Buchholz’s Gray
Hypomecis buchholzaria

State Status: Endangered
Federal Status: None

DESCRIPTION: Buchholz’s Gray (Hypomecis buchholzaria) is a geometrid moth with a forewing length of 14-18 mm (Rindge 1973). Both the forewing and the hind wing have a dark gray ground color. The forewing postmedial line is black and toothed, curving outward from the costa and then inward in the vicinity of the radial veins. The forewing median line is diffuse and obscure. The antemedial line is black and wavy, outlining an oval area in the basal portion of the forewing that is often more darkly shaded than distal to the line. The reniform spot is a black, elliptical ring, often obscured by the median line. The hind wing has a black and toothed, shallowly-curved postmedial line. The hind wing median line is straight, but diffuse and often obscure. The discal spot is a black, elliptical ring. The head, thorax, and abdomen match the dark gray ground color of the wings.

HABITAT: In Massachusetts, Buchholz’s Gray inhabits sandplain pitch pine-scrub oak barrens.

LIFE HISTORY: In Massachusetts, adult Buchholz’s Gray moths fly in June and early July. Larval host plants are not well documented; captive larvae accept sweet fern (Comptonia peregrina) and bayberry (Morella pensylvanica) (Schweitzer et al. 2011). Larvae feed in July and August, pupating by September. The pupa overwinters.

GEOGRAPHIC RANGE: Buchholz’s Gray is rare and locally distributed along the Atlantic and Gulf Coastal Plains, with populations in Massachusetts, New Jersey, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, Mississippi and eastern Texas (Rindge 1973). In Massachusetts, this species is only known from the pine barrens of southeastern Plymouth County.

STATUS AND THRERATS: Buchholz’s Gray is threatened by habitat loss and suppression of fire, which is needed to maintain the open structure of its habitat. Other potential threats include introduced generalist parasitoids, aerial insecticide spraying, non-target herbiciding, off-road vehicles, and light pollution.
Literature Cited

A Species of Greatest Conservation Need in the Massachusetts State Wildlife Action Plan
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