

Aposematism

Atyphella scintillans larva active 4 April 2022 at Modanville near Lismore (pics from iNaturalist thanks to Jarrah Coates for permission to use them here). That pattern of dark and light colour on the upper surface will make this larva harder to see among the leaf litter. But then why does it turn on the light? Fireflies are frequently very distasteful to predators, and the light can remind them that once before when they had a feed on something with a light it actually tasted terrible and next time they might avoid the light. Of course, it may not taste terrible at all but if there was another species of larva in the vicinity that did taste terrible, then our predator might avoid anything that has the light.

The phenomenon is **Aposematism** which is the advertising by an animal to potential predators that it is not worth attacking or eating.

