

A Note on *Ghost Moths*—family HEPIALIDAE

*Abantiades hyalinatus* (Herrick Schaeffer)

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Little seems to be known of the life history of this beautiful moth. The writer has carried out some observations in the Kingston (Tasmania) Area where the peppermint gum (*Eucalyptus amygdalina*) seems to be the tree most favoured by this insect. The perfect insects emerge after heavy rain about the middle of January or February.

The eggs dropped as the large female flutters over the eucalypts are at first cream coloured, but change to a dark leaden colour in a short time. The exact time lapse from egg to emergence of adult is not known but there appears to be an emergence each year. Full grown larvae and pupae have been collected in December in silk lined tunnels leading to the roots of the gums on which they feed.

When the larva is ready to pupate, the hole is sealed with a lid of earth and silk about an inch below the surface of the ground. This lid is pushed out by the pupa when it works its way up the tunnel, by the ridges on the abdominal segments.

Full grown larvae have been observed creamy white in colour and averaging 107 mm. in length. Observations on the pupae show them to be castaneous brown, about 82 mm. long and 17 mm. in diameter.

The females vary little except in size but three colour forms in the male have been noted at Kingston. These are forms *brunneus*, *imperialus* and a *brunneus* form of *erythrinus* which does not seem to have been recorded before. The true *hyalinatus* male with ochreous wings is common in this area.

The *erythrinus* without silvery-white markings in the forewings, was caught in cop with a large female hanging to a small tree. Both specimens are in the Tasmanian Museum Collection.

