

ART. XII.—Notes on the "*Hairy Cicada*"
(*Tettigarcta crinita*).

By HOWARD ASHTON.

[Read 13th December, 1923.]

Whilst visiting Mount Kosciusko in February, I found emerging a specimen of Cicada which, from the shape of the nymph, I took to be the Gippsland hairy Cicada, not previously recorded in New South Wales. Upon taking it to the hotel, several specimens flew into the room in which I had it, possibly attracted, as some insects are known to be, by emanations of scent which attract the opposite sex. Three were taken in this manner, either in the dusk of the evening, or before dawn.

I concluded that the species could not be uncommon in the district, and set out to find it. I was successful in taking seven specimens, most of them females, in their natural habitat. The pupae emerge upon the "Snow Gums" and stunted "Mountain Ash" of the district. The Cicada, instead of perching on the bare stems of trees and rejoicing in the sunlight, would appear to be nocturnal, for I only saw the insects fly in the dusk, and all the specimens I took were under the bark of trees, hiding like moths.

In the published descriptions of species, it is stated that the opercula, or process covering the musical organs, are obsolete. Dissecting one of the males I could find no trace of any musical organs at all. I do not think they can be regarded as "obsolete." This Cicada, in fact, is very doubtfully a Cicada at all, if the usual classification is to stand. It is far more different in structure than some of the Aphrophorids and Cercopids. Yet, of course, its general form is like that of the Cicadas. Possibly in the future some worker may decide to make a family of this insect, and, really, owing to the immensely dilated pronotum and the absence of musical organs, this would be justified.

I find that Distant's description fails lamentably in respect of colour. The insect is not "all reddish brown" without spots. It is very variable, the body tints being yellow grey with large black streak and patches. In some specimens the frontal "cape" is all black except for a broad greyish stripe down the centre; in others even this stripe is missing; and in others again the black is confined obscurely to the lateral furrows. The colour of the abdomen in almost all cases is black with a tint of chestnut brown on the anterior margins of segments. The only "reddish brown" is in the basal venation and colouration of the hind wings of some specimens, and even there the red is not marked.

I can only conclude that Distant's type must have been an old and stained specimen. I had seen such in the various Museums, and had one in my own collection, all yellowish brown, but the living specimens are entirely different. In some specimens the tegmina are heavily infuscated at the bases and extremities of the apical areas.

Judging from the number of pupal cases I found on trees, the species is not so uncommon as its infrequent appearance in Museum collections would indicate.



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