

Genus *Durbaniella* van Son, 1959
Little Rocksitter

Novos Taxa Entomologicos (16): 10 (15 pp.).

Type-species: *Durbania clarki* van Son, by original designation.

Durbaniella (**Little Rocksitter**) is a purely Afrotropical genus containing a single South African species.

****Durbaniella clarki* (van Son, 1941)#**
Little Rocksitter

Durbania clarki van Son, 1941. *Journal of the Entomological Society of Southern Africa* 4: 183 (179-196).

Durbania clarki Trimen. Swanepoel, 1953a.

Durbaniella clarki (van Son, 1941). Van Son, 1959.

Durbaniella clarki (Van Son, 1941). Dickson & Kroon, 1978.

Durbaniella clarki (Van Son, 1941). Pringle *et al.*, 1994: 130.

Durbaniella clarki van Son, 1941. d'Abreu, 2009: 626.

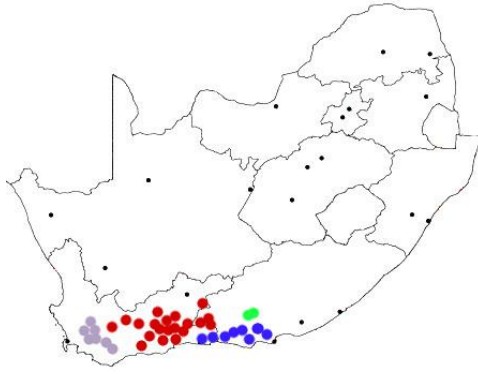


Durbaniella clarki clarki. Male (Wingspan 22 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside.
Oudtshoorn, Western Cape Province, South Africa. 10 December 2007. J. Dobson.
Images M.C.Williams ex Dobson Collection.



Durbaniella clarki clarki. Female. Left – upperside; right – underside.
Huis River Pass, Western Cape Province, South Africa. 13 November 1989.
Images M.C.Williams ex Gardiner Collection.

Type locality: South Africa: “Seven Weeks Poort”.



Distribution of *Durbaniella clarki*

Ssp. *clarki* (red dots) – Eastern Cape Province, Western Cape Province.

Ssp. *belladonna* (green dots) – Eastern Cape Province.

Ssp. *jenniferae* (blue dots) – Eastern Cape Province, Western Cape Province.

Ssp. *phaea* (mauve dots) – Western Cape Province.

Distribution: South Africa.

Habitat: Rocky areas in the fynbos and karoo biomes. The rocks on which this species breeds are of sedimentary origin, except for those frequented by populations of subspecies *belladonna*, which are doloritic in origin. Irrespective of the type of rock, grey and orange-red crustose lichens, with lesser numbers of grey-green foliose lichens, are always present. Populations of the various subspecies occur at altitudes from 200 to 1 600 m. Average annual rainfall in the various localities varies from 230 to 750 mm (Pringle *et al.*, 1994). Further details regarding the habitat for each subspecies are given in Pringle *et al.*, 1994.

Habits: Nothing appears to have been published.

Flight period: The following months have been recorded for the various subspecies: nominate subspecies – November; subspecies *phaea* – October, November; subspecies *jenniferae* – September to December, and February; subspecies *belladonna* – September (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Early stages: Nothing published.

Larval food:

Rock lichens (Lichenes) [Pringle *et al.*, 1994: 130].

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Durbaniella clarki clarki. Female. Left – upperside; right – underside.
Huis River Pass, Western Cape Province, South Africa. 13 November 1989.
Images M.C.Williams ex Gardiner Collection.

Type locality: South Africa: “Seven Weeks Poort”.

Distribution: South Africa (Eastern Cape Province, Western Cape Province – in the mountains on either side of the Little Karroo, as well as the eastern Langeberg mountains and the Witteberge near Matjiesfontein).

Specific localities:

Eastern Cape Province – Willowmore (Mecenero *et al.*, 2013).

Western Cape Province – Seven Weeks Poort (TL); Kandelaars, south of Oudtshoorn (Clark); Meiring’s Poort (Swanepoel, 1953); Witteberge near Matjiesfontein (Swanepoel, 1953); Swartberg Mountains (Swanepoel, 1953); eastern Langeberg Mountains, including Garcia’s Pass (Swanepoel, 1953); Schoeman’s Poort near Oudtshoorn (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Kammanassie Mountains (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Touws River (Mecenero *et al.*, 2013).

Durbaniella clarki belladonna Ball, 1994#
Karoo Little Rocksitter

Durbaniella clarki belladonna Ball, 1994. *In*: Pringle, Henning & Ball [eds]. *Pennington’s butterflies of southern Africa* 2nd edition: 132 (800pp.). Struik-Winchester, South Africa.



Durbaniella clarki belladonna. Male (Wingspan 23 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside.
Jansenville, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. 4 October 2003. N.K. Owen-Johnston.
Images M.C.Williams ex Dobson Collection.



Durbaniella clarki belladonna. Female (Wingspan 31 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside.
Jansenville, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. 19 September 2010. J. Greyling.
Images M.C.Williams ex Greyling Collection.

Type locality: South Africa: “30 km northeast of Jansenville, Eastern Cape. 27 Sept. 1986 (Dr J.B. Ball)”. Holotype in the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria.

Diagnosis: The orange markings of the upperside are of a very bright tone and there are fewer black scales in the orange than in other subspecies; the underside is heavily irrorated with white scales, giving it the lightest underside colouration of any of the subspecies (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Distribution: South Africa (Eastern Cape Province). Known only from the type locality.

Conservation status: Classified as Vulnerable (Henning *et al.*, 2009: 28).

Note: D’Abrera (2009) omits *belladonna* from his book.

Durbaniella clarki jenniferae Ball, 1994#
Eastern Little Rocksitter

Durbaniella clarki jenniferae Ball, 1994. *In*: Pringle, Henning & Ball [eds]. *Pennington’s butterflies of southern Africa* 2nd edition: 131 (800pp.). Struik-Winchester, South Africa.



Durbaniella clarki jenniferae. Male. Left – upperside; right – underside.
Uitenhage, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. 12 November 1989. E.L. Pringle.
Images M.C.Williams ex Pringle Collection.



Durbaniella clarki jenniferae. Female. Left – upperside; right – underside.
Baviaanskloof, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. 25 November 1986. E.L. Pringle.
Images M.C.Williams ex Pringle Collection.

Type locality: South Africa: “Vanstadensberg, Eastern Cape, 11 Oct. 1979 (Dr J.B. Ball).” Holotype in the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria.

Diagnosis: Compared to the nominate subspecies the orange ochreous markings are lighter; the submarginal spots are distinctly evident in the submarginal black area of both wings, from the costa to the anal angle (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Distribution: South Africa (Eastern Cape Province – south-west, Western Cape Province – south-east).

Specific localities:

Eastern Cape Province – Vanstadensberg (TL; Ball); Cambria near Uitenhage (Swanepoel, 1953); 60 km north-west of Humansdorp (Knight); Baviaanskloof (Dickson); 20 km west of Uitenhage (Ball); Elandsberg (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Sandfontein, near Uitenhage (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Western Cape Province – Keurboom’s Forestry Reserve, near Natures Valley (Ball); Outeniqua Mountains (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Tsitsikamma Mountains (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Kouga Mountains (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Note: D’Abrera (2009) omits *jenniferae* from his book.

Durbaniella clarki phaea Ball, 1994#
Riviersonderend Little Rocksitter

Durbaniella clarki phaea Ball, 1994. *In*: Pringle, Henning & Ball [eds]. *Pennington’s butterflies of southern Africa* 2nd edition: 131 (800pp.). Struik-Winchester, South Africa.



Durbaniella clarki phaea. Male. Left – upperside; right – underside.
Greyton, Western Cape, South Africa. October 2016. J. Dobson.
Images M.C.Williams ex Dobson Collection.



Durbaniella clarki phaea. Female. Left – upperside; right – underside.
Greyton, Western Cape, South Africa. October 2021. J. Dobson.
Images M.C.Williams ex Dobson Collection.

Type locality: South Africa: “Jonaskop, Cape Province, 23 Nov. 1986 (Dr J.B. Ball).” Holotype in Transvaal Museum, Pretoria.

Diagnosis: The ochreous orange markings in this subspecies are heavily irrorated with black scales giving the upperside a much darker appearance than that of the nominate subspecies. The submarginal black border is broader than in the other subspecies (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Distribution: South Africa (Western Cape Province).

Specific localities:

Western Cape Province – Jonaskop, near Villiersdorp (TL); Waboomsberge, near Montagu (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Riviersonderendberge, near Greyton (Barnard; Kaplan) and Swellendam (Swanepoel, 1953); Stettynsberge, north of Villersdorp (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); mountains near Robertson (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Elandia in the Worcester district (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Langeberg mountains (Mecenero *et al.*, 2013).

Note: D’Abrera (2009) omits *phaea* from his book.