stray; reported only from four counties (Brunswick and New Hanover along the southern coast, Dare on the northern coast, and Chatham in the eastern Piedmont). This Southwestern species normally ranges east to OK, TX, and LA; however, it has strayed east to FL, SC, and PA.

ABUNDANCE: An accidental to casual visitor from the Southwestern states, with four reports.

FLIGHT PERIOD: The sole reports are (in monthly order) for August 4, 2010, October 3, 2019, October 7, 2000, and November 5, 2023. The normal flight occurs from March to October, with about three broods. The species is to be expected in the East in the fall season, especially in October.

HABITAT: The first individual (New Hanover County) was seen in a weedy area on Figure Eight Island, and the second (Brunswick County) was seen in a weedy/brushy area near mixed forest. The Piedmont record (Chatham County) was in a rural garden, as was the Dare County record. Within its normal range, the Funereal Duskywing inhabits woodland edges, thickets, scrub, and other semi-open places (and is the Southwestern counterpart of the Zarucco Duskywing).

FOOD AND NECTAR PLANTS: Foodplants are various legumes (Fabaceae). The NC individuals were seen nectaring on Lantana (*Lantana strigocamara*) and various other herbaceous species.

COMMENTS: I observed one, presumably of this species, at Figure Eight Island in fall 2000. The individual showed a bright white hind wing fringe, but otherwise resembled a Zarucco Duskywing, which has a buff-colored hind wing fringe (though a FL Keys population may have white fringes). John Ennis photographed a duskywing, with a white hind wing fringe, which was initially identified as a Zarucco Duskywing, until I saw the photographs in late 2010. It was apparent to me by seeing a handful of Ennis' photos from different sun angles that the white fringe was not an artifact of light. Two lepidopterists who viewed the photos expressed some concern about the white fringe not being as bright white and as wide as some Funereals within the usual range, and the potential of the butterfly to be a mutant or odd variant of Zarucco. However, a review of dozens of photos of Funereals on websites (through Google) revealed many individuals that seem to be identical to the Brunswick County individual. In addition, there was a notable flight of this species northward and northeastward in summer and fall, reaching WI, PA, and even northeastern Canada; and there was a convincing sight report for the Coastal Plain of SC, on October 2. A second record for SC was made in 2018, and a third in 2019. The most significant NC record was of a male photographed by Susie Moffat in her garden in Chatham County in 2019; the duskywing was nectaring on Lantana. Rachel Veal photographed one in Manteo (Dare County) in 2023, the first record for the northeastern part of the state. Photos of these last two records are posted on the iNaturalist website. A few references consider the Zarucco and the Funereal to be the same species, but the Funereal is considered a valid species by the Butterflies of America website, Pelham (2023), and most other recent authorities.