

## A GOLDFIELDS SWIFT MOTH

WHEN Steve Davies' photograph of a frog eating a swift moth (family Hepialidae) appeared in WW Vol. 7 No. 4, Matt Williams of CALM Science commented that the antennae needed to be visible for a more



detailed ID. Thus, when Grant Whiteman from the Centre for the Management of Arid Ecosystems photographed this one on "Southern Hills" station, he was careful to include the antennae.

So, this lovely hepialid is, according to Matt, a *Trictena* sp., because the antennae have three rows of combs. There are three (possibly more) species of *Trictena*. Their larvae live in vertical tunnels in the soil, feeding externally on the roots of eucalypts, emerging from the pupa to search for a mate after a good fall of rain. They may live many years as larvae, but their time as an adult is very short. They have no mouthparts, so they cannot feed, but must find a mate and lay their eggs within three days!